Publications Committee 2006-2009
Chief editor
Moira Johnson-Vekony
ese@DunaScripts.com
Production manager
Margaret Cooter
mcooter@bmj.com
Secretary
Sheila Evered
secretary@ease.org.uk
European Science Editing
Articles
Igor Vlahovic
geologia-croatica@zg.htnet.hr
All original articles will be peer reviewed
Editing around the world
Dario Sambunjak
dario.sambunjak@mef.hr
Viewpoints and
Book reviews
Moira Johnson-Vekony
ese@DunaScripts.com
From the literature
Liz Wager
liz@sideview.demon.co.uk
Reports of meetings and
News from editing societies
Jane Sykes
j.sykes@wxs.nl
EASE-Forum digest
Elise Langdon-Neuner
langdoe@baxter.com
WebWatch
Mary Ellen Kerans
ese.webwatch@gmail.com
News notes
Richard Hurley
rhurley@bmj.com
Editor's bookshelf
Paola De Castro (coordinator)
paola.decastro@iss.it
Books (Handbook)
Moira Johnson-Vekony
ese@DunaScripts.com
Website
Emma Campbell
mailtoemma_c@yahoo.co.uk
EASE Council
Arjan K S Polderman (*ex officio*)

Contributions for the journal should be sent to the Chief Editor or the appropriate section editor listed above. See the Instructions to authors on Ease's website (www.ease.org.uk).
The journal is published in February, May, August and November, free to paid-up members of EASE and available on annual subscription of £54 to libraries and other non-members.

Disclaimer: The views expressed by contributors are their own. The Association does not necessarily endorse the claims of advertisers.

Printed by MPG Impressions, Chessington, Surrey GB-KT9 2NY ©EASE 2007

From the Editors' Desks

Membership rates for 2007

The full membership rate remains £66, with retired people and those over 60 paying the reduced rate of £33. Invoices for 2007 were sent out in January – many thanks to those who have already paid. If you have not received yours, please contact Sheila.

Two new categories of membership

Student membership is now available at half the full rate. Student applications must be supported by proof of student status, such as a letter from the institution. Also, other editorial societies with minimum group size of 10 are eligible for group membership at the reduced fee of £45 per person. Such members will be treated as individual members.

Thanks for your questionnaires

At the EASE Conference in Krakow last year, an informal questionnaire asked for opinions about the Conference. There were 40 responses. One important question was about the format with mainly plenary sessions: was it valued better, about the same or less good than the usual format with many more parallel sessions? The replies are encouraging: 15 said the new format was better, 2 said it was less good and 7 about the same.

Several valuable suggestions were made to further improve EASE Conferences:

- There should be more opportunities for small group meetings, either informal (lunch) or formal (workshops). Social interaction was a bit thin.
- More efforts should be made to welcome newcomers and bring them into the EASE community.
- There should be distinctive nametags to identify Council members and other officials, and perhaps also new members and non-members.
- PowerPoint presentations should be available as handouts.
- Vegetarian options should be available at meals.

Council and the Programme Committee will pay due attention to these and many other suggestions. I am very grateful to everyone who returned the questionnaire and made so many useful remarks. I would also like to thank Alison Clayson, who prepared the questionnaire and digested the replies.

Arjan Polderman
EASE President

Announcement

It is with great pleasure that we announce the award of Honary Membership to Marie-Louise Desbarats-Schönbaum, in recognition of her invaluable contributions to EASE and ESE over the years.

Contributions for next issue

The copy date for the next issue of ESE (May 2007) is **15 March 2007**. Please send contributions to the appropriate member of the publications committee (see list on left) by then.

EASE Council 2006-2009

President: Arjan K S Polderman, Pharmaceutisch Weekblad, PO Box 30460, 2500 GL The Hague, The Netherlands; a.k.s.polderman@pw.nl
Vice-Presidents: Linus Svensson, Sweden; Joan Marsh, UK
Members: Eva Baranyiová, Czech Republic; Alison Clayson, France; Ricardo Guerrero, Spain; Mare-Anne Laane, Estonia; Volodymyr Lysenko, Ukraine and USA; Reme Melero, Spain; Mercè Piqueras, Spain; Witold Zuchiewicz, Poland; Moria Johnson-Vekony, UK (*ex officio*)
Past-President: Elisabeth Kessler, Sweden
Treasurer and Company Secretary: Roderick Hunt, UK
Secretary: Sheila Evered, EASE, PO Box 6159, Reading, RG19 9DE, UK; tel +44 (0)118 970 0322; email secretary@ease.org.uk
EASE website: www.ease.org.uk
Correspondence about EASE and applications for membership (see website) should go to the Secretary.

