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European Science Editing*Articles*

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igor.vlahovic@gmail.com
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Elise Langdon-Neuner
langdoe@baxter.com

Web Watch

Colin Batchelor
BatchelorC@rsc.org
News notes

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rhurley@bmj.com
Editor's bookshelf
Paola De Castro (coordinator)
paola.decastro@iss.it

Production assistance

Penny Hubbard
pennyhubbard@gmail.com

Books (Handbook)

Moira Johnson-Vekony
ese@dunascripts.com

Website

Emma Campbell
mailto:emma_c@yahoo.co.uk

EASE Council

Arjan K S Polderman (*ex officio*)

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From the Editors' Desks

Honorary member

It is with great pleasure that we announce the award of Honorary Membership to Jennifer Gretton in recognition of her invaluable contributions to EASE and ESE over many years.

Statement on impact factors

Council has drafted a statement representing EASE's standpoint on the use of impact factors, which is on the EASE Forum and the website. Comments are invited from members who should send them to Arjan Polderman (a.k.s.polderman@pw.nl) by 1 September 2007. He will then prepare a final statement for publication.

Looking for a new job? Need to advertise a vacancy?

The EASE online job advertisements service is now live and vacancies have been posted. See the 'Jobs' page of the EASE website for details: www.ease.org.uk (click on Jobs in the left-hand menu). Vacancies include those in science editing, writing, translation, production, proofreading, indexing, acquisition, commissioning, librarianship and more...including freelance work.

Membership campaign

The time has come...



This issue sees the launch of our membership campaign. The aim is to double our membership—look on page 78 to see how you can help.

Sponsorship scheme

The sponsorship scheme (see p 83) has been re-activated and there are currently 14 sponsored members.

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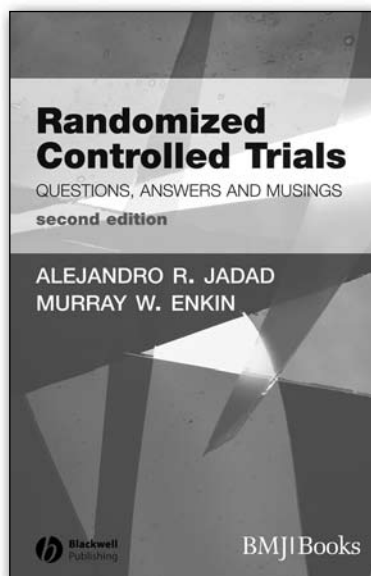
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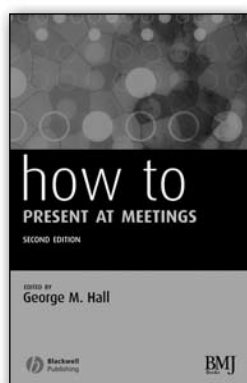
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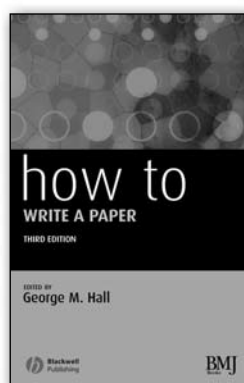
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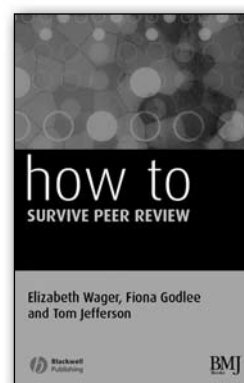


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Editorial

Your journal needs your articles

“Publish or perish” was the phrase I heard so many times (more times than I care to remember) in my days in academia. Those who published progressed up the career ladder; those who didn’t publish—either because they had nothing worthy of setting down for posterity, or because they were simply too lazy to put pen to paper (I said it was a while ago), perished career wise, staying at the bottom of the academic pecking order, and even failing to get contracts renewed. Others of us “saw the light”. I belong to that rare breed of academics who hated tedium of laboratory work, but I loved writing about it. So long as I don’t have to manipulate all those test tubes I’m a happy wordsmith.

But I digress. Back to the point of the publish or perish principle. It can be applied to journals, as well as to authors and career-makers. Publish good articles in your journal and your readers will tell their colleagues—you will get more readers, and eventually more good quality contributions. However, fail to consider the quality and quantity of articles, and publish uninteresting, mediocre, or poorly written work and you may as well kiss your back page goodbye. A statement of the obvious perhaps?

Another anecdote from the past comes from the time I spent living in Canada, when oftentimes I would be greeted with “Hi, how are you?” My reply would be the ever-non-committal “Very good, thank you”, and the response would come back “What’s stopping you from being great?” Good question. What is stopping our very good journal, *European Science Editing*, from being great? Actually, nothing is, we just have to decide to make it so.

Which brings me to the point (you knew I’d get there eventually, didn’t you?). As editors and writers, many of us occasionally carry out some sort of research. For many of our members, analysing editorial and publication standards and practice is part of their every working day, whereas for others of us it is more of an interesting diversion, to be done in spare moments or thought about while doing mundane tasks. Either way, much of the thought process and the results it produces can be very valuable. But, what happens to all that information?

It is some seven or eight years since the then Editorial Board of *European Science Editing* took a decision to subject any articles submitted to peer review. The aim of this was to increase the quality of the articles published, and that has happened. All articles that are submitted to *ESE* are sent to two reviewers. These may be members of the Publications Committee, or other individuals with interest in the

particular topic of the article. Usually they will reveal their names, and almost always will suggest ways of improving the article if it falls short of requirements; many times the reviewers will help with modifications and with the English.

What we need to do now is—and this is a problem common to many journals—to increase the number of submissions we receive.

If the results of your research or study do not meet the criteria of an original article, consider preparing a report in a shorter format—a Viewpoint, for example. Disseminate your results among the very people who want to read about them.

European Science Editing can be as great as its collective membership skills—there are talented writers out there, equally there are keen readers and learners. It is today’s generation of editors who are responsible for passing on skills to the next generation. Let us not lose all that valuable information, let us record it here.

European Science Editing reaches science editors throughout the world, and our membership is significantly growing again. Bear in mind that many issues of *ESE* are sent out to publishers and corporate members, and a number of copies of each issue go out as complimentary copies to those who request them or who we think may be interested in subscribing.

The bottom line is that this is, after all, **your** journal: please consider publishing your studies here, have your colleagues read them, and put your name out there in the editing world.

But that’s not the only bottom line. I’d say: “It is our responsibility to make this good journal into a great journal.” – and to that I’d add Abraham Lincoln’s words: “You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.”

Enquiries about potential articles or viewpoints may be sent to the Chief Editor at ESE@dunascripts.com or to the Articles Editor at igor.vlahovic@gmail.com—we are looking forward to hearing from you!

Maira A Johnson-Vekony
ESE@dunascripts.com

Articles

Life and times of the impact factor: retrospective analysis of trends for seven medical journals (1994–2005) and their editors' views

Mabel Chew

Clinical Lecturer, Discipline of General Practice, University of Sydney; Associate Editor, BMJ (mch3004@gmail.com)

Elmer V Villanueva

Epidemiologist, National Breast Cancer Centre, Australia; Associate Professor, Monash University Department of Rural and Indigenous Health

Martin B Van Der Weyden

Editor, Medical Journal of Australia

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Abstract

Objectives To analyse trends in the journal impact factor (IF) of seven general medical journals (*Ann Intern Med*, *BMJ*, *CMAJ*, *JAMA*, *Lancet*, *Med J Aust*, *N Engl J Med*) over 12 years; and to ascertain the views of these journals' past and present editors on factors that had affected their journals' IFs during their tenure, including direct editorial policies.

Design Retrospective analysis of IF data from ISI Web of Knowledge Journal Citation Reports—Science Edition, 1994 to 2005, and interviews with editors-in-chief. Setting Medical journal publishing.

Participants Ten editors-in-chief of the journals, except *Med J Aust*, who served between 1999 and 2004.

Main outcome measures IFs and component numerator and denominator data for the seven general medical journals (1994 to 2005) were collected. IFs are calculated using the formula: (Citations in year z to articles published in years x and y)/(Number of citable articles published in years x and y), where z is the current year and x and y are the previous two years. Editors' views on factors that had affected their journals' IFs were also obtained.

Results IFs generally rose over the 12-year period; *N Engl J Med* had the highest IF throughout. Percentage rises in IF relative to the baseline year of 1994 were greatest for *CMAJ* (about 500%) and *JAMA* (260%). Numerators for most journals tended to rise over this period, while denominators tended to be stable or to fall, although not always in a linear fashion. Nine of 10 eligible editors were interviewed. Possible reasons for rises in citation counts included: active recruitment of high-impact articles by courting researchers; offering authors better services; boosting the journal's media profile; more careful article selection; and increases in article citations. Most felt that going online had not affected citations. Most editors had no deliberate policy to publish fewer articles (lowering the IF denominator), which was sometimes the unintended result of other editorial policies. The two editors who deliberately published fewer articles did so as they realized IFs were important to authors. Concerns about the accuracy of ISI counting for the IF denominator prompted some to routinely check their IF data with ISI. All editors

had mixed feelings about using IFs to evaluate journals and academics, and mentioned the tension between aiming to improve IFs and "keeping their constituents [clinicians] happy".

Conclusions IFs of the journals studied rose in the 12-year period due to rising numerators and/or falling denominators, to varying extents. Journal editors perceived that this occurred for various reasons, including deliberate editorial practices. The vulnerability of the IF to editorial manipulation and editors' dissatisfaction with it as the sole measure of journal quality lend weight to the need for complementary measures.

In 1955, Eugene Garfield created the impact factor (IF). It was intended as a means to evaluate the significance of a particular work and its impact on the literature and thinking of the period. Little did he dream that it would become a means to rank journals and to evaluate institutions and academics. The UK government has said that "after the 2008 RAE [Research Assessment Exercise], the system for assessing research quality and allocating 'quality-related' research funding to universities... will be mainly metrics-based". Moreover, journals often commend their own IFs in advertisements targeting readers, subscribers, authors and advertisers, among others. Yet many, including Garfield himself, have warned against misuse of the IF as a surrogate measure of research quality. Despite this, we found no studies directly exploring editors' perspectives and policies regarding the IF. We believe such study is vital, as these may dictate what is published.

Thus, we decided to explore the IF phenomenon with two aims: to review trends in the IFs of selected general medical journals from 1994 to 2005, including several high-impact, prestigious journals held in high general regard; and to explore what factors these journals' past and present editors considered had affected their IFs during their tenure, including any direct editorial policies.

METHODS

Journals

Five high-impact journals: *Annals of Internal Medicine* (*Ann Intern Med*), *British Medical Journal* (*BMJ*), *Journal*

of the American Medical Association (JAMA), *Lancet*, *New England Journal of Medicine* (*N Engl J Med*), and also the *Medical Journal of Australia* (*Med J Aust*) and *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (*CMAJ*).

A journal's IF is calculated yearly using citation and publication data from the previous two years. The numerator count comprises citations in one year to any article published by that journal in the previous two years; the denominator of citable articles comprises research articles and reviews published that year only, and excludes editorials, letters, news items, and meeting abstracts.

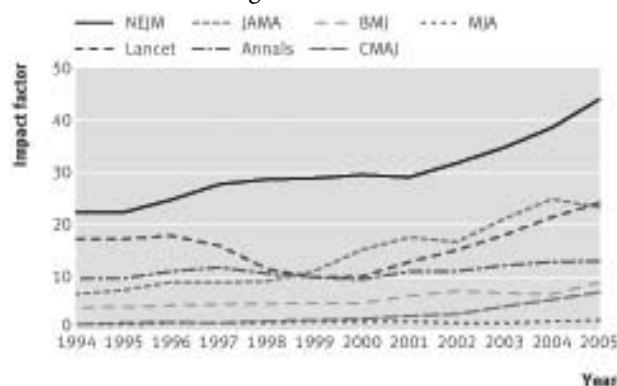
Quantitative study of IF statistics – Yearly data on IFs, citations and citeable article counts were collected from Journal Citation Reports for 1994-2005 for the seven journals. Absolute and relative annual changes were calculated using 1994 as the base year. Inferences (necessarily broad) were drawn from these simple observational data and used to identify issues for exploration in the qualitative phase.

Qualitative study of interviews with editors – The 10 editors-in-chief of these journals (except *Med J Aust*) who had served between 1999 and 2004 were contacted by e-mail to seek a telephone interview regarding influences on their journal's IF. The relevant journal's yearly IFs, citation and article counts from 1994 to 2003 (2004/5 data being unavailable at that time), were supplied together with our prime interview question: "What factor/s do you believe contributed to the rise in your impact factor, and how?" A telephone interview was scheduled in advance.

RESULTS

Quantitative analysis – All seven IFs rose from 1994 to 2005 (figure). Percentage increases in IF relative to the baseline year of 1994 were greatest for *CMAJ* (about 500%) and *JAMA* (260%). Citation counts tended to rise, while citeable article counts tended to be stable or to fall.

Interviews – Nine of 10 editors-in-chief were contactable, and all agreed to be interviewed. These comprised all five current editors (*Ann Intern Med*, *CMAJ*, *JAMA*, *Lancet* and *N Engl J Med*), one who had resigned just before the interview period (*BMJ*), and three of four other former editors (*Ann Intern Med*, *JAMA*, *N Engl J Med*). Specific factors that were identified through the interview process were coded; by the final interview, no new reported influences on the IF or new issues surrounding it were identified.



Trends in impact factors for seven general medical journals, 1994-2005

Editors gave reasons for their journal's IF rises:

Active recruitment of "high impact" articles

- **Courting researchers.** Cultivating major research institutions, personal approach to lead investigators of major research projects.

- **Hiring editorial staff.** Good, well trained editorial staff are necessary for journal promotion. Contracting experts in particular fields as editors to advise, attend research presentations, and to commission ensuing papers.