Editorial

The dilemma of duplicity

Having recently taken on the role of Chief Editor of *European Science Editing*, I find that I am facing a huge challenge—that of maintaining the standard of publication achieved by my predecessor, Hervé Maisonneuve. *European Science Editing* is one of the public faces of EASE, it is the flagship publication of EASE, and it is also a major benefit of membership. Our members – you – expect to open *ESE* and find something informative, well presented, useful, and possibly even amusing between the covers. As I ponder how best to serve our readership, several questions about editorial policies and certain ethical issues have come to mind—and often they are the very same issues that challenge me in my day job in commercial publishing.

One such issue, a hot topic on several of the editorial discussion forums at the moment, is that of "duplicate, redundant, or repetitive" publication, in all of its forms – salami slicing (deriving multiple – often distinct – publications from the same or modified data set), reprinting previously published material verbatim, publishing a translation of an article, or publishing variants of the same work for different readerships.

You might assume that, for a publication such as *European Science Editing*, "salami publishing" wouldn't be an issue. But, what happens when we receive an article from a hopeful author, the content of which is highly relevant and interesting for our members, but which is far too long? Should we reject it outright, on the basis that it is overly lengthy, the risk being that it never gets published anywhere, and therefore the information is lost to the public domain; or should we insist that it is shortened to a shadow of its former self, a process that may possibly diminish the message to non-existence. How would it be if we were to divide the article into two or more sections and publish them in consecutive issues of *ESE*? Each section would have to also "stand alone" as well as being part of a "mini-series", so this would necessitate a certain amount of repetition of the contents. The author would then have not one, but two or more, entries on his or her publications list – albeit in the same journal and with similar titles – and any citations to one of the articles would necessitate reference to the other(s). Are we then guilty of "salami slicing" the data?

Another possible solution is to publish a shortened version of the manuscript in *ESE*, and make the full paper all of the data and associated analysis available on the internet via the EASE website. But the majority of our members are not regular internet users (as reflected in the relatively small proportion of members who choose to subscribe to and participate in the EASE Forum). So, is there a workable solution? As more and more members turn to the internet, this may become a viable way forward, but first we need to encourage our members to make more use of the online world.

Probably of more relevance to a society publication is the practice of reprinting – or secondary publication – and of this *ESE* is definitely guilty. But let me justify this thus: as a society journal our raison d'être is to make items of interest and relevance to science editors available to our readers. Many of our members – for example, those in countries in Eastern Europe (see viewpoint by Lysenko, p11 this issue) or freelance members in any country may not have access to printed journals in libraries, or even to the internet. For this reason we have felt justified in reprinting articles that have first appeared elsewhere (an example is the article by Wager et al, page 61 of the August 2006 issue) to make them accessible to our members.

Looking at this from the other side we recently granted permission to *The Grey Journal* to reprint an article that appeared in the November 2006 issue, so that the grey literature community could access information in a members-only publication. The coin is thus a two-headed one. Similarly, one more face of secondary publication is that of publishing translations of works originally published in a language other than English, or vice versa. Again, this is duplicate publishing – but in a good cause, especially in a society such as ours, where we have members of numerous nationalities. Right or wrong, English is still the international language of science, and so we should strive to make accessible any articles that come to our attention. The concept of printing translations may fall into the category of "acceptable secondary publication" (see the IJCME guidelines).

At the end of a long week in publishing, and when thoughts return to *ESE*, I invariably reach the conclusion that what serves our members best is the way to choose, and if that means creating an ethical dilemma, then I shall learn to live with that. You, the readers, are who matter, and it is my job, and that of our very talented the Publications Committee (see profiles on page 22 of this issue) to ensure that the content of *ESE* continues to fulfil the role of relevance, usefulness and interest – oh, and maybe with that little bit of entertainment I alluded to earlier.

For more information on publication ethics see "acceptable secondary publication" at www.icmje.org and the World Association of Medical Editors website (www.wame.org), and in this issue: From the literature, WebWatch, and the EASE Forum.

Moira Johnson-Vekony
ese@dunascripts.com

Editing around the World

Scientific periodicals in Bulgaria − history and present status

Mariana Dyakova
Assistant professor of public health and epidemiology, Department of Preventive Medicine, Faculty of Public Health – Sofia, 8 Bialo More str, 1527 Sofia, Bulgaria (dr_dyakova@abv.bg)
Dobriana Sidzhimova
Assistant professor of medical pedagogy and public relations, Department of Medical Pedagogy, Faculty of Public Health – Sofia, 8 Bialo More str, 1527 Sofia, Bulgaria

Bulgarian periodical literature dates from the end of the 19th century. Although no accurate register exists from that period, nor can accurate systematic information be found in present-day libraries, it is known that the earliest periodic scientific editions were issued around 1880. During the period 1880–1888 Bulgarian physicians, as well as society as a whole, were interested in and searched for information from two different perspectives: (i) strictly scientific or specialized medical issues and problems; and (ii) more popular, easily understandable and accessible health news and topics, widely known as "popular science".

Of the six medical issues from that period, five were scientific journals: *Medical Gathering*, *Home Physician*, *Medical Journal of the Varna Medical Association*, *Mind and Health* and *Medical Review*; and one was a newspaper: *Health*. Despite the different spheres of interest, they shared certain common features, among which were: (i) both their editors-in-chief and the whole editorial board consisted of well-known and recognized names in medical science and practice in Bulgaria at that time; (ii) they contained original articles, referees (translated foreign articles), strictly scientific articles, and popular science; (iii) they all had a relatively short life – from several months to three years.

Early developments

During 1888–1893 the size of the periodical press in Bulgaria was abruptly reduced. The main reasons for this were high costs of preparation and printing, difficulties in dissemination, and lack of centralized financing from the state 'sanitary budget' (the resources for health at that time).

The year 1894 may be considered as a turning point in the history of the periodical literature in Bulgaria. In that year three specialized medical issues appeared: *Medical Talk*, *Medicine* and *Science and Health*.

The beginning of the 20th century was marked by three events of major significance for the development of Bulgarian biomedical scientific literature: the founding of the Medical Library in Sofia (1904), the opening of a Medical Museum (1906), and the establishment of the first medical school in Bulgaria, the Medical Faculty of the Sofia University (1918). These years were characterized by an overall lack of specialised medical literature for educational purposes (textbooks, etc). This was gradually overcome by the students themselves through the establishment and development of a Students' Medical Association, which opened a "Library" fund. The fund gathered its financial resources from students' graduation fees and voluntary donations. A famous specialized issue of the Medical Faculty dated from that time; it is now prepared mostly by students and is called *Premedicus*.

Organizations and their journals

A specific feature of the Bulgarian scientific periodicals and their market both in historical terms and at present is that such specialised journals were and are predominantly issues of scientific or professional organizations, associations or institutions such as the Bulgarian Association of Cardiology; the National Associations of Ophthalmology, Immunology, Gastroenterology; the Ministry of Health; and the National Statistical Institute. Due to this, their fate closely followed the historical development of the mother organization. For example, every member of the Bulgarian Medical Association (BMA) until 1944, paying his/her membership fee, received the non-governmental organizations' specialised issue *Annals of the Bulgarian Medical Association* (one of the oldest periodicals in Bulgaria). After the political, social and economic turnover in 1944, the BMA was liquidated as an autonomous professional organisation and the journal was stopped. With the restoration of the association in 1990, a newspaper, *Quo Vadis*, began to be published: this serves as the BMA's specialized weekly issue; however, it is self-sustained by advertisements. In 2006 the BMA started its own scientific journal, *Medical Science*, of which the first pilot edition was bilingual, in Bulgarian and English.

The example of the specialized issue of the Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC) is analogical. After 1955 the journal was renamed from *Bulgarian Red Cross* (the same name as the organisation) to *Health* and became one of the biggest issues in the country. During the 1950s its print run reached 80,000 copies and during the 1980s it reached 230,000. The journal was financed entirely by the BRC, which searched for contributions and sponsorship among governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as the private sector.