Improving "services" to authors.

- Shorten turn-around times

- Fast track publication for potential high impact papers

- Coincidence of publication with presentation of data at research meetings.

Finding niches

- Identification of particular areas of interest to attract academics to publish with the journal.

Media promotion

- High profile = first-class authors:

- media releases

- media conferences

- cultivation of reporters.

Article selection

- Careful selection of articles based on quality:

- originality

- interest

- substantive contribution to international literature.

Going online

- In general of limited value in increasing IF.

Non-editorial policy

- The increase in journal citations in general is rising:

- more journals are included in the ISI database

- more citations are being made in articles.

Factors influencing citeable article counts:

- **Publication of fewer citeable articles.** The fall in the number of citeable articles was attributed to editors generally being "choosier" about what they published; two editors had deliberately published fewer citeable articles as they realized IFs were important for authors deciding where to submit.

- **Article classification by ISI.** Misclassification as citeable could affect the IF denominator.

Editors' attitudes toward IF:

- **Mixed feelings and concerns.** Although all editors were pleased about their journals' rising IFs, they expressed mixed feelings toward the IF phenomenon:

- IF means more to researchers than to clinicians

- IF favours English-language and US journals

- IF could be an "uneven playing field", "open to abuse"

- Publication in high-IF journals can be misused as a surrogate index of academic performance.

- **Editorial effort.** The extent of interest editors expressed in their own journals' IF ranged from "not taking it that seriously" through "aiming for a robust but not overwhelming IF" to seeking high IFs as a means to an end

(attracting attention to the journal's broader message).

- **Alternatives to the IF.** Most editors would not be unhappy if the IF no longer existed but felt that it served a purpose, was easily measurable, was objectively calculated and would be difficult to replace.

DISCUSSION

From 1994 to 2005, IFs of these seven general medical journals rose, mostly due to rising numerators and falling denominators. We postulated that these component data might be malleable, and our qualitative exploration showed that editors believed this to be so, with some editors going to great lengths to improve their IFs.

While our interviewed editors were generally pleased at their journal's IF improvement over time, they were uneasy about its use as a measure of journal quality or as a means of

keeping their clinical readers engaged. They are not alone in their concerns. The two-year time span of the IF is known to favour dynamic research fields such as the basic sciences, rather than clinical medicine or public health. The journal IF (which includes *total* citations to the journal) is not necessarily representative of citations to individual articles, as these vary widely. The most-cited 50% of papers published in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* (*Aust NZ J Psychiatry*) and in the *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* (*Can J Psychiatry*) between 1990 and 1995 account for 94% of all citations to these publications.

Citation counts do bear some correlation with quality and proposed hierarchies of evidence. Journal citation counts in the US Preventive Services Task Force guidelines were found to correlate with their IFs. Yet this study showed that low IF journals were also cited frequently as providing

Possible reasons given by journal editors for rising impact factors

FACTORS INFLUENCING CITATION COUNTS

Courting researchers

"Our IF increased because I hustled for key papers—I talked to people I'd known for years and who hadn't previously submitted to [our journal] ... I had a cadre of people I knew personally who told me what was hot; I would call researchers to ask why they never sent anything good to [us]—they were amazed that I would call. One author sent us a "test" paper, a secondary [data] analysis, and found working with us such a good experience that they've just sent us their two hottest new articles."

"I deliberately cultivated relationships with [national research institutions], personally met them once a year, told them why they should publish in [our journal] rather than our competitors'. We had greater publicity ... [we made ourselves] approachable ... authors found us easy to talk to, they were amazed that our editors answered the phone, they could ring and find out if we'd be interested in an article. We made ourselves warm and fuzzy"

"We vigorously recruit high-impact papers with an aggressive approach to getting new research; eg during the XXX outbreak, I rang my ex-trainees [involved in the outbreak] to ask for a case series."

Hiring editorial staff

"We hired relatively young, fresh professors or assistant professors about to be professors, with fire in their belly... to sniff out the best research and bring it to [us]."

Improving services to authors

"We introduced fast-track publication ... for high impact papers of clinical, public health or news significance. Authors ... believe it's the most important thing [our journal] has done in my time as editor. It's transformed our relationship with authors."

Finding niches

"We don't get the big trials but have niche products ... mainly due to our exclusive partnership with X [institution] since I became editor."

Media promotion

"I consider which articles will get media coverage in making publication decisions."

"We gave lots of press releases and conferences. I cultivated reporters and didn't betray them—I only gave them good stuff which they could trust; we had weekly... news releases ... authors loved this! They loved being on X [television station], Y [newspaper] etc."

"We're all over TV or the media ... at least one article is mentioned in Z [weekly newspaper science feature] so there might be a higher likelihood that authors want to submit [to us] for publicity."

Article selection

"We try to find papers that will change medicine in 100 years and these may be RCTs on the benefits of ACE inhibitors or molecular genetics changing cancer treatment."

"We actively decided to make our acceptance criterion those articles that we felt would make a contribution to the international literature. Now our basis for rejection is often "I don't think this paper is going to be cited."

FACTORS INFLUENCING CITEABLE ARTICLE COUNTS

Publication of fewer citeable articles

"Our advisory board and regular contributors ... thought [a falling impact factor would be] seriously bad, affect tenure commitments etc ... so we decided to cut down material published."

Article classification by ISI

"Every year, we have a formal conversation with ISI before their data are published. [When] the journal was re-designed ... we had a chat with ISI to ensure they understood what's eligible for counts; we double-check ISI figures by estimating citable items ourselves then checking with ISI—there's not much variance now ... We take on trust that the numerator is correct. We now know that [other] publishers do this with ISI—we'd been slightly naive before."

important evidence. There are other disadvantages to relying solely on citation counts as quality indicators: they do not reflect the context of the citation, as a paper may be much cited for being misleading or erroneous; they favour journals that publish many review articles; and they are subject to author biases (eg the tendency to cite others in the same discipline).

Citation counts as used in the IF calculation are subject to other biases. Citations are counted for *all* items in a journal, but denominators only include specific items; thus the IF favours journals that publish many articles contributing to the numerator but not the denominator (eg letters to the editor). Bias may also arise from author or journal self-citation, and editors are also known to have asked authors to add citations to their journals.

Alternatives to the impact factor

Concerns raised in our study and in the literature should be an impetus to seek alternative or complementary measures for journal impact or quality. Several initiatives to evaluate individual research papers have arisen, essentially based on peer review. These include:

- *BMJ Updates*
- Biomed Central Faculty of 1000
- A yearly initiative by *Aust NZ J Psychiatry* (identifies articles considered to have contributed most to knowledge and future research in psychiatry that year)

- The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts & Sciences is exploring indicators for the societal impact of applied health research that includes factors other than citation

However, finding objective, reproducible and comprehensive indicators of *journal* quality that can be regularly updated is more difficult. Such indicators are most likely to complement, rather than substitute for, the journal IF.

Study limitations

This was a purposive study, not intended to be representative of all general medical journals. The focus was on several high-impact journals to identify any specific strategies to explain their “success” in the IF stakes. The quantitative analysis of simple observational data was exploratory, generating issues for the qualitative phase of the study. We chose not to employ formal tests of hypotheses. The interview question and prompts were validated through triangulation. Respondent validation was also used: Additional issues raised by earlier interviewees were “fed back” to subsequent interviewees. Any contradictory responses were further explored and refined. Interviews were not audio-taped. Independent analysis of the qualitative data by a second investigator was not possible.

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Introducing Selfcite 2.0—career enhancing software

Nick Craddock

Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow in Clinical Sciences (craddock@cardiff.ac.uk)

Michael C O'Donovan

Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry

Michael J Owen

Professor of Neuropsychiatric Genetics, Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff CF4 4XN

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Citation rate is becoming increasingly important as an index of success within medical academia.¹ Self citation (referencing one's earlier publications in a new publication) is a useful method for increasing citation rate.² Although some academics are undoubtedly masters of this approach, maximising the benefit from self citation can be tedious, so we have developed a user friendly software package, Selfcite, to help in this task. In this paper we introduce the theory of self citation and give a short description of the Selfcite program.

The benefits of self citation: theoretical considerations

To achieve maximum benefit from self citation, each new publication should cite all earlier works.³ Thus, in one's second paper, the first is cited. In one's third, the first and

second are cited, making a total of three citations. In the fourth, the first, second, and third are cited, making a total of six citations. The mathematically inclined reader will immediately recognise that the number of possible citations is the sum of a series of triangular numbers, and that the total number of citations possible on publication of the *n*th paper is given by $n(n-1)/2$.⁴ Thus, the tenth paper produces 45 references and the 100th produces 4950. The expected accumulated reward is shown graphically in the figure.

Clearly this is the ideal situation and it will rarely be possible to realise this goal: despite a commitment to the principle of self citation, the content of manuscripts may prevent later citation. In this regard it is worth remembering that early publications should be kept very general with a view to later citation in progressively more specialised works.⁵

Recognising the burden on time and ingenuity of incorporating citations of one's earlier work into new manuscripts, we were motivated to develop Selfcite.

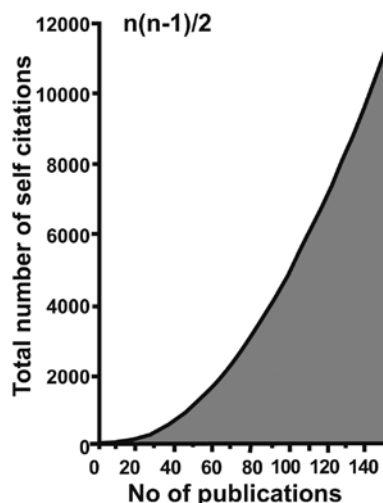
The Selfcite 2.0 package

Selfcite 2.0 is an integrated suite of programs that runs on IBM compatible personal computers under Windows and is compatible with the major word processing packages, reference managers, and online reference databases. A database within Selfcite stores details (including title, key words, and abstract) of each of the user's publications.

The program can be used in interactive mode or non-interactive mode. In interactive mode the user composes the text of a new manuscript and Selfcite makes context sensitive suggestions for citations of one's own work. The user can then select or reject suggestions. In the non-interactive mode Selfcite can be used to scan the final text of a manuscript and automatically insert self citations. The algorithm used to decide on inclusion of a citation involves assigning a score to each of the user's previous publications based on the similarity between words and phrases in the nascent manuscript and those used in the database record for previous publications. The user sets a threshold score that determines whether or not a citation will be inserted automatically in scan mode.

The package has several important features:

- *Maxicite* – this option maximises the number of self citations and can usually incorporate over 80% of the user's earlier work.
- *Megacite* – this option ensures inclusion of all one's previous papers and if necessary inserts them randomly into the text. We recommend that this option should be used only sparingly as reviewers and editors may notice that references do not have a crucial bearing on the text.
- *Minicite* – This option allows the user to choose the desired number of self citations for a given manuscript and the program selects those most appropriate.
- *Modesty* – This overrides the program and prevents self citations (not recommended for general use).
- *Multicite* – This allows multiple users to maximise the



Total potential number of self citations as a function of the number of publications

number of joint self citations. This is particularly useful for research groups.

- *Shaft* – A popular option introduced in version 2.0. It allows the user to specify one or more other researchers who should not be cited. A warning message flashes on the screen if one of the researchers in the shaft list is coauthor of a paper that the user is inadvertently trying to cite. The closest self citation is suggested as an alternative.
- *Paracite* – An extremely useful feature. The program deliberately miscites one's own earlier publication in the hope that another worker will write a letter to the journal pointing this out, thus allowing the user to publish a letter in reply, thereby providing further self citation opportunities. (The default setting is paracite=on but only once per manuscript.)
- *Citers-block* – The user decides on the references to be cited and the program offers suggestions for plausible passages of text to support their citation.
- *Stats* – This set of options provides statistics about the overall efficiency of the self citation process (total number of self citations divided by total number possible) and will present the data in graphical form. The algorithms monitor potential self citation classics and automatically increase their citation priority in the main part of the program.

Conclusion

We believe that self citation is currently handled inefficiently by most (but by no means all) researchers and that its correct use is beneficial to an academic's career. We have developed a user friendly package of programs that minimises the arduousness and maximises the benefit of the self citation process. We are confident that it will prove useful to researchers as well as to clinicians in training.

The current manuscript has been prepared using Selfcite 2.0 with multicite = on, minicite = 5, and shaft = global. Programs are available from the authors at: <http://www.onan.Selfcite>.

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Editing around the World

Brazilian scientific journals: an overview

Norah B Piccoli

Librarian, Editorial Assistant, *Jornal de Pediatria, Brazil*; jped@jped.com.br

Renato S Procianoy

Professor of Pediatrics, *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul*; Head of Newborn Section, *Hospital de Clinicas de Porto Alegre*; Editor-in-Chief, *Jornal de Pediatria, Brazil*; renatosp@terra.com.br

Brazil has a prominent position in scientific production among Latin American countries and is 23rd of the 31 countries that produced more than 98% of the world's highly cited papers in 1997–2001, defined by Thomson ISI as the most cited 1% by field and year of publication. The remaining 162 countries have a much less representative contribution (2%).¹

This position was achieved in great part due to the development of postgraduate programmes. Authors prefer to submit their articles to international journals with greater visibility and to national journals indexed in Medline and Thomson ISI databases, to meet the evaluation criteria of Brazilian research funding agencies, mainly the Federal Coordinating Agency for the Improvement of Higher Education (CAPES). According to these criteria, journals are classified in three categories: journals indexed in Medline that have a high impact factor (above the median impact factor in a given area) measured by Thomson Scientific's Journal Citation Reports (JCR); journals indexed in Medline that have a low impact factor in JCR (below the median impact factor in a given area); and journals indexed in Medline but not by ISI. Authors who publish in indexed journals will contribute a better evaluation to the postgraduate programmes of their institution.