The current situation

At present, 135 periodicals in the field of medical and natural sciences are published in Bulgaria. These are predominantly specialized scientific journals in different fields of clinical medicine, public health, stomatology, pharmacy, biomedicine, environment and ecology, education and pedagogy, as well as information and statistical bulletins. Most have four issues per year. Some also deal with more general topics, including "popular science" publications and reviews. They include journals disseminated all over the country as well as local scientific issues; periodicals of certain institutions (e.g. universities) or non-governmental organisations (professional associations). Almost all the publications in these journals have a summary in English. A few are published entirely or simultaneously in English: *Acta Medica Bulgaria*, *Folia Medica – Plovdiv*, etc.

The main source of information and most reliable "register" of scientific periodicals is the Information Catalogue issued by the Central Medical Library in Sofia. It includes the other big biomedical libraries, such as the libraries of the medical universities in Plovdiv, Pleven, Varna and Stara Zagora, as well as the libraries of certain hospitals and institutions (e.g. the National Center for Protection of the Public Health). All of the periodicals have the obligatory ISSN and most of them are indexed in local (Bulgarian) databases. The strictly specialized scientific issues are systemized in the Bulgarian Citation Index and few of them are indexed in international databases (e.g. SCOPUS, Excerpta Medica).

It is important to mention the periodicals issued by the Medical University and the Central Medical Library in Sofia. One is called *Medical Review*, under which a series of journals, specialised in different fields of medical science and practice, are issued. These issues are strictly scientific, publishing original articles and reviews. They support a web page, where articles are published in both Bulgarian and English. Another relatively new journal is issued by the Faculty of Public Health in Sofia: *Journal of Healthcare Management* was launched in 2000 in response to the increasing changes in society and health care in Bulgaria. Its mission and objectives include scientific publishing in the sphere of public health, healthcare management, economics, ethics, and nursing, and it serves as a tribune for positions and views surrounding problematic health and organisational issues. It is trying to create an open forum and discussion on hot topics and unsolved problems in the healthcare sector. In structural terms, it strives to reach international standards and requirements for quantity (six issues per year) and quality and to be indexed in a foreign database. It also supports a web site with three years of archives.

A number of years ago, the journal of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences was the only periodical in Bulgaria that had an impact factor. Unfortunately, at the present time this impact factor has been lost.

Important questions

Issues surrounding the requirements for authorship of a scientific publication and the contents and structure of a scientific journal have been and continue to be developed in Bulgaria by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and its department of naukometrics (scientific measurement). Unfortunately, despite the good quality of certain specialized scientific journals, the level of individual scientific publications, overall, is unsatisfactory. This is mainly due to the lack of general and specific accessible, understandable and widely spread information about scientific publishing and editing, and to the relative isolation of the Bulgarian scientific community. Another major problem is financial sustainability, as most scientific institutions and organizations in Bulgaria are underfinanced. Dissemination of periodicals is realised mainly by regular voluntary subscription or free purchase. This is often not enough for self-sustainability, due not so much to the production cost (one of the cheapest in Europe) but by the low market price, driven by the financial status of the population. So, most contemporary journals are self-financed through various advertisements in the respective fields of interest, mainly by pharmaceutical companies.

Recently, interest in subscribing to scientific periodicals and buying scientific or educational material has increased due to the introduction of a "Unified Credit System for continuous medical learning" as a part of the postgraduate learning. It started almost three years ago and is implemented and controlled by the Bulgarian Medical Association. Every subscription to a specialised scientific issue brings credit points for the physician, which is one of the criteria for his/her lifelong professional qualification and competence.

In conclusion

Bulgarian scientific literature has a long tradition in general, although most of the biomedical periodicals had short or interrupted lives or have been renamed several times due to the past political and socioeconomic transitions. The life of a scientific journal was and is still a hard and risky one in Bulgaria, without clear regulation and control over the quality of structure and contents, hardly gathering good quality original scientific publications and lacking any international recognition. Unfortunately, the generally bad economic situation reflects strongly on the development of science and scientific literature and gives space to the more popular and colourful periodicals, full of advertising materials and simple health information and advice. The scientific and publishing environment created forces all serious bio-medical scientist to search and compete for space and recognition in well known international journals in their fields, either with or without an impact factor. Another result of these circumstances has been the use of different journals for social, political, educational, informational purposes, or as provocative instruments, raising the public as well as the mass media interest and participation in health-related issues and problems. Thus some journals start to play an important role in advocating for public health and its new values in the Bulgarian health care reality.

Sources

Central Medical Library, MU-Sofia. 2006. Medical and Biomedical Periodicals in the Medical Libraries in the Country. Information Catalogue. Sofia.

Kinov V, Milenkov K. 2003. History of the Bulgarian Medical Association 1901–2003. Sofia.

Petrovski I. 2001. Contemporary Bulgarian healthcare from 1877 till nowadays. Sofia, DNK:370–9.

Topusov V, Gladilov St. 1998. Bulgarian Red Cross 1878–1998. Sofia, Prof. Marin Drinov.

Reports of Meetings

Institutional archives for research: experiences and projects in open access

Rome, 30 November – 1 December 2006

This international conference attracted about 130 participants and key speakers from different countries who talked about open access issues from different perspectives. The two days of intense and challenging discussions on new models for publication through the internet also attracted the attention of the media, because access to information is no longer limited to a restricted circle of scientists and scholars but is now available to members of the public who have access to the internet and who wish to obtain information for their own needs. In particular, people affected by illness or disease have become avid internet surfers and students, changing the relationship between doctors and patients.

The main objectives of the conference, which took place at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (the Italian National Institute of Health), were to make authors of biomedical publications aware of the benefits of publishing in open access journals and of depositing research material in digital open archives. The impact of the open access publishing model on the assessment of research output was widely discussed, as was the adoption of policies encouraging adhesion to the open access paradigm and the need to promote cooperation between research institutions to share resources and experiences.

The Berlin Declaration (http://oa.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlin_declaration.pdf), one of the most important documents stating the principles of open access and signed by almost 300 institutions worldwide, was mentioned repeatedly during the conference, as were data from the most relevant sources for open access journals (Directory of Open Access Journals, DOAJ, which now contains 2492 journals; http://www.doaj.org) and repositories (Directory of Open Access Repositories, DOAR, which now lists 830 repositories; http://www.opendoar.org), and Sherpa/Romeo, which provides information on publishers' copyright policies and self-archiving (http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/projects/sherparomeo.html). Discussions and presentations contributed to clarify the different perspectives of open access, pointing out the distinction between open access journals (maintaining the traditional peer review system) and institutional repositories (promoting self-archiving of research output in different stages of publication: pre-print, post-print, or published articles).

Supporting open access

The first session of the conference was devoted to support of the open access movement by the international community. Jean Claude Guedon from the University of Montreal (Canada) gave the introductory lecture on the advantages of open access for guaranteeing better science for both scientists and society. He was followed by Derek Law from the University of Strathclyde (UK), who clearly pointed out the advantages of open access, in terms of visibility and accountability, compared with the most controversial impact factor strategy. Francis Andre from the INIST, CNRS (Institut de l'Information Scientifique et Technique of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) reported the French experience with the Hyper Article on Line (HAL) archive, and Peter Morgan from Cambridge University (UK) talked about their experience with DSpace for capturing research output.

The second session was devoted to the Italian situation and there were exciting and impassioned presentations from researchers (Enrico Alleva, a neuroscientist who pointed out, among other things, the importance of open access and digital repositories to make data available to the entire community, so that experiments are not repeated unnecessarily; and Alessandro Giuliani, a biophysicist who discussed the role of open access as antidote to the self-referencing nature of scientific publications) and from librarians and information specialists (Maurella Della Seta, Valentina Comba and Franco Toni), who reported statistics on open access and citation patterns and gave very practical examples to help researchers to deposit their papers in institutional archives. Every session was followed by a lively discussion that emphasized the participants' deep interest in ways of making scientific information available and how to evaluate it.

Policies and initiatives

The third session was devoted to policies for open access and covered the experiences of Italian universities (Roberto Delle Donne) and research institutes (Paola De Castro); plans for the next International conference "Berlin 5", which will be held in Padua in 2007 (Laura Tallandini); and the Pleiadi initiative, a digital platform for the Italian Open Access Community (Paola Gargiulo).

Last, but not least, the fourth session was devoted to the opportunities for developing open access initiatives by different services, taking into consideration the relationship between science and society (Adriana Valente). Copyright issues, which often may prevent researchers from archiving their work, were clearly presented, as were their solutions (Antonella De Robbio). Experiences with different digital archives were also reported (Antonio Fantoni, for the digital library at the University la Sapienza of Rome; Paolo Roazzi for the digital repository of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità).