The effort of Brazilian researchers led to an impressive growth of scientific production that can be measured by the number of articles that were published in indexed international journals. According to the National Science Indicators released by the Institute for Scientific Information in 2004, Brazil was 17th in the number of articles published in international journals indexed by ISI, with 13,328 articles (1.73% of the world's production). This represents a 604% growth in comparison to the 1891 articles published in 1981. Brazil was fifth among the countries with greatest growth in the number of articles published in international journals indexed by ISI from 1999 to 2004. In 1981, scientists from Brazil produced 33% of all articles from Latin America and 0.44% of the world articles published in international journals indexed by ISI. These numbers increased to 47% and 1.73% respectively in 2004.²

Medical journals

The good performance seen in general sciences can also be seen in the life sciences, where Brazil is the biggest Latin American producer, followed by Argentina. In clinical medicine, Brazil is on top in output and has the biggest citation impact of all other Latin American and Caribbean

countries.¹ In 1981, 322 Brazilian clinical medicine articles were published in international scientific journals—23% of clinical medicine articles from Latin America and 0.33% of all such articles published in the world. In 2004 the numbers of Brazilian medical articles grew to 2508, representing 54% of Latin American and 1.4% of world production.³

Publishing medical journals in Brazil is a recent activity—there were no medical journals before the beginning of the 20th century. Some journals disappeared after publishing only a few issues, but the most important publications are steady—the oldest journal, *Memórias do Instituto Oswaldo Cruz*, has been published since 1909, and 10 other journals were established before 1950. Medical journals are published by scholarly societies, medical schools, or research institutions aiming to document the scientific output and promote continuing medical education of professionals in different specialties. Of the 40 journals in the SciELO database, 36 are published by scholarly societies, two by medical schools, and two by research institutions.

Medical journals publish mainly original research articles, but also review articles and case reports. Almost all articles submitted for publication are peer-reviewed, with the exception of review articles written by invited specialists and those written by the editors.

In spite of Brazil's increasing importance as a science producer, most of its research is poorly visible due to language barriers.⁴ To reduce this problem, many journals are being published in English. Medical journals follow the same policy. Of the 20 Brazilian medical journals indexed in Medline, 10 are published in Portuguese, six in English, two in both languages, and two in Portuguese, English, and Spanish. Of the 40 journals indexed in the SciELO database 12 are published in Portuguese, eight in English, 11 in both languages, and nine in English, Portuguese, and Spanish. Most of the articles submitted to Brazilian journals need to be translated into the official language of the journal.

Shortage of financial resources is a concern of the editors, as journals have more and more expenses to maintain quality and follow new developments in technology, such as producing electronic editions. The cost of translations also takes a significant share of a journal's budget. The financing agencies on which the journals depend give preferential support to journals that are indexed in international databases. More than half of the journals indexed in SciELO receive financial support from governmental research funding institutions. Subscriptions and advertising also represent important sources of income.

Scientific production and indexing

International databases capture only a fraction of Brazilian growth in scientific research, since these databases are not comprehensive and do not intend to be. Thomson ISI, for example, indexes nearly 16,000 journals in more than 160 areas of knowledge. The 15 Brazilian journals represent 0.09% of all titles indexed by ISI.⁵ Brazil is a great science producer and would probably rank higher if more domestic journals were indexed.

The impact factor given by Thomson ISI is used increasingly to assess the quality of a journal, the excellence of institutions and their staff, and even the development of science in a country. The fact that just a few Brazilian journals are indexed in the ISI databases gives a distorted view of the country's scientific performance. Brazil has a number of high quality journals that publish important research that goes unrecognized because they are not blessed by ISI's acceptance. As a consequence, Brazilian authors prefer to submit their work to international journals, and citations to their works will be drawn to these journals. The problem is further complicated by the fact that in most of the cases, the research that produced the articles was financed by the Brazilian government. A larger, multidimensional picture of research in Latin America and the Caribbean would include local journals not indexed by ISI.¹ An attempt in this direction was made with the development of SciELO.

SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online) is a project developed by FAPESP (Foundation of Support to the Investigation in the State of São Paulo), BIREME (Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information), and editors of scientific journals. SciELO has three main objectives:

- To publish Brazilian journals electronically and with open access, so that the full-text articles could be freely accessed, which would bring national and international visibility to these journals;
- To improve the quality of Brazilian journals in respect to like relevance of the articles, rigor in the methodology, and careful presentation; and
- To create a bibliometric/scientometric database, affording indicators similar to those provided by ISI.⁵

SciELO's Consultant Committee selects journals to be included in the database according to the quality of the journal's scientific guidelines, its publishing board, periodicity, punctuality, number of articles during the year, and other criteria. To maintain the high level of the journals included, an Intelligent Consultant Committee is responsible for a continuous evaluation of the journals.³

The SciELO Project began in Brazil in 1997 and similar projects are being developed for all Latin American countries, including Mexico, and also in Spain and Portugal. A portal to integrate and provide access to the network of SciELO sites operates at <http://www.scielo.org>.

Another important regional database is LILACS (Literatura Latino-Americana e do Caribe em Ciências da Saúde; Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Literature), a cooperative database created by BIREME

that provides health sciences literature published in the region since 1982. It contains articles from 670 journals as well as theses, books, proceedings, scientific reports, and government publications.⁶ The main objectives of this database are bibliographic control and dissemination of Latin American and Caribbean scientific literature on health sciences, generally absent in international databases. LILACS covers the scientific literature of 25 countries.⁶

Of 40 Brazilian medical journals indexed in SciELO database, 20 are indexed in Medline and 6 by Thomson ISI, with others in EMBASE, SIIC, Scopus, Medical Research Index, CAB Abstracts, and Biological Abstracts.

In November 2006, 5051 scientific journals from more than 70 countries were indexed in Medline, with 13 countries from Latin America and Caribbean represented by 67 titles—led by Brazil with 32 titles (48%), Mexico with 12 (18%), and Argentina with 7 (10%).⁷

Final remarks

Overcoming financial difficulties, scientific production in Brazil is increasing both in quantity and quality. This performance is the result of the efforts of the researchers, research institutions, and universities that are determined to employ all the available resources for scientific development that will further contribute to the economic and social development of the country. Government policies that foster this development also have to be credited as they are essential to accomplish the research programmes.

Inclusion in international databases should provide more comprehensive coverage. High quality papers that are now submitted to international indexed journals would then be published in national journals, bringing to the country the recognition it deserves for its scientific contribution.

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Reports of Meetings

Council of Science Editors: 50th annual meeting

Austin, Texas, 20–22 May 2007

The Council of Science Editors (CSE) celebrated its 50th annual meeting this year. Before the main meeting, CSE offered its well-established two-day course for journal editors, a one-day course for manuscript editors, plus one-day courses on publication management and statistics. The main meeting attracted over 300 participants, predominantly from North America but including five scholarship recipients from Iraq, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Uganda. The increasing globalization of CSE was also reflected in this year's President, Ana Marusic, from the *Croatian Medical Journal*, who is the first person from outside North America or the United Kingdom to hold this position. Currently fewer than 10% of CSE's members are from outside North America, but one of Ana's aims during her term of office is to make it a truly global society.

The theme of the meeting was "The next 50 years: CSE in the digital world". Monica Bradford (the retiring President) commented that many editors feel part of the "sandwich generation". This term is usually used to describe people who care for both their young children and their elderly parents, but Monica suggested that most editors grew up in the era of paper and typewriters but have had to embrace the new technology and were thus sandwiched between two worlds.

Who needs editors?

Michael Keller, the publisher of HighWire Press from Stanford University, gave a provocative address entitled "Who needs editors and publishers?" and concluded that publishers and editors still play a vital role. He also noted that the role of librarians is increasingly important given the growth of indexing, cross-linking, and the need to search the growingly disparate literature, which he described as "information chaos". He also predicted that blogs will develop into a useful adjunct to established journals, providing space for "work in progress" communications and perhaps helping identify peer reviewers.

The keynote talk was followed by parallel sessions on large-scale marketing (consortia and site licenses), the changing roles of editors with emerging technologies and globalization, the future of print (cultural and technical influences), and common data standards and protocols for interoperability (which I attended). This session addressed issues of data sharing and the role of databases for research output such as gene sequences, which are increasingly forming part of the scientific literature.

Different cultures

In the afternoon there were further parallel sessions on training non-native-English-speaking editors, delivery modes of

the future (audio, podcasts, and blogs), and detecting image manipulation. The session about training editors covered cultural aspects of editing, with Tom Lang (a trainer from California who has worked in Japan and China) suggesting that one role of training was to give editors permission to make changes.

Mauricio Rocha e Silva from the Brazilian Association of Science Editors described the Latin American culture, in which criticism can appear close to an insult and where reviewers and editors may be reluctant to reject papers for fear of appearing disrespectful. During the discussion, James Tumwine from Uganda noted that although English is not a problem in many African countries, editors there are often faced with poor science and not just poor reporting—training in research methodology is therefore essential.

Holding the keys

The second day started with a plenary lecture from Colin Humphreys, who is Professor of Materials Science at Cambridge (UK). In just under an hour he managed to provide fascinating insights into the growth of China as a technological power, the impact of new materials on global warming, and new techniques for overcoming water shortages. He believes that science holds the key to many of the world's problems and that the role of science editors has never been more important, since it is vital that complex scientific messages are communicated accurately to the public and politicians.

Editors' choices

After the plenary, the meeting again split into parallel sessions on the influence of changes in technology on publishing business models, the psychology/sociology of editorial decision-making, the changing workplace, and how to use Office 2007. The session on the psychology of decision-making was led by Arthur Markman from the University of Texas in Austin. He applied current psychological theories to explain the ways editors behave and provided examples to show how subjective our decision-making can be and how we may be influenced by some surprising factors which often prevent us from acting rationally.

The afternoon sessions focused on the current status of open access, the role of science journals in promoting capacity development in the developing world (with speakers including Phyllis Freeman and Anthony Robbins from AuthorAid, who spoke at the Krakow EASE meeting in 2006—see *ESE* 33(1):9–10), and the implications of STIX fonts.

One of the problems of the CSE meeting is choosing between different sessions; I opted to hear CSE's Editorial

Policy Committee present the findings from their recent survey aimed at discovering how editors handle ethical issues. The survey presented 16 scenarios with multiple-choice options to indicate how an editor might react. It covered issues such as alleged data fabrication, manipulated photographic images, and redundant publication. There was surprisingly little consensus about what editors would do in many circumstances, suggesting that guidelines (such as the COPE flowcharts – see *ESE* 33(1):18) could be helpful.

Exciting possibilities

The third day saw parallel sessions on commercial versus self-publishing (for academic societies), Word™ tips for editors, and how the public domain will revolutionize science and medicine. For once, this was an easy choice for me and the session subtitled Open Access 2.0 was one of the best I attended. We heard from passionate open-access advocate Gavin Yamey, from the Public Library of Science (PLOS), and also had our eyes opened to exciting possibilities for networking data. John Wilbanks from Science Commons concluded that the scientific literature is getting too big for humans to search and therefore encouraged journals to work towards machine readable or tagged articles accessible for text mining. Chris Surridge described how *PLoS One* enables static journal articles to evolve into dynamic products with opportunities for readers to comment and to add information and links, creating a “Wiki”.

The final parallel sessions covered expanding markets in Asia and Africa, predictions for the future, and how editors can promote editorial research. The latter session focused on what editors can do to detect and prevent publication misconduct, rather than the broader topic of peer-review

research (which, personally I was hoping for) but included presentations from journals as diverse as the *Journal of Economic Psychology*, *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, the *Croatian Medical Journal*, and *JAMA* (the journal of the American Medical Association). For me, the most interesting aspects were hearing about automatic systems for checking references (available from Inera Inc) and a major initiative from CrossRef (which provides links between journal articles) to use their database as part of anti-plagiarism systems. This isn't exactly journalology, but shows how important it is for editors to keep abreast of new tools that might help them do a better job.

Catching up

Between the many sessions, CSE always schedules generous breaks (with the usual opportunities for serious caffeine and calorie intake). These provide a nice chance to meet old friends, make new ones, and carry on discussions started in the more formal meetings. CSE is an excellent meeting for catching up with North American editors. Despite the name change (from Council of Biology Editors), biomedicine still predominates. It was good to see some representatives from the worlds of physics, mathematics, and chemistry, and I hope that these sciences (and the earth sciences) will increasingly be represented on the speaker list as well. Next year's meeting will be on 16–20 May 2008 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Liz Wager

Publications Consultant, Sideview, Princes Risborough, UK
liz@sideview.demon.co.uk

First National Conference on Medical Editing in Pakistan

Rawalpindi, April 23–25 2007

Like a trout jumping up and down a pond, we from Shiraz, southern Iran, went up and down the map—to Tehran to Dubai to Islamabad—to reach Rawalpindi, where the Pakistan Army Medical College in collaboration with the Pakistan Medical Journalists Association (PMJA) and the Pakistan National University of Science and Technology (NUST) held the first ever conference on medical editing in Pakistan. The conference was supported by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan.

There were more than 100 participants, some of whom were from outside Pakistan: one from WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) in Cairo; four from the neighbouring country, Iran; one from Saudi Arabia; and one from the United Arab Emirates. Several journals were represented: the *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*, the *International Journal of Pathology*, the *Journal of the Dow University of Health Sciences*, *Anaesthesia, Pain and Intensive Care*, and the *Pakistan Armed Forces Medical Journal*.

Toes in the water

Different aspects of biomedical journalism and editing—including medical editing in countries of the region, peer review, publication ethics, indexing systems, impact factor, e-journalism, plagiarism, falsification, and scientific misconduct—were discussed during the conference. The lack of time meant that none of these topics were explored in depth—just a toe in water.