A new revolution

As a general final consideration, we can state that the impact of the open-access publishing model is creating a new revolution in information dissemination, and nowadays most publishers consent to articles being deposited in digital archives. While the advantages of accessing free information on the internet are widely recognized, there is still some confusion and reluctance on the part of authors to use open access channels for their publications or to deposit their articles in institutional archives.

The conference proceedings will be published in the series Rapporti ISTISAN, edited by the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, and will be available on its website (www.iss.it). The conference abstract book can also be accessed through the website (http://www.iss.it/binary/publ/cont/0393-5620_2006_I_06_C9.1164010432.pdf), and most of the PowerPoint presentations are available in E-lis, the open archive for library and information science (http://eprints.rclis.org).

Paola De Castro (Istituto Superiore di Sanità)
paola.decastro@iss.it

Closing the gap between editing practice and theory: METM 06

Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' Meeting, Barcelona, 27-28 October 2006

The 105 attendees from 20 different countries in the Mediterranean region judged the Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' second international professional development event, on the theme "International communication—promising practices", as successful as its first international meeting in 2005.[1] Practitioners of communication- and language-related professions (translators, author's editors, copyeditors, journal editors, publishers, medical writers and bibliometricians) used the two packed days to learn about new solutions, brush up on practical skills, and exchange views with colleagues from both professional and academic settings.

This reporter, however, was saddened by the absence of colleagues from non-Schengen countries who planned to attend but were prevented from doing so because of difficulties in obtaining a visa. Forcing experts to stay at home, rather than facilitating dialog and free exchange of information and opinion, seems more likely to hinder rather than aid mutual understanding and good professional practice in science, technical and medical (STM) communication across the globe.

Programme overview

In plenary sessions participants learned about plagiarism, got advice on how to meet the needs of demanding clients, and were introduced to an illustrious group of international organizations for communications professionals (including EASE, of course). Intensive training workshops covered appropriate citation, statistics, the genre approach to translating and editing, effective annotation of texts by authors' editors, and punctuation as a tool to enhance text flow. Panel sessions dealt with coaching oral communication, the new European translation standard EN15038, academic English, time management, the history of translation in the Mediterranean region, "accidental" interpreting, and successful freelancing. Short workshops concentrated on alternatives to the impact factor, point-by-point replies to editors and peer reviewers, non-directive listening for translators and communications coaches, and journals' instructions to authors. The programme also included a range of presentations on topics such as visual aids to support lectures, authors' editing at a distance, the overlapping roles of authors and editors, ghostwriting in medical journals, translating a minoritized language, translation in undergraduate instruction in medical English, and teaching publishing skills to researchers whose first language is not English. The full programme along with abstracts, some PowerPoint presentations, and other resources developed by some of the speakers can be consulted at www.metmeetings.org/METM 06.

Highlights from plenary sessions

Miguel Roig, a psychology professor at St John's University in New York, has done research on plagiarism and served as advisor to the US Government's Office of Research Integrity. He reminded the audience that ideas can be stolen or misattributed from any medium, including verbal communications and unpublished sources, not just published material. His research suggests that the actual incidence of plagiarism is much higher than claimed, although it is hard to determine the true incidence. Often overlooked is the problem of self-plagiarism, which misleads readers into believing that unoriginal material is new, and skews the literature by overestimating or underestimating statistical effects in reviews and meta-analyses.

Chris Durban, a freelance English-to-French translator based in Paris and president of the Société Française des Traducteurs (SFT), is well known for her efforts to "raise the bar" in the translating profession, particularly in economic and financial translation. She explained how to satisfy "premium clients", which she defined as those who give advance notice of work, value the translator's input, are willing to answer translator's questions about the material, and pay well and on time. Durban reminded the audience that despite the increasing numbers of foreign language speakers in the world, the key skill truly professional translators sell is good writing, in addition to their competencies in languages and subject matter.

The panel session,"Organizations for communication professionals—what do they offer you?" gave participants a chance to acquaint themselves with several respected associations that work to raise professional standards in writing, publishing and translating around the world.[2] In attendance were EASE President Arjan Polderman, Council of Science Editors President-Elect (and past president of the World Association of Medical Editors) Ana Marusic, and Farhad Handjani, Secretary-General of the Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME). Also on hand were Sheryl Hinkkanen, Secretary-General of the International Federation of Translators, Chris Durban representing the SFT, and Elise Langdon-Neuner, editor of the European Medical Writers Association journal *The Write Stuff*.

Communicators at the wordface and in academia

Interdisciplinary events such as the MET meetings and the recent PPRISEAL conference[3] are closing the gap between theory and practice in STM communication. Academics from departments of translation, philology, and languages for specific purposes are discovering that some practices predicted to work on the basis of theory have already been shown to be effective, or at least promising, by wordface professionals. Likewise, seasoned wordfacers are finding that not all theory is disconnected from practice. Both academics and practitioners are beginning to understand how the roles of translators, gatekeeper editors and authors' editors overlap. Expertise in areas currently identified with a variety of acronyms such EAP (English for Academic Purposes), ESP (English for Specific Purposes), EIL (English as an International Language),[4] (EAL) English as an Additional Language,[3] or ISE (International Scientific English) can inform promising practices developed by colleagues who solve real-world communication challenges for both non-native and native users of English. In turn, academics can learn how to refine their theories and develop testable hypotheses by observing first-hand how wordface professionals meet their clients' real-life needs.

Karen Shashok
kshashok@auna.com

References

1. Shashok K. 2006. English language professionals on their mark in the Mediterranean. *European Science Editing* 32(1):15-16.
2. The websites of the organizations represented are at www.councilscienceeditors.org (CSE), http://www.emro.who.int/EMAME/ (EMAME), www.emwa.org (EMWA), www.fit-ift.org (FIT), www.sft.fr (SFT), and www.wame.org (WAME).
3. Publishing and presenting research internationally: issues for speakers of English as an additional language. La Laguna, Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain, 11-13 January 2007. http://webpages.ull.es/users/ppriseal/
4. Benfield JR, Feak CB. 2006. How authors can cope with the burden of English as an international language. *Chest* 129(69):1228-1230.

Post-conference workshops

Workshops run after the 9th EASE Conference held at Palac Larischa, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland , 19 June 2006

Two roads to open access

The programme of the workshop was ambitious and covered many topics related to open access to scholarly publications, from institutional repositories to open journals and from funders" policies and copyright issues to researchers" behaviour towards open access, handled respectively by four invited speakers well known in the "open access movement': Neil Jacobs (JISC [Joint Information Systems Committee], Bristol, UK); Bill Hubbard (SHERPA [Securing a Hybrid Environment for Research Preservation and Access], University of Nottingham, UK); Alice Keefer (University of Barcelona, Spain), and John Willinsky (University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada).

Neil Jacobs asked why self-archiving needs a national infrastructure and discussed answers such as name authority, semantic interoperability, common policies, complex objects, persistent identifiers, preservation, authentication, copyright, and de-duplication. He presented an infrastructure for a national network of repositories based on four levels (see p14 of this issue): preservation, provision, service providers and aggregators, and end-user services.

In the second presentation, Bill Hubbard asked some practical questions about repositories: what are they? what do they do? Repositories help institutions to manage their intellectual production and encourage wider use of open access information assets (eprints, theses, e-learning objects, etc). Visibility and dissemination of publications benefit institutions, researchers, and society in general. Bill also provided information about SHERPA partners and their future projects.

Alice Keefer (see p16) considered authors' attitudes to and knowledge of open access and self-archiving. Some features of authors that hinder the growth of open access are ignorance about copyright, threats in the author-pays model, and awareness of open access but lack of commitment or resistance to change. Training, dissemination, understanding of the movement, marketing efforts, services to assist authors, and policies encouraging open access are some solutions to these obstacles. Another effective action is the enthusiastic word-of-mouth testimony of believers in open access.

John Willinsky is the director of the Public Knowledge Project (PKP) known internationally by the development of three very useful open source tools, which are OAI-PMH compliant: Open Journal System (OJS), Open Journal Conference (used to create this workshop's website), and the PKP Metadata Harvester. His main concern about open access is how information can achieve a broader dissemination. Some reasons he presented to support open access were services provided to authors and readers, the higher impact of articles, the access to institutional research outputs, and the social role open access can play among "developing communities" in removing barriers to scientific communication.

Thanks to the Institute of Open Society (OSI) for its grant to support this workshop, and to all those who took part in the workshop, especially the speakers.