The participants, mainly involved in biomedical editing in one capacity or another, agreed upon the need to take action against duplicate publication and plagiarism, which are not uncommon in the region; to establish a national code of publication ethics; to arrange training programmes for editors; and to include courses on medical writing and research methodology at an undergraduate level in Pakistani medical schools. Delegates were told of the mission and vision of the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) and Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors

(EMAME), and how to access the listserv discussions and resources of these associations.

The third way

For me, there were two important points worth mentioning. Firstly, when talking to participants it was noticeable how they had picked up the main concepts of the lectures and talks and applied them to their own situation and context. Secondly, even though the organizing committee had no experience in running such a conference, everything ran smoothly. As the chairman of the conference organizing committee and the principal of the Army Medical College, Major General Muhammad Aslam, said: "There are three ways to do a thing—the right way, the wrong way, and the military way!" Considering

the situation, I believe that it was indeed military discipline that made it possible to arrange things so well—they ran the conference in the third way!

Although a date was not set for a second meeting, most of the participants indicated that they would participate in the fourth regional conference on medical journalism in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, to be held in Bahrain in early 2008.

Finally, this report would not be complete without mentioning how hot and spicy the food was!

Farrokh Habibzadeh

Director-at-Large, WAME;

Chairman, Editorship Committee, EMAME

habibzaf@ams.ac.ir

Fifth World Conference of Science Journalists

Melbourne, 16–20 April 2007

This conference, which was hosted by the Australian Science Communicators with the World Federation of Science Journalists and the Australasian Medical Writers' Association, was essentially (and of course) about science journalists reporting science.

To quote Niyall Byrne, the Conference Director: "We want to help connect science journalists across the world. Science news is global ..." This aim was achieved—the conference was attended by about 600 delegates from developed and developing countries around the world.

There were 46, 90-minute presentations and workshops; the speakers were eminent and eloquent. During Tuesday–Thursday, there were four sessions each day with a choice of four or five presentations at each session—and nine sponsored breakfast briefings; eight sponsored lunch briefings; three satellite meetings; two public forums; five evening receptions, and a choice of six tours to places of relevance and interest.

Science editing for journalists

Although the role of science editors and science editing was somewhat peripheral to the conference, many aspects of editing were included in the array of workshops and presentations. A science-editing workshop attended by some 70 delegates and comprising two 90-minute sessions run by Janet Salisbury (Biotext Science Information Consultants) was a satellite event. Editing versus rewriting was addressed during the first session. The presenters, Linda Worland, Kathie Stove, and Daniel Park, instigated a lively discussion about the fine dividing line between substantive editing and rewriting. They pointed out that editors should "first, do no harm", but can enhance recorded knowledge and value from scientific discovery. All editors (not just science editors) should have a passion for clarity; confidence in their ability; processing power (be able to handle large amounts of data);

ability to create a clear, durable end product; and market awareness. Types of authors and the need for diplomacy were also discussed. It was agreed that the best advertising for freelance editors was in doing a good job, and that satisfaction is in the editing itself and not necessarily in any external recognition.

Editing associations—an Australian view

The presenters of the second session (Rob Morrison, Daniel Park, Suzannah Lyons, and Basil Walby) questioned whether an Australasian Science Style Guide is needed, and if so, what it should include and how it could be produced. One suggestion was to develop an online style guide that could be accessed through the ASC website, or even a "Wiki" where there could be ongoing contributions and suggestions. The presenters asked whether a science editors' chapter of the Australian Science Communicators (ASC) should be formed or even an Australasian Science Editors Association.

Basil Walby (bjwalby@hotmail.com) prepared a brief overview of editors and editing associations. Historically, science editors in Australasia have depended for training and development upon experience gained overseas, and support from organizations in Europe and in the USA, such as the European Association of Science Editors (EASE), the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP), the Council of Science Editors (CSE), and the Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP). An attempt to remedy this situation was initiated at a three-day residential workshop organized by the University of New England and CSIRO Publishing in July 1982. At the conclusion of that workshop, the delegates resolved to create science editors' associations in Australia and New Zealand. Nothing came of this resolution in Australia, but New Zealand successfully formed an association of science communicators that

published a newsletter until about 1988. In 1986, a National Forum on Publishing in the Natural and Social Sciences was held and produced much useful data on the size of the industry and described the problems facing science communicators.

This conference has provided journalists the opportunity to re-examine the issue as technological changes affect science authors, publishers, and editors. This session enabled participants to consider the need for either a regional association of science editors or a special interest group within an existing body such as the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd) or an Australasian chapter of EASE.

Ethical dilemmas

The challenges of ethical dilemmas in today's progressive, multicultural, and globally aware society featured prominently in the presentations. Climate change and sustainability, water supply throughout the world, medical research, the nuclear debate, stem cells, and public health were included. Ethics, biasing of scientific information, and investigating scientific fraud were discussed. The responsibility of scientists, governments, and global society

to contribute to finding viable solutions to the dilemmas that face our fragile, shrinking planet was considered. Presentations and workshops about communication strategies, creating clear science messages, and writing plain English were available. Janet Salisbury presented a further "Introduction to Science Editing" workshop. The exponentially expanding use of digital media and the worldwide web were also brought to our attention.

The conference was a week full of challenge, and the general consensus was that it had been extraordinarily successful. My overall impression (and I admit bias) is that editors, whatever the genre to which they contribute, provide the invisible glue that smoothes out and vitalizes the process of knowledge creation to knowledge translation to knowledge publication.

Estelle Longfield

ejledit@optusnet.com.au

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The time has come...



From the Literature

Future visions for biology and medical journals?

Two papers have recently predicted how molecular biology and medical journals might evolve. Interestingly, the authors (working independently of each other) propose similar visions of the future.

Michael Seringhaus and Mark Gerstein from Yale University predict what they call “tomorrow’s information architecture”.¹ They note that molecular biology is based on facts that are “inherently suited to database storage” and that this has led to the proliferation of databases for information such as gene sequences and protein structures. But such databases are currently not integrated with traditional articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Seringhaus and Gerstein say that journals should evolve to exploit the opportunities of modern electronic publishing. They note that “this means more than online access to articles, hyperlinked references and web-based supplemental data”.

Traditional journal articles were designed to be read by humans, and the conventional text-based format limits the type and amount of information they can contain. Relying on text also makes automatic text mining difficult. The team from Yale says that journals need to embrace the new technology and make articles readable by computers. Depositing results in a suitable databank should be a condition of publication and biology journals should provide “structured digital abstracts” consisting of machine-readable (XML) summaries. Also, authors should write short lay summaries of their work to accompany their main article.

A few months earlier (and unaware of the paper from Yale) I published an essay on the future of publishing clinical trials.² Like Seringhaus and Gerstein I commented on the fact that the format of papers had hardly changed in the last 50 years, and I also considered the possibility of electronic posting of results. One of the new types of databases influencing medical publishing is the trial register (see *ESE* 2006;32(3):66–67). I suggested that articles reporting clinical trials should link to trial registers, and called for international agreement on a standardized method of reporting trials electronically. While I did not go so far as to suggest that this should be machine-readable (although I now think this is an interesting idea), the idea of a standard format for posting results is a similar concept to Seringhaus and Gerstein’s structured digital abstract. I also suggested that journals might provide versions for consumers (again, similar to the suggestions for biology).

Another aspect of biomedical publishing noted by both papers as likely to change was authorship. For molecular biology, the Yale authors propose that contributions to databases should be recognised by a consistent citation system. For clinical trials, I noted that, if electronic results summaries become the norm, then authorship of traditional papers may become less important, while contributions to trial reports may attract greater recognition. Traditional systems of allocating authorship are firmly embedded into systems for measuring research productivity and rewarding researchers. Therefore, if new methods of results dissemination evolve, these academic reward systems may need to be rethought.

The American authors set out a clear and exciting vision of the future and set down some challenges to everybody involved in biological research and publishing. I would have liked some more ideas about how such new systems might be funded and some more discussion about the barriers to this vision becoming a reality. In my own essay, I mention the social, commercial and political factors which explain why, although data sharing is a technological possibility, it is resisted by many researchers. Perhaps the world of molecular biology is more advanced (or less commercially entangled) than that of medicine (although I doubt it) - but it will be interesting to see whether any of our predictions come true and, if they do, how long this will take. In the meantime, I hope we have given journal editors food for thought. Given the apparent similarities between molecular biology and medicine, perhaps this is also an area where editors could learn from the practices of those in other disciplines.

Liz Wager

liz@sideview.demon.co.uk

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EASE-Forum Digest: March–June 2007

When do people work?

Mary Ellen Kerans wanted to know when to expect answers back from authors who had been sent manuscripts for publication and lived in far-off places. Contributors to the forum responded with examples of the national and religious holidays throughout the world. Vietnam shuts down for the month of February for Tet (Terry Clayton). Offices in continental Europe can also be sparsely populated in February, when people with school-age children go away for ski week. The end of April/early May is golden week in Japan and usually taken as a holiday (Carol Goldsmith). November is usually Ramadan for Muslims but they carry on working except for the days at the end for celebration. Italy closes down throughout August for summer vacations (Judy Baggott). In Poland the first week in May is generally taken as a holiday (Aleksandra Golebiowska).

Added to this, different cultures have different new years, weekends vary (even within one town, as Liz Wager experienced in Cairo), and working hours are also culturally defined. It's a globalization nightmare but the tools of globalization can come to the rescue. Stefano Mizzaro suggested googling to find out holiday times in different countries (<http://www.google.com/search?q=calendar+holiday>).

Marge Berer didn't think culture mapping would be of any help to Mary Ellen anyway. Authors, regardless of their location, either answer within 24 hours or are less organized (or, I venture to suggest, have some other priorities in life) and take time off from their computers for illness, holidays, meetings, etc. Marge suggested authors should be given a time limit for replies and an opportunity to negotiate if they needed longer.

Terry Clayton added that professionals in Southeast Asia are uncomfortable with the immediacy of emails because written communication is taken seriously. They agonise over putting words into writing, which is regarded as a commitment. On the other hand, they all have mobile phones which they never turn off. Phoning is therefore a more effective method of quick communication, even at weekends, when business telephone calls are not considered an intrusion on "private" time.

Open access: the debate again

Amanda Whiting of the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP) drew attention to an editorial by Rick Anderson in the April issue of *Learned Publishing* that raises some questions about the costs of open access (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1087/174148507X183542>), which have to be balanced against the benefits. Signatures in support of the editorial are being collected at http://www.alpsp.org/ngen_public/article.asp?aid=723. Sylwia Ufnalska agreed that costs and benefits should be compared but felt that Anderson had neglected some important aspects:

- Money saved by universities and other subscribers will probably be spent on research.
- Money saved on paper and printing can also be redirected to research.
- Thanks to open access, researchers in poorer countries have access to more data, reducing the disparity between rich and poor countries in part.

Ian Russell, chief executive of ALPSP, responded to these points:

- Money saved would probably go to "author-pays" fees.
- Money saved on paper and printing arise when a journal goes online only, which is independent of open access because subscription journals can also be online only.
- The bigger issue is the developing world's poor access to IT infrastructure hindering access to online journals. The "author pays" model would need to generate enough money from those who can pay to subsidize those who cannot (as happens under the subscription model).

Sylwia Ufnalska replied:

- The best solution would be direct grants to publishers rather than authors having to pay.
- Online-only formats favoured by open access journals are cheaper and costs can be covered more easily.
- All universities in poor countries have internet access. Providing free access to all journals would be cheaper than sending printed copies of selected journals.

Karen Shashok drew attention to a statement from not-for-profit publishers on the principles of free access to science at www.dcpinciples.org and reactions to *Nature's* article on the economic hurdles faced by the Public Library of Science on Declan Butler's personal blog at <http://declanbutler.info/blog/?p=43>.

She thought that something of great value must be under threat, with so many publishers and organizations banding together against open access, and alluded to the apparent overlap among the supporters of the Brussels Declaration, the ALPSP statement "Open access—clear benefits, hidden costs", the members of the Publishing Research Consortium (who claim to support unbiased data and objective analysis of topics in scholarly communication), and potential clients of a "public relations pit bull" hired to influence public opinion against open access (according to Jim Giles' article in the 24 January 2007 issue of *Nature*). Rather than hold back open access, which seems to be working, Karen said it might be better to look for ways to make it work more efficiently.

Sally Morris drew attention to a review by Ian Craig and others entitled "Do open access articles have greater citation impact?" available on www.publishingresearch.net. She said that the article showed that the relation between open

access and citation almost disappeared when "selection bias" and "early view" effects were taken into account and the effects of disciplinary differences and publication date were controlled for.

Disadvantaged in English

I asked forum subscribers for information about whether scientists whose first language is not English are willing to accept that they need to write in English and have a strong feeling of being disadvantaged (eg in getting articles published), and how they are being helped. Thank you to all those people who wrote to me for the interesting feedback I received. The consensus was that these scientists accept that they have to write in English to be widely read, and because of the increasing reliance on publications indexed in Science Citation Index—few of which are published in languages other than English—for judging a scientist's performance. An obvious disadvantage is that these authors either write in their own language and need to pay for translations, or they write in English and need to pay for an author's editor to check the English. Sometimes the cost is met by their institutions or from research grants, but very often they have to pay themselves. Lorna O'Brien suggested that institutions in non-English speaking countries could help authors by establishing links with suppliers of editing/language services.

In small countries where the native language is primarily spoken only by inhabitants of that country (eg in Finland as pointed out by Carol Norris), there is a stronger incentive to learn English, reinforced by higher education often being conducted in English and exposure to English TV and films that have subtitles in the native language rather than being dubbed into that language. However, the number of people speaking the native language is not the only factor. History is another. In India many speakers of Hindi are growing up speaking English. Yateen Joshi reported that schools in Mumbai and Pune offering instruction in English are greatly sought after, while those offering instruction in Marathi find it increasingly difficult to attract students. Where English has not been taught in schools, eg in Eastern Europe during the Communist era, Sylwia Ufnalska confirmed that the current generation is greatly disadvantaged.

Elisabeth Heseltine referred to the help authors are receiving through the AuthorAID project (ESE 33(1):9–10) and two programmes she is involved in. One of these is financed by the US National Cancer Institute and is run by the International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research (www.inctr.be) and the other is financed by the Inter-Academy Medical Panel. The first runs workshops for participants from developing countries around the world, and the second concentrates on African countries.

As for the possibility of help through translation software, Mary Ellen Kerans stressed the distinction between computer assisted translation (CAT) and machine translation (MT). CAT is a searchable corpus of validated

translations which a human translator uses to produce consistently high-quality translation from idiosyncratic texts—such as research articles tend to be. With MT a draft is produced electronically, which a human translator brings up to publication standard by making sure terminology is accurate, style is followed, and nothing stupid has crept in.

From her experience with bilingual publication Mary Ellen explained that bilingual publication of science strives to bring a whole community of scientists closer to the center of discourse and at the same time reinforces autochthonous language scientific activity and thereby strengthens higher education in that language—whereas individuals' learning to publish in the lingua franca is something individuals competing for elite positions do as individuals. When a society goes heavily in that direction, eg Arab-speaking communities where the educated elite are Francophone or English-speaking, it runs the risk that the best scientific minds might not always be in the most advantaged classes and also that clinical science is two-tiered, well informed about knowledge being produced everywhere or not well informed.

Harvey Shenker from Hungry felt there was still a strong bias against acceptance for publication from his part of the world, even without the often specious remarks from journal editors and reviewers. John Benfield reported that his data from the *Annals of Thoracic Surgery* indicate that the disadvantage is not in the incidence of ultimate publication but rather in the need to revise manuscripts. Another disadvantage was the inability of authors whose first language is not English to say what they want to say as well as a "native speaker" would say it or as well as they would say it in their own language. This is a particular problem when addressing controversial matters or subtleties.

The information collected in this article has been included in Langdon-Neuner E. Let them write English. *Revista do Colégio Brasileiro de Cirurgiões* 2007 (in press).

Joining the forum

You can join the forum by sending the one-line message "subscribe ease-forum" (without the quotation marks) to majordomo@helsinki.fi. Be sure to send commands in plain text format because only plain text is accepted by the forum software, e.g. HTML formatted messages are not recognised. More information can be found on the EASE website (www.ease.org.uk).

Elise Langdon-Neuner (compiler)

langdoe@baxter.com

Discussion initiators

Mary Ellen Kerans: mekerans@telefonica.net

Amanda Whiting: training@alpsp.org

Viewpoints

International Journal of Marine Sciences *Acta Adriatica*—75th anniversary

Seventy five years have passed since the publication of the first issue of International Journal of Marine Sciences *Acta Adriatica*. Political and administrative circumstances have changed many times during that period, and so has the appearance of the journal. However, the main publication goal of *Acta Adriatica* has remained unchanged: to publish scientific papers of many disciplines that aid in our understanding of the Adriatic Sea, as well as of the Mediterranean.

Initially each issue featured a single article. Since the 20th volume (1979) the Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries in Split, Croatia, has published two issues per year. So far a total of 701 articles written by 686 authors have been published, including some reviews, notes, and introductory articles. In addition, the journal has published papers presented at national and international meetings held in Split.

For the 75th anniversary we prepared a cumulative list of all the articles. It was not an easy task because in its long history the journal's publication style changed several times. The list has been unified as much as possible. Sixty per cent of the published articles deal predominantly with biology, 18% with issues important to commercial fishing, 14% with physics, and 8% with chemistry and pollution.

The journal's language policy has changed over time. At the first, papers were published in the main international languages of the time: French, English, and German. In the 1960s and 1970s the government preferred the use of the Croatian language, with summaries in an international language. From the 1980s, English was the rule, with a few exceptions in French. At present English is the official language of publication. In all, more than 70% of the articles have been published in English.

The greater diversity of authors' nationalities over time also shows the progress of the scope of the journal, from local to international. Though authors from outside Croatia had been published from the very beginning, in the past decade they wrote almost half of the papers. They come mostly from the Mediterranean (Egypt, Italy, Turkey,

France, Malta, Lebanon, Israel, and Spain), but also from the UK, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Romania, former Czechoslovakia, Hungary, USA, Argentina, India, Senegal, Japan, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates.

Acta Adriatica is a scientific journal supported by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education, and Sports and therefore functions on an exchange basis with over 350 institutions and individuals worldwide.

Because of world globalization, scientific standards of professional titles are becoming unified. To offer the scientists who submit their papers to *Acta Adriatica* a better service, we started to give open access to our web pages (www.izor.hr/acta/eng) in 1999.

The contents of *Acta Adriatica* are listed in Aquatic Science & Fisheries Abstracts, Zoological Record Agricola, CAB Abstracts, Georeference, Water Resources Abstracts, Oceanic Abstracts, Pollution Abstracts, Dialog and Referativnij Zhurnal, Fish & Fisheries Worldwide produced by NISC South Africa, DOAJ, Scopus, and Hrcak.

The status of the journal has been measured in relation to other scientific journals specializing in marine sciences, particularly from the Adriatic and the Mediterranean.¹ Among 54 journals analyzed, *Acta Adriatica* is 12th with respect to the number of citations of its articles in the most relevant secondary publications—databases. An analysis of citations of articles from *Acta Adriatica* in Science Citation Index during 1970–2000 is under way; it has found that, compared to 119 Croatian scientific journals in all fields except medicine, *Acta Adriatica* ranks second.

Jakov Dulčić, Anita Marušić, Dijana Čelić
Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries,
 POB 500, 21000 Split, Croatia
dulcic@izor.hr

1. Jokić M. Seventy years of *Acta Adriatica*. *Acta Adriatica* 1998;39(1):81-90.

Alice, mustard, and ornamental writing

Do you remember Lewis Carroll's (1865) *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and the conversation between Alice and the Duchess about flamingos and mustard? This is one of my favourites—and a useful lesson about scientific writing.

After some discussion with the Duchess on what mustard is, Alice figures it is a vegetable. The Duchess, as always, agrees with Alice, and adds her moral from this: "Be what you would seem to be." But then, she puts it "more simply"—"Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might

have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise."

Does this not remind you of something that every science editor has come across during his or her editorial work? It perfectly shows how sometimes science authors like to write in a very puzzling way; sometimes it is not so obvious they haven't done that on purpose. Making a sentence incomprehensible, with a bit of luck, may help deliver a simply message in a very "clever" way—at least that is what such authors think.

This is not the best way of writing scientific reports, but it seems to be quite common among authors who wish to ornament their results and writing with wordiness. First of all, the results (if they are valuable) should ornament themselves; and second, wordiness is not what ornaments writing—it is what makes writing incomprehensible, uneasy, and unpleasant. I know this from my own experience as an author—not once has my writing been called wordy.

Some author, of course, write in a wordy manner because they do not have the skill to write otherwise; they may also not have put enough attention into learning the language. “But you don’t have to be a genius to write clear, effective English,” says Thomas Kane in the *Oxford Essential Guide to Writing* (2003). These are useful words, even though I am not sure Kane also has non-native English speakers in mind. Maybe we for whom English is a foreign or a second language have to be geniuses to write “clear, effective

English”? I do not know the answer to this question, but Kane adds, “You just have to understand what writing involves and to know how to handle words and sentences and paragraphs.” This is encouraging and inspiring. And scientists, who are assumed to be on a high intellectual level (I am not claiming that they are the highest among human beings), should possess a level of writing skills to satisfactorily write “clear, effective English”, shouldn’t they?

But after Alice has given her “more simple” explanation, the Duchess adds, “That’s nothing to what I could say if I chose.” Every “clever” sentence may be “cleverer”, which is certainly not a consolation for an editor.

Marcin Kozak

Department of Biometry, Warsaw Agricultural University

m.kozak@omega.sggw.waw.pl

Why use MeSH headings in the editorial process?

The use of MeSH headings (the subject headings of the National Library of Medicine in Medline) is generally associated with indexing and retrieval. But using MeSH headings in the initial steps of the editorial process should be highly recommended in order to improve article quality. This would benefit authors, editors, referees, indexers, and readers.

- **Authors** are the first actors in the editorial chain who might properly select the terms that best describe their articles (MeSH terms are available online in several languages).
- **Journal editors** should recommend the use of MeSH terms in their Instructions to Authors. This would allow the creation of a sound database of articles and organize the referees’ database using MeSH terms (the same as those provided by the authors).

- **Referees** should pay attention to the key words indicated by authors.
- **Readers** seeking articles would find the most appropriate hits.
- **Indexers** would be facilitated in their work.

This concept might be developed in educational programmes.

In June 2006 I discussed these topics during a workshop to promote the Italian translation of MeSH headings that was carried out by the Istituto Spueriore di Sanità.

Paola De Castro

paola.decastro@iss.it

Sponsorship Scheme

Application for sponsorship is open to anyone in countries with currency exchange problems or some other form of financial constraint. Each application must be supported by a statement of need; if the application is successful, the applicant’s subscription (half the full membership rate) is paid for the year by another member of EASE. Applications for sponsorship are welcomed at any time, as indeed are offers of sponsorship from current members. If you know of anyone who might fit this category and benefit from membership of EASE, please bring the scheme to their attention and ask them to contact Sheila at the Secretariat (secretary@ease.org.uk). Offers to sponsor would also be welcome.

Book Reviews

George M Hall (ed). **How to Present at Meetings**. 2nd ed. BMJ Books. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007. x, 75p. Paperback. ISBN 1-4051-3985-4

How to Present at Meetings is one of the titles in the BMJ/Blackwell Publishing “How to” series. The second edition has been fully revised and is an ideal practical guide for healthcare professionals, clinical researchers, and others involved in preparing and giving presentations. The format of the book is such that it is a valuable source of key points for those new to giving presentations and also a useful aide-mémoire for the experienced presenter—something one can “dip in and out of”. The contributors include well known people from the worlds of medicine and the media.

How to Present at Meetings covers the essential parts of a presentation, including preparing the talk, visual aids, and computer-generated slides. In addition, the book provides some very helpful information on the principles of communication and advice on selling a message, appearing on stage, and dealing with the difficult questions. Each chapter is concise and ends with a helpful summary section comprising key “take home messages” and reminder points.

Some chapters are particularly useful in today’s world of new media and PowerPoint. One focuses on visual aids, an essential feature of clinical presentations, and emphasizes the need to ensure that figures, tables, and videos are easy for the audience to read and follow in the time allowed during the presentation. Another focuses on computer-generated slides, which are used universally for medical

meetings and can help the presenter produce perfectly timed presentations that capture the attention of the audience. However, as pointed out, it is important to consider the technical aspects, such as ensuring that the projector correctly interfaces with the presenter’s laptop, that good colour combinations have been used on the slides, that special effects (text/image build up, for example) are used carefully, and that the computer has enough memory for digital photographs or videos to be incorporated into the presentation.

The book concludes with a helpful chapter on successfully chairing a session. Often the first meeting one chairs is a small, local meeting with speakers whom you know. In offering advice, the book takes the reader through an interesting scenario which is based on a half-day symposium at a large prestigious world congress in an area the chairperson is familiar but not an expert. The chapter then sets out the key principles and timing from the moment the chairperson accepts the role to the conclusion of the meeting.

The updated edition of *How to Present at Meetings* is a helpful guide to have at hand, whether you are new to giving presentations or an experienced presenter.

Kathryn A H Orchard
ese@dunascripts.com

Correction

When we published this book review in the last issue, the italics that denote the words of the book’s title shown in grey on the book’s cover got lost. We hope the same has not happened again in this reprinting of the review.

Susie Dent. **The language report**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. x, 164 p. Hardback. £0.99. ISBN 0-19-920766-6 [978 0 19 920766 4].

In *European Science Editing* 32(1), I reviewed the third of Susie Dent’s annual surveys of changes in English; this is the successor volume which has dropped a first part from its title (although the dust jacket does read “The *like*, Language Report *for real*”, with the words I have put in italics in grey). It continues the format of the previous volume and has less of immediate interest to the scientific editor, though the chapter on “Attitudes and platitudes: our changing usage” does show how some new forms we would state to be

straight errors (“would of” for “would have”, for example) may in time become more accepted. Thus we now seem less worried by “straight-laced” for “strait-laced” (which occurred in 66% of recorded usages).

This book will interest and amuse those wanting a snapshot of how the language is being used today.

John Glen
john_glen@jgla.demon.co.uk

The Editors' WebWatch

The Editors' WebWatch is a membership-driven resource guiding editors and writers in the sciences to websites and services of interest. Suggestions for the November issue should be sent to ese.webwatch@gmail.com. We are also using the Editor's Bookshelf blog at <http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com> to collect entries. You can join the blog posters by contacting paola.decastro@iss.it. We look forward to your contributions.

Microsoft Office 2007 and OpenXML

http://blogs.msdn.com/brian_jones/
<http://blogs.msdn.com/murrays/>

Buying a new computer? Should you upgrade to Windows Vista and Office 2007? The answer at the moment, at least for people copy-editing scientific manuscripts, seems to be "not yet". This has even made it to the national press, with the news that neither *Nature* nor *Science* will accept papers in Microsoft's new .docx format: <http://technology.guardian.co.uk/online/insideit/story/0,,2096779,00.html>

At first glance this is surprising. The new format is based on XML (<http://www.w3.org/XML/> - described by the World Wide Web Consortium as "designed to meet the challenges of large-scale electronic publishing"), and big scientific publishers use XML for at least some of their workflow. But what Microsoft had in mind was an XML format that would faithfully represent the innards of Word documents, certainly not one that would work easily with familiar XML technology like MathML (which, as the name suggests, represents mathematics)—hence the trouble that NPG and AAAS are having.

Murray Sargent, a developer at Microsoft, gives Microsoft's side of the story on his blog: <http://blogs.msdn.com/murrays/archive/2007/06/05/science-and-nature-have-difficulties-with-word-2007-mathematics.aspx>

If you're working on the technical side of publishing, this blog and Brian Jones's blog (see above) are two you will have to follow.

Finally, Howard Ratner, the chief technology officer at NPG, explains

"why Word 2007 is not being actively endorsed by STM publishers":

http://blogs.nature.com/wp/nascent/2007/06/word_2007_and_the_stm_publishe.html

Blogs and aggregation

Remaining in the blogosphere, I've had Matt Hodgkinson Barrett of BMC's *Journalology* (<http://journalology.blogspot.com/>) drawn to my attention. Like the original, and most comprehensive, Peter Suber's *Open Access News* (<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/fosblog.html>), *Journalology* is one of the many open access advocacy blogs, all picking over the same items of news.

Faced with the profusion of blogs that are saying similar things, one of the most exciting developments in the blogosphere is aggregators, especially in the life and chemical sciences. *Postgenomic* (<http://www.postgenomic.com/>), developed by Nature Publishing Group, collects its posts from hundreds of science blogs and puts them in order by subject.

An intriguing spinoff has been developed by chemist Egon

Willighagen. It's called *Chemical Blogspace* (<http://blueobelisk.sourceforge.net/cb/>).

There are all sorts of ways of mining chemical blogs through this website, but the most interesting is sorting posts by molecule (see illustration). This relies on some clever HTML trickery which is probably beyond the typical blogger. They need a better blogging tool for chemists.

A scholarly electronic publishing bibliography

<http://www.digital-scholarship.com/sepb/sepb.html>

Rather more low-tech is the *Scholarly Electronic Publishing Bibliography* compiled by Charles W Bailey, Jr, which is rather like our Editor's Bookshelf and concentrates on the "changing system of academic scientific communication".

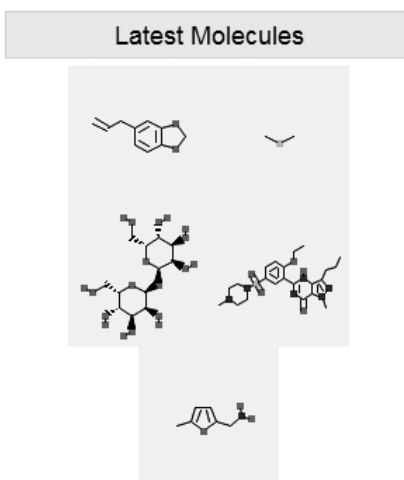
Open access in medical publishing

<http://www.openmedicine.ca/>
 Finally, I should mention a new peer reviewed open access journal from Canada, *Open Medicine*. It describes its mission as "to facilitate the equitable dissemination of high-quality health research; to promote international dialogue and collaboration on health issues; to improve clinical practice; and to expand and deepen the understanding of health and health care."

It's interesting to see a medical journal that doesn't accept advertising from for-profit pharmaceutical or medical device companies. (See also p 86.)

Thanks to Liz Wager and Paola de Castro.

Colin Batchelor
 BatchelorC@rsc.org



News Notes

Looking at impact factors

The *BMJ* devoted its 17 March issue to the impact factor. One article looks at the development of the measure and its importance for editors (2007;334:561–564). A debate article describes impact factors as, on one hand, “so seriously debased that only the naive could attach any value”; their proponent says that they “might save the planet”, though, because they encourage quality and less waste (pp 568–569). Satirical advice for new editors argues that impact factors are for “people who prefer a number to thinking for themselves” (p 586).

Copyediting is essential

Copyediting and proofreading alters manuscripts substantially, a study in *Learned Publishing* has found (2007;20:121–129). The authors looked at 189 articles in 23 science and humanities journals before and after subediting. Copyeditors had found 3689 minor changes and raised 1708 queries to authors. Almost half of the changes were to references. Copyediting is “an important function within the publisher’s overall responsibility towards the integrity of the article,” they conclude. Accurate electronic tagging for web publishing is also an essential copyediting function, they say. “Copyediting has an equal role to play in both the printed and online environments.”

Image manipulation rising

As an increasing number of computer manipulated graphics are being submitted to science journals, software is being developed to detect this form of falsification. editors heard at a seminar of the Committee on Publication Ethics in March (www.publicationethics.org.uk). The *Journal of Cell Biology* has issued guidance. At least a quarter of accepted manuscripts included unacceptable graphics, and in 1% the manipulation was judged fraudulent. “Scientists expect and assume . . . that the data presented are accurate representations of what was actually observed,” said the editor, Mike Rosner. (*BMJ* 2007;334:607)

Homoeopathy taught as science

Six UK universities are teaching bachelor of science degrees in the unscientific but lucrative field of homoeopathy. Several universities refused journalists access to course materials, and one argued that its course is science because it teaches the standard model of disease and encourages criticism of studies of homoeopathy. Some scientists say that these degree titles bestow alternative medicine with undeserved scientific credibility. This is ultimately harmful, they argue, because patients might assume the practice is supported by evidence. The doctor and journalist Ben Goldacre thinks they “teach that it’s OK to cherry pick evidence. That’s totally unacceptable.” (*Nature* 2007;446:352–3)



Publisher quits arms fairs

Reed Elsevier has agreed to stop organizing international arms fairs. The global publishing giant and owner of the *Lancet* medical journal bowed to pressure from the editors of its journals (including the *Lancet*), academics, and other public figures who claim that a subsidiary that runs arms exhibitions was inappropriate for a publisher of journals that aim to improve health. Sir Crispin Davis, chief executive, said, “Defence shows are no longer compatible with Reed Elsevier’s position.” Peter Hall, chairman of Doctors for Human Rights, described the U turn as a triumph “for the integrity of the medical and scientific world”. (*BMJ* 2007;334:1182)

Plagiarism rife and rising

Plagiarism is rife among university engineering students, and the problem is growing, says the US Institute of Electrical and Electronics

Engineers (*The Institute* 2007 Mar 2, www.theinstitute.ieee.org). The institute has also noticed more plagiarism in its journals—from 14 cases in 2004, 26 in 2005, to 47 in 2006. It has published resources, including a PowerPoint tutorial and a flowchart showing how it deals with accusations of plagiarism, at www.ieee.org/web/publications/rights/Plagiarism_Guidelines_Intro.html. Meanwhile UK examining boards announced that, because of cheating, schoolchildren would no longer be examined by coursework done at home in academic subjects. (*Daily Telegraph* 2007 Jun 14)

Plagiarists improve their English

Scientists are stealing elegant constructions and even whole paragraphs from published work to try to improve their own writing. “It’s an increasing problem,” says David Williams, editor of the journal *Biomaterials*. Most culprits are people whose first language is not English, he says, and he predicts that in the rapidly expanding science publishing sector in China, plagiarism will rise as people whose first language isn’t Mandarin try to compete. (*New Scientist* 2007 Mar 31, p 7)

Institute pays for open access

A medical research institute will pay publishers for open access for all articles written by researchers that it supports and that are published in certain journals. The non-profit making US Howard Hughes Medical Institute, which funds \$600m in biomedical research a year, has agreed to pay Elsevier and Cell Press \$1000–\$1500 per article for free online access six months after publication, starting with those published after 1 September 2007. Elsevier will deposit peer-reviewed but unedited manuscripts with PubMed Central. The institute’s move supports its policy that requires original research to be freely available online within six months of publication. (www.hhmi.org/news/hhmielsevier20070308.html)

Blog code has bad start

The first draft of a universal code of conduct for blogs was allegedly met with a barrage of abuse (http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2007/03/call_for_a_blog_1.html). The internet pioneers Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia, and Tim O'Reilly, who coined the phrase Web 2.0, proposed seven rules, which include a commitment by blog owners to remove "unacceptable" postings. Unacceptable postings include abusive, threatening, libellous, and anonymous entries. There are 71 million blogs, and the number is growing fast. "Setting standards for acceptable behaviour . . . is conducive to free speech, not damaging to it," said Mr O'Reilly. (*Guardian* 2007 April 10)

Thomson delists conference proceedings

Thomson Scientific, the company that calculates impact factors, has removed an unknown number of titles from its Web of Science index, according to a letter published in *Nature* in April (2007;446:725). The change seems aimed at moving conference proceedings to another, little known product, ISI Proceedings, even though many journals include the proceedings of conferences. Excision from the main index might be construed as a reflection of a publication's lack of credibility. But the decision to delist *Proceedings of the Combustion Institute*, for example, was "not based on an evaluation of its importance to the community of scholars it serves," says Thomson.

PowerPoint lacks power and point...

Microsoft PowerPoint, the ubiquitous software for presentations, is counterproductive, research has shown. John Sweller, an educational psychologist at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, says that a simple speech would be more effective. The human brain cannot cope with too much information, he says, and simultaneous visual and auditory stimuli cause it to switch off. Poor communicators tend to repeat orally the messages already written on each slide, which places "too much

load on the mind and decreases your ability to understand," he says. (*Daily Telegraph* 2007 Apr 19)

...and journals spurn Word 2007

Manuscripts and revisions submitted in the latest Microsoft format, Word 2007, are being returned by many scholarly publishers because they are incompatible with their publishing systems. Top ranking science journals, including *Science* and *Nature*, have revised their guidelines, asking authors not to use the format because the equation editor in Word 2007 is non-standard. Saving files in a previous Word format converts equations into non-editable graphics. *Science* suggests using the MathType equation editor or the editors that are included in previous versions of Word, accessed from Insert Object in the Insert menu. See www.sciencemag.org/about/authors/prep/docx.dtl and www.nature.com/nature/authors/submissions/template/index.html



Europe consults on research area

The European Research Area needs the support of academics and industry to benefit research throughout Europe, according to an editorial in *Nature* in April (2007;446:701-702). The area, a concept of the European Commission, aims to help European researchers who are working in cross-border science. This includes identifying funding for scientific infrastructure that is intended to serve the whole continent as well as helping to solve problems that affect individual scientists—for example, transfer of pension entitlements when moving between states. The EC will use feedback from the consultation to improve the way the area works.

Experts report on copyright

An expert group set up to advise on the creation of a European digital library released a report on copyright in April. This aims to reconcile making information as widely available as possible and protecting intellectual property rights. The group recommends a voluntary approach rather than legislation and gives four governing principles, including respect for copyright. Representatives of the British Library, the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, the Federation of European Publishers, and Google said that the recommendations apply only for long term preservation of a work, and they emphasize that to "disseminate widely" does not give liberty to "disseminate freely". (http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3366; *BMJ* 2007;334:871)

Sacked editors launch *Open Medicine*

A Canadian open access medical journal was launched in April by former members of staff of *CMAJ*, the journal of the Canadian Medical Association. *Open Medicine* is non-profit making, editorially independent, and will not charge subscriptions or publish advertisements from drug companies (www.openmedicine.ca). Six of *Open Medicine*'s editorial team left *CMAJ*, and 10 of its board members had been on the board at *CMAJ* until a row over editorial independence last year. In February 2006 the association sacked two senior editors, including the former chief editor, John Hoey. Other *CMAJ* editors left in protest, and most of the editorial board resigned. *CMAJ* is also an open access journal. (*BMJ* 2007;334:870)

Electronic notes help lab work

Electronic laboratory notebooks have many advantages, an editorial in *Nature* argued in May (2007;447:1-2). Not only might they provide an achievable and citable record of collected data, but stamped with date and time and with changes marked they might prove invaluable in the event of errors or accusations

of research misconduct. The drug industry, for example, has embraced the use of e-notebooks, but academia has been slow to take up the idea. Funding agencies and research institutions, the editorial argues, need to recognize that electronic notebooks will improve “the rigour and transparency of publicly funded research”.



State censorship online grows

Censorship of the internet by the governments of the world is rising, a study has shown. Websites and internet services were blocked in 25 of the 41 countries investigated. But in 2002 only a couple of nations were filtering content. The OpenNet Initiative, a transatlantic academic collaboration, found that Burma, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen carry out most filtering (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/6665945.stm>). The governments of western Europe also censor web content, and the human rights champion Amnesty International recently accused the internet giants Cisco, Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo of colluding in helping governments to block web content (see <http://irrepressible.info>).

Read, watch, hear, touch science

“Science should be read about, but also watched, touched, and listened to,” say the organisers of the first international science media fair—FEST (Fiera Editoria Scientifica

Trieste). Through meetings, conferences, and performance, the fair aimed to help the public to discover the diversity of the scientific world and reflect on the complex interaction between science and society. The fair celebrated the communication of science through all media, including books, newspapers, magazines, television, radio, blogs, and websites, and was held in Trieste, Italy, over four days in May. Many authors and publishers of scientific work attended. See www.festrieste.it/eng/b01.php

Helpline for whistleblowers

In May the UK Research Integrity Office set up a telephone and email service for advice about what to do next when whistleblowers suspect research misconduct (www.ukrio.org). Currently the helpline is for suspected malpractice in medical research—from small adjustments to plagiarism or fabrication of data—but there are plans to extend it to all disciplines. Researchers have not wholly welcomed the line—or the creation of the Research Integrity Office last year—because neither has investigatory powers. The helpline is 0844 7700644 and email address helpline@rio.org. (*Financial Times* 2007 May 12)

Bad reviews risk litigation

Writers and publishers risk being sued if their reviews are too critical, after recent cases in which judges have deemed restaurant reviews defamatory. In 2003 the *Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper slated restaurant Coco Roco, describing the flavour of the oyster and limoncello dish as “like a car crash”. The restaurant closed three months later. After months of litigation, the high court of New South Wales found for Coco Roco, with damages to be decided. In Belfast this year a jury upheld a claim from Goodfellas restaurant that a review in the Irish News in 2000 was defamatory and awarded £25,000 damages. (*Guardian* 2007 Feb 10 and Jun 16)

Flawed research left unretracted

Fewer flawed papers are retracted by journals with low impact factors than by top ranking ones, according to correspondence in the molecular biology journal *EMBO Reports* (2007;8:422–3). Computer scientists found just 596 retracted articles among the 9.4 million articles published between 1950 and 2004 and listed in PubMed. They used a model based on journal impact factor and number of retractions to estimate that between 10,000 and 100,000 articles should have been retracted—20 to 200 times the actual number. But the work was not peer reviewed, and some experts say the model is overly simplistic. (*Nature* 2007;447:236–7)



A comeback of collective nouns

A shrewdness of apes, a murmuration of starlings, and a murder of crows: in June the *Independent* newspaper tried to save what it calls the “entertaining confusions” of collective nouns. Apparently some animals have become so rare that their collective terms are dying—for example, quail aren’t often seen in a bevy nowadays. To redress the balance the *Independent* asked readers for new terms to describe specific groups of people. Winning submissions included a waffle of MPs, a gazump of estate agents, and a jabber of journalists. See www.vigay.com/nouns. (*Independent* 2007 Jun 9, Jun 16)

Thanks to Margaret Cooter, Sheila Evered, Elise Langdon-Neuner, Joan Marsh, and Karl Sharrock.

Richard Hurley
rhurley@bmj.com

Forthcoming Meetings, Courses and BELS Examinations

World Library and Information Congress: 73rd IFLA General Conference and Council
“Libraries for the future: Progress, Development and Partnerships”
 19-23 August 2007; Durban, South Africa
www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/index.htm

Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP): 18th Annual Conference
“Learning is always in season”
 3-5 September 2007; University of Sussex, Brighton, UK
<http://sfep.org.uk>

Society for Scholarly Publishing Top Management Roundtable
“Inspired: Lessons from a Wider World”
 5-7 September 2007; Philadelphia, PA
 “An opportunity to learn from our neighbors in other sectors of media and publishing about their hands-on experiences.” Contact: SSP, Wheat Ridge, CO. Tel: +1(303) 422 3914; fax: +1(303) 422 8894; www.sspnet.org

European Science Foundation
“Research Integrity: Fostering Responsible Research”
 16-19 September 2007; Lisbon, Portugal
www.esf.org/conferences/

International Society Of Addiction Journal Editors Annual Meeting
“Quality Assurance in Addiction Publishing”
 27-29 September 2007; Dresden, Germany
www.parint.org/isajewebsite/meetings2007.htm

American Medical Writers Association (AMWA): 67th Annual Conference
“A Legacy of Leadership”
 11-13 October 2007; Atlanta, GA
www.amwa.org

Fifth International Conference on the Book
“Save, Change or Discard — Tradition and Innovation in the World of Books”

20-22 October 2007; Madrid, Spain
 “A conference for any participant in the world of books—authors, publishers, printers, librarians, IT specialists, book retailers, editors, literacy educators and academic researchers.”
<http://b07.cgpublisher.com/welcome.html>

COURSES

ALPSP training courses, briefings and technology updates
 Half-day and one-day courses and updates. Contact Amanda Whiting, Training Coordinator, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, Tel: +44 (0)1865 247776; training@alpsp.org; www.alpsp-training.org

Style for reports and papers in medical and life-science journals
 John Kirkman Communication Consultancy courses: London, UK
 One-day seminars devoted to discussion of style – tactics for producing accurate and readable texts, not structure or format. Contact Gill Ward, JKCC, PO Box 106, Marlborough, Wilts SN8 2RU, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1672 520429; fax +44 (0)1672 521008; kirkman.ramsbury@btinternet.com

Publishing Training Centre at Book House, London
 Contact: The Publishing Training Centre at Book House, 45 East Hill, Wandsworth, London SW18 2QZ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 8874 2718; fax +44 (0)20 8870 8985; publishing.training@bookhouse.co.uk
www.train4publishing.co.uk

Society for Editors and Proofreaders workshops
 SfEP runs one-day workshops in London and occasionally elsewhere in the UK on copy-editing, proofreading, grammar, and much else.
 Training enquiries: tel: +44 (0)20 7736 0901; trainingenquiries@sfep.org.uk

Other enquiries: SfEP, Riverbank House, 1 Putney Bridge Approach, London SW6 3JD, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7736 3278; administration@sfep.org.uk
www.sfep.org.uk

Society of Indexers workshops
 The Society of Indexers runs workshops for beginners and more experienced indexers in various cities in the UK. Details and booking forms can be found at www.indexers.org.uk; admin@indexers.org.uk

University of Chicago
 Medical writing, editing, and ethics are among the many courses available at the Graham School of General Studies, 5835 S Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637-1608, USA. Fax +1 773 702 6814.
<http://grahamschool.uchicago.edu>

University of Oxford, Department for Continuing Education
 Courses on effective writing for biomedical professionals and on presenting in biomedicine, science, and technology.
 Contact Gaye Walker, CPD Centre, Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford, Suite 5, Littlegate House, 16/17 St Ebbses Street, Oxford OX1 1PT, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1865 286953; fax +44 (0)1865 286934; gaye.walker@continuing-education.ox.ac.uk
www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev

BELS - Board of Editors in the Life Sciences examination schedule
<http://www.bels.org/becomeeditor/exam-schedule.htm>

10 October 2007,
 Atlanta, GA (AMWA meeting)
 Register by 19 September

17 May 2008
 Vancouver, BC (CSE)
 Register by 27 April

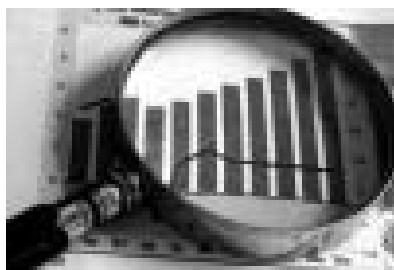
22 October 2008
 Louisville, KY (AMWA)

The Editor's Bookshelf

This section of the Bookshelf is based on the collection of postings gathered on <http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com>. At the May 2007 meeting of the publications committee we decided to use the blog also for postings related to the Webwatch section and introduced the identifiers **B** (Bookshelf) and **W** (Webwatch) to help to retrieve information on specific topics.

We are receiving comments and suggestions from EASE members and non-members and rejoice to see that the blog and the journal are read and appreciated outside Europe as well. One suggestion came from India, marking the global dimension of this enterprise that we hope will further contribute to increase the awareness of the role of the Association.

ECONOMICS AND FUNDING



Rowlands I, Olivieri R. **Research productivity and the journals system: a study of immunology and microbiology.** *Research Evaluation* 2007; 16(1):23–34.

This article focuses on research productivity and the journal system. A select group of biomedical scientists were surveyed on these issues. The main problems on research productivity concern funding issues; while accessing journal articles is not considered to be an obstacle to the scientific work (issue ranked 12th of 16 problems).

Scientists, librarians, universities, and funding bodies should hold constructive dialogue, and they should examine “the complete R&D value-chain, from research proposal through citation to exploitation”, and possibly contribute to scientific and economic progress.

King DW. **The cost of journal publishing: a literature review and commentary.** *Learned Publishing* 2007; 20:85–106.

Illustrates the effect of number of articles published on average costs, examines implications for libraries and the author-side payment model, and gives examples of how economies of scale can be achieved.

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Falagas ME. 2007. **Peer review in open access scientific journals.** *Open Medicine* 2007; 1(1):49–51.

The peer review process is not without flaws. The birth of the open access publication model and the rise of a more open science presents an ideal opportunity to re-evaluate the transparency of editorial and peer review practices. Many suggestions and hints are given to critically evaluate open peer review process.

Hames I. **Peer Review and Manuscript Management in Scientific Journals.** Blackwell, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers. 2007. xii, 293.

This is a handbook on how the process of peer reviewing and manuscript management should be carried out. Chapter headings are: The peer-review process—how to get going. Manuscript submission and initial checks on completeness and suitability. The full review process. The decision-making process for reviewed manuscripts. Moving to on-line submission and review. Reviewers—a precious resource. The obligations and responsibilities of the people involved in peer review. Misconduct in scientific research and publishing—what it is and how to deal with it.

Lieff Benderly B. **Dealing with deception.** *ScienceCareers.org* 2007 Jan 19.

Echoes of the recent Korean stem cell scandal continue to reverberate, most recently in a

report commissioned by the journal *Science* to examine how it can keep from falling victim to future frauds. Finding protection from the perils of potentially disastrous scientific deceptions is an important issue not only for journal editors but also for researchers in the early stages of their careers.

Regehr G, Bordage G. **To blind or not to blind? What authors and reviewers prefer.** *Medical Education* 2006; 40:832–839.

A web-based survey was sent to all authors and reviewers who had submitted or reviewed a manuscript for *Medical Education* in 2003 and 2004. Authors and reviewers who chose to respond to the survey voted strongly in favour of continuing the double-blinding procedure of concealing the identities of both authors and reviewers during the review process. Determining the replicability of these findings in other academic fields would reveal the extent to which this social construction of peer review is idiosyncratic to medical education.

Schulz WG. **Giving proper credit.** *Chemical & Engineering News* 2007; 85(12):35–38.

Stockholm University has sanctioned an associate professor of chemistry, Armando Córdova, for research misconduct. He works in the emerging field of organocatalysis. In a number of cases, the investigation found that Córdova violated scientific ethics in his quest to publish research results.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Cassels A. **The media-medicine mix: quality concerns in medical reporting.** *Open Medicine* 2007; 1(1):52–54.

Many people hear about medical discoveries for the first time through popular media (newspapers, magazines, television, and the internet). Good medical

journalism provides accurate, balanced reports and important contextual information, helps to set appropriate expectations on the part of consumers, informs the larger medical community, and thus arguably provides a vital public service. By the same token, poor medical journalism can exaggerate or oversimplify an issue, unnecessarily inflating expectations of patients and providers and putting increasing strain on the physician–patient relationship. A major and sustained improvement in reporting standards needs to start with improving the education of journalists and the public on what qualities to look for in news reports about new treatments. The article contains more critical suggestions and useful links.

England C, Hodgkinson M, Stamber P. **Not being clear about authorship is lying and damages the scientific record.** *National Medical Journal of India* 2007;(29)2:56–58.

Sound advice to authors about authorship criteria and invites editors to create in-house policies regarding who can and should be listed as an author. Young authors should clarify authorship rights at the start of a project to avoid disappointment at the end, and seniors authors should show humility and accept other forms of acknowledgement when authorship is not really appropriate.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING



Learning/teaching medical writing. *The Write Stuff* 2007;(1).

The January issue of *The Write Stuff* (the official publication of the European Medical Writers Associations, www.emwa.org) is dedicated to the topic Learning and Teaching Medical Writing and

considers it from different points of view. Medical writers rarely have a specific qualification in medical writing and often need to learn. Scientists can benefit from courses on medical writing that also increase the chances of publication for non-native speakers. Teaching medical writing is now a good opportunity for medical writers. Some useful tips from teachers are included.

Hartley J. **There's more to the title than meets the eye: exploring the possibilities.** *Journal of Technical Writing & Communication*. 2007;37(2):95–101.

The author distinguishes between 12 types of title for academic articles, and suggests that these should be discussed with student writers. Before and after examples are provided to show how titles can be improved

Joshi Y. **A systematic approach to improving writing skills.** *Current Science* 2007;92:1343–1344

Suggests an action plan for ESL (English as second language) researchers who wish to improve their writing skills. In the manner of an old-fashioned general practice in medicine, the suggested prescription is a “mixture” comprising (a) extensive reading, (b) a modest amount of progressively difficult writing assignments, (c) revising one's writing, and (d) developing a concern for readers. It is possible, simply through massive exposure, to absorb typical patterns of English sentences and to string words together in those patterns without any formal study of grammar.

Sand-Jensen K. **How to write consistently boring scientific literature.** *Oikos* 2007;116 (5),723–727.

Scientists typically insist that their research is very exciting when they talk to laymen and prospective students, but the allure of this enthusiasm is too often lost in the predictable, stilted structure and language of their scientific publications. A top-10 list of recommendations for how to write consistently boring scientific

publications is presented and suggestions given to make these contributions more accessible and exciting. (doi:10.1111/j.2007.0030-1299.15674.x)

Stevens M. **Subtleties of scientific style.** *Science Scape Editing*. 2007. (<http://www.zeta.org.au/~mls/subtleties.html>)

The author says: “This book is aimed at hands-on scientific editors, those who work with the nuts and bolts of the text—from spelling, punctuation and grammar (copyediting) to meaning and logic (substantive editing). Copyeditors (subeditors) and journal editors will also find something of interest in it. I decided to write this book when I recognized that the assortment of books on my shelves either don't mention some faults of scientific writing that I regularly encounter, or mention them only in passing. The book collects together many subtle, recurring errors that I've come to recognize in my more than 20 years of editing. It also incorporates a few essays I've written or lectures I've given on things that annoy me about scientific writing.”

The full text is free online.

Tompson A. **How to write an English medical manuscript that will be published and have impact.** *Surgery Today* 2006; 36:407–409.

English has become the international language in science. Yet to write a medical manuscript in a second language is a challenge for many scientists whose native language is not English. The authors explains how it need not be such a challenge if you follow a few simple rules based on the concept of “simplicity = clarity = effective communication”. Any paper will have impact only if the readers can understand it easily.

PUBLISHING

Physical Review Letters launches new feature to improve accessibility. *APS News* 2007;16(3):7.

Physical Review Letters launched a new feature in January (<http://prl.aps.org>). Each weekly issue has

several papers designated as “Editors’ Suggestions”, intended to be papers that are well written and of interest to a wide range of physicists. How they are selected is described. .

Altman M, King G. 2007. **A proposed standard for the scholarly citation of quantitative data.** *D-Lib Magazine* 13(3/4). doi:10.1045/march2007-altman.

The authors propose a universal standard for citing quantitative data that retains the advantages of print citations; adds other components made possible by, and needed due to, the digital form and systematic nature of quantitative data sets; and is consistent with most existing subfield-specific approaches.

Brecher J. 2006. **Graphical representation of stereochemical configuration.** *Pure and Applied Chemistry* 78(10):1897–1970.

Recommendations for the display of three-dimensional stereochemical information in two-dimensional diagrams in ways that avoid ambiguity and are likely to be stereochemical configuration; explanation of which styles are preferred or should be avoided.

Chen F. **Open access unnecessary for physicists.** *APS News* 2007;16(4):12.

Letter giving the view that physicists do not need open access as they prefer to attack problems without comprehensively reading the literature. The author says: “the only time I access previous articles is when the referee forces me to”!

Gawrylewski A. **New site pits “published” vs. “posted”: Nature Precedings raises questions over the value of sharing findings before submitting to peer review.** *The Scientist* 2007 June 19.

Nature set up a new site, Nature Precedings, to post preprint articles which are not yet submitted to peer review. This experiment should be watched, particularly with respect to the consequences on scientific communication, publishing, and evaluation aspects.

Hooker B. **The future of science**

is open (access). *APS News* 2007; 16(2):12.

Surveys open access from the perspective of a molecular biologist. Discusses open access archives/ repositories and open access journals, including questions of financing and the desirability of including metadata to develop “open science”: Open (Access + Data + Source + Standards + Licensing) = Open Science.

Kiernan V. **The embargo should go.** *APS News* 2007; 16(3):8.

Discusses the arguments for and against the embargo system, under which science journals provide journalists with advance copies of newsworthy articles but set strict timelines on when that information can be shared. Concludes that the system does more harm than good in the reporting in newspapers of science advances. The article is adapted from the author’s 2006 book *Embargoed Science* (see <http://www.press.uillinois.edu/>.)

Rodriguez MA, Bollen J, Van de Sompel H. **Mapping the bid behavior of conference referees.** *Journal of Informetrics* 2007;1(1):68–82.

Analyses the possible factors influencing the bid behavior of conference referees. For instance, referee fatigue can be responsible for the quality of the peer review process: a valid study may be rejected or a fraudulent one may be accepted. Further studies and data are needed.

Symonds MR, Gemmill NJ, Braisher TL, Gorringer KL, Elgar MA. **Gender differences in publication output: towards an unbiased metric of research performance.** *PLoS ONE* 2006;1(1):e127.

Male scientists publish more than women, bringing into question the fairness of academic selection processes that rely heavily on publication quantity to rank scientists. But according to some measures, women’s work is cited more than men’s.

Warlick SE, Vaughan KTL. **Factors influencing publication choice: why faculty choose open access.**

Biomedical Digital Libraries 2007; 4:1–12.

Interviews with scholarly biomedical faculty members at two US universities. Participants were chosen on the basis of their recent publication record in OA journals, and interviews were conducted to establish why they chose OA journals, what factors influenced those decisions, and their general attitude to open access. The authors conclude that although free access and visibility are incentives to OA publication, ,publication quality is the most important factor influencing the faculty members’ decisions.

Weinrach SG, Thomas KR, Pruet SR, Chan F. **Scholarly productivity of editorial board members of three American Counseling and Counseling Psychology journals.** *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling* 2006;28(3):303–305.

Scholarly journals in professional and scientific fields communicate new knowledge, and editorial board members serve as gatekeepers of what information will be communicated. This study analyzes the scholarly productivity of the editorial board members of three major American counseling journals.

RESEARCH EVALUATION



Coleman A. **Assessing the value of a journal beyond the impact factor.** *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 2007; 58(8):1148–1161.

With the current rapid evolution of scientific communication in its different facets, the author considers citations (and, consequently, impact

factor) not completely representative of journal value, and proposes other criteria to evaluate a journal: journal attraction power, author associativity, and journal consumption power. Williams G, Hobbs R. **Should we ditch impact factors?** *BMJ* 2007; 334:568–569.

Should we get rid of impact factors, or is refining them the answer? One argument is that they don't measure quality: every scientist knows that the vagaries of peer review can push a "not so good" paper into a "good" journal, and vice versa. Though bibliometric scoring will be driving the UK's research assessment exercise, we want journals to publish material that has been filtered to ensure it is reliable, interesting, relevant, or important, and that reading it results in some wider benefit.

Brown H. **How impact factors changed medical publishing and science.** *BMJ* 2007; 334:561–564.

Journal rankings can be maximized by keeping the number of scholarly articles as small as possible, and boosting review content can make journals perform better. But minor manipulation of journal content is not the issue causing concern: ignorance persists about what impact factors can and cannot do, especially in regard to guiding decisions on research funding.

Martyn C. **Advice to a new editor.** *BMJ* 2007; 334:586.

Tongue in cheek advice on, above all, maximizing the (medical) journal's impact factor. Although you'll probably produce a journal that is widely read and enjoyed, you'll never impress the sort of people

who prefer a number to thinking for themselves.



SCIENCE

Van Noorden R. **Computers learn chemistry.** *Chemistry World* 2007;2:4.

Chemists who trawl through the thousands of chemistry papers published every month must wish their computers could do the job for them and maybe one day they will: that's the ultimate goal of Project Prospect, an initiative of Royal Society of Chemistry Publishing. Starting in February 2007, papers in the electronic RSC journal will be written in such a way that their data can be read, indexed, and intelligently searched by machine. The aim of this project is to create a chemical version of the semantic web, where computers can understand the meaning (semantics) of information, rather than simply display data.

Soler JM. **A rational indicator of scientific creativity.** *Journal of Informetrics* 2007;1(2):123–130.

An index to measure scientific creativity, in terms of creating new and useful knowledge, and therefore to evaluate the scientific merit.

Rhoten D, Pfirman S. **Women in interdisciplinary science: exploring**

preferences and consequences. *Research Policy* 2007;36(1):56–75.

Reports three studies aimed to investigate gendering and other factors (race, ethnicity) in interdisciplinarity. Limited data suggest that, overall, women tend to be more interdisciplinary than men and this is probably due to "different gender-based ways of knowing". The "Matilda effect" (coined by MW Rossiter) in science is cited, as a corollary to the "Matthew effect" (by RK Merton), to underline that women tend to receive less credit for their scientific work than their male colleagues even when they deserve more recognition.

Stone JH. **Communication between physicians and patients in the era of e-medicine.** *New England Journal of Medicine* 2007;356(24):2451–2454.

An experience of using a secure internet link to communicate with physicians and medical staff members. Secure Web messaging about routine issues was an attempt to direct round-the-clock communication into a manageable channel. The e-medicine model comprised online appointment scheduling, electronic prescription refills, general messaging capabilities, and "web visits" with physicians. Despite the advantages of e-medicine, physicians, who face ever-increasing demands on their time, were hesitant to accept new responsibilities that might increase their workload.

Thanks to Margaret Cooter, John Glen, and Renata Solimini for contributions.

Paola De Castro (compiler)
paola.decastro@iss.it

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European Science Editing welcomes contributions related to the editing and management of publications in the sciences. Submissions in the following categories are accepted: Articles, Viewpoints, Editing around the world, Correspondence, brief Reports of meetings (see suggestions for reports at the end of these instructions), short news items, and notes or suggestions about articles, books or websites of interest to editors of scientific journals or books.

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With Word documents, accents and any text in italics or bold lettering will be recognized by the desktop publishing software. Remove any running heads, page numbers or page divisions before saving the final version of the file.

Headings other than the main title of a contribution should be title case (initial capital, caps elsewhere only if needed, and lower-case), with one blank line above each heading. Use **bold type** for a level 1 heading and *italics* for a level 2 heading. Avoid level 3 headings.

Tables should be sent in a separate file from the text. Please submit tables in Microsoft Word documents, not as spreadsheets or .tif. For guidance on the presentation of Tables please refer to chapter 2-2.3, "Editing and design of tables", in the *Science Editors' Handbook*

Figures should be professionally prepared and of high resolution (scanned at 300 dpi). Each figure should be sent in a separate file saved in .tif or .jpg format. For guidance on the presentation of Figures please refer to chapter 2-2.1, "Illustration basics", in the *Science Editors' Handbook*.

Style

Use the spelling of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Concise or Shorter), including -ize, -ization where appropriate. Use inclusive language (non-sexist, non-racist). Avoid abbreviations unless they are SI units or other widely accepted and understood terms. Avoid

using footnotes. Explain all other abbreviations when they are first mentioned. Write numbers one to nine in full in the text, except when they are attached to units of measure. Use double quotation marks, with single quotation marks only for quotations within quotations.

Citations in the text

For citations in the text, use consecutive numbers, given as superscripts.

Reference list style

Please use Vancouver style (see <http://www.icmje.org/>, section IV.A.9). Journal titles should be written in full, as should page ranges:

Adam A, Eve Z. Eating apples can be dangerous. *Journal of Food Information* 1997;8(1):51–59.

References to electronic sources should include the web address and the date the reference was accessed:

Adam A, Eve Z. Eating apples can be dangerous. *Journal of Food Information* 1997;8(1):51–59. [www.jfi.org.il/volume8\(1\)/Adam/apple.pdf](http://www.jfi.org.il/volume8(1)/Adam/apple.pdf). (Accessed 2005 January 1.)

Accuracy of references is the responsibility of the author(s).

Deadlines and proofs

Deadline dates for contributions other than articles, review articles and viewpoints are December 15, March 15, June 15 and September 15, for the February, May, August and November issues, respectively. Articles, review articles and viewpoints should be submitted one month earlier than

those dates.

Proofs (PDF files) will be sent to authors of articles and viewpoints. Proofs of other contributions may be sent if authors ask for them or if there are queries.

Meeting reports: suggestions for presentation

- A report should be between 100 and 800 words, depending on the length of the meeting and the novelty of the material.
- Describe only those presentations and other contributions that you believe will interest *ESE* readers.
- Concentrate on new information rather than opinion. If you quote numbers, please check them. If you can supply references, so much the better, but please limit these to about five.
- If discussion of a paper reaches a consensus, record it.
- Give the names and brief institutional addresses of contributors whose presentations you report.
- Be prepared for your report to be edited for length and style; the organizational delights and downfalls of conferences are particularly vulnerable. You may be sent an edited text, but time constraints may limit consultation about changes.
- Write up your contribution as soon as the meeting ends, to capitalize on its impact.
- Send your meeting report to Jane Sykes (j.sykes@wxs.nl).

EASE Business

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held in Barcelona on 14 May 2007.

The President presented his report for 2006–7, a copy of which may be obtained from the Secretariat or viewed on the website (www.ease.org.uk). He informed the meeting that EASE would be applying to take part in the EuroScience Open Forum to be held in Barcelona from 18–22 July 2008.

The Treasurer went through the statement of income and expenditure for the year. He reported that reserves at the end of 2006 stood at £65,000 and membership was increasing again. The financial reviewer was then reappointed.

Council Meeting

Council met on 13 May 2007 in Barcelona.

The President presented a draft statement on the use of impact factors, a final version of which will be published later in the year.

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2006 which Council approved. He said the financial arrangements for the Association had been restructured during the year, creating a more efficient and flexible system. Reserves, which stood at £65,000 at the end of the year, were now in a high interest deposit account.

Rod Hunt, who had led the group working on the application to the EU for funds towards the organization of EASE's triennial conference in 2009, said this was on schedule to be submitted by the deadline of 31 May. If successful, the conference would be on a larger scale than the usual one. The outcome would be known later this year when a final decision about the size, date and venue would be made.

The Secretary reported that the decline in membership had been arrested and was now on the increase again. It was agreed to raise subscription rates for 2008 (see page 65). The new database was running well, and the website continued to be developed with a new section for job advertisements and a members' only site proposed.

Council agreed to apply to take part in the EuroScience Open Forum which will take place from 18–22 July 2008 in Barcelona, and to award Honorary Membership to Jennifer Gretton in recognition of her invaluable service to EASE.

Publications Committee

The Publications Committee met on 13 May 2007 in Barcelona. The November 2006, February 2007 and May 2007 issues of European Science Editing were reviewed and the status of the next two issues discussed. The new front cover and other changes in the last two issues had been met with great approval.

A Google spreadsheet to assist in the production of ESE was now available to members of the Committee.

A new chapter on editing graphs would soon be ready for the Handbook, and others were in the pipeline.

For more information about the aims of EASE and for an application form, visit www.ease.org.uk

Membership changes

Honorary Member

Mrs Jennifer T Gretton, West Clandon, Sussex, UK

New Members

Individual

Professor Ruzica Beljo-Lucic, Faculty of Forestry, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Drvna Industrija

beljo@sumfak.hr

Dr Mitsutaka Fujita, Saitama-Ken, Japan

Publications of the Astronomical Society of Japan

mitsutaka.fujita@nifty.com

Mr Jamie S Hutchins, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK

jhutchins@cambridge.org

Prof Dr Jan Kowalczyk, Kielanowski Institute of Animal Physiology & Nutrition, Jabłonna, Poland

Journal of Animal and Feed Sciences

j.kowalczyk@ifzz.pan.pl

Dr Helen S J Lee, East Saltoun, East Lothian, Scotland

International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology

hsjlee@btinternet.com

Ms Veronica J Thorp, Bellerive, Tasmania, Australia

vtthorp@optusnet.com.au

Corporate

Józef Kokoszka, Cornetis SP. z o.o., Wrocław, Poland

Endokrynologia, diabetologia i choroby przemiany materii wieku rozwojowego; Gastroenterologia Polska; Dermatologia Kliniczna; Mikologia Lekarska; Przegląd Pediatryczny

jkokoszka@cornetis.com.pl

Change of address

Prof Dr Jakov Dulcic, Institute of Oceanography & Fisheries, Split, Croatia

Acta Adriatica