R Melero
rmelero@iata.csic.es

Statistics for journal editors: learning to be sceptical

> "So much of science is driven by the convenience of round numbers." Chris Palmer (chris.palmer@medschl.cam.ac.uk)

There was just a hint of apprehension in the air when our small group gathered at Jagellonian University in Krakow for the one-day post-conference workshop on statistics for journal editors. Most of us possessed only minimal knowledge of the subject or admitted to having critical gaps in our ability to assess the quality of evidence-based results. But that's why we were here. In the cosy atmosphere of a classroom seminar led by Dr Chris Palmer of the Centre for Applied Medical Statistics at the University of Cambridge, we had all gained confidence and skill by the end of the day.

The course very wisely avoided technical aspects to concentrate on general principles and checklists that the author, editor, or peer reviewer might use in evaluating whether results have been properly presented and interpreted. These were complemented by examples drawn from major medical journals and accompanied by work sheets and discussion of certain common pitfalls that, once identified, could be avoided.

Among the issues covered were: types of study design; types of data; use of standard error vs standard deviation; when to use which statistical test; why confidence intervals are generally preferred; the CONSORT statement for reporting randomized trials; describing study strengths and weaknesses; what the research really shows – assessing causality; and common pitfalls detected by statistical referees.

The workshop provided an excellent introduction to a complex and subtle subject. It taught us the importance of maintaining a skeptical frame of mind, of asking the right questions, and of being wary of statistical information. It's not that statistics lie, but they must be handled with care.

Alison McKelvey Clayson
alison@clayson.org

Sponsorship scheme – call for sponsors and candidates!

Council discussed the value of the sponsorship scheme at its last meeting and decided it was well worth continuing. EASE's Secretary, Sheila Evered, has therefore been galvanised into action to re-activate it and has already been in touch with all sponsors and those sponsored. If you fall into one of these two categories and have NOT heard from Sheila, please get in touch with her. You may not be on her list.

For those unaware of the scheme, it is for prospective members in countries with currency exchange problems or some other form of financial constraint, for whom another member of EASE pays their annual membership fee at half the full rate – currently £33. If you know of anyone who might fit this category, please bring the scheme to their attention and ask them to contact Sheila. She also says a few more sponsors are needed, so if you are willing to pay an extra £33 a year for someone to benefit from membership of EASE, please get in touch with her.

Viewpoints

AuthorAID: Developmental editing assistance for researchers in developing countries

Two critical observations, not ours alone, have provoked the AuthorAID concept:

- Research and policy debates about how to reduce poverty, improve population health, and hasten development, too often exclude the voices and insights of those closest to the greatest problems.
- Resources spent on research to tackle these problems are largely wasted if the research results do not get published, communicated to others.

Two populations – people in possession of immense experience, knowledge, and skills – could help solve this problem with developing world researchers:

- Senior scientists from all over the world, who are also experienced authors, appear willing to volunteer to mentor younger researcher/authors in developing countries when they are at or close to retirement, if a linking system were in place.
- Authors' editors, a resource familiar in Europe but largely unknown in developing countries, would similarly contribute their editing and teaching experience to help researchers eager to publish.

Emerging information and computer technology (ICT) makes it possible to create a global knowledge community dedicated to communicating science. (And surely it need not be limited to science.)

For the last three years we have explored and elaborated the AuthorAID concept: modelling it in a project for the Rockefeller Foundation; designing a research project to evaluate it rigorously; and offering it to organizations that want to try it on their own.

The concept of developmental editing

From our experience with health researchers in more than a dozen countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe who had received Rockefeller Foundation grants, we learned how labour intensive the process of developmental editing can be. We learned of the struggles to write in English, to conform to unfamiliar editorial conventions, and to resolve questions of authorship and author order. Either because of the articles that they receive or because of their own lack of interest, we also learned that major journals are often inattentive to development issues.

Yet everywhere we travelled and talked with scientific colleagues, particularly those who are no longer driven to add another article to their CVs, to administer another research project, or to manage another academic department, the majority seem eager to mentor developing country researchers and to help them publish their work. For mentoring one manuscript project per year, they would forswear authorship in favour of acknowledgement. That these mentors should have no purpose other than assisting their less experienced colleagues distinguishes the AuthorAID approach from that of international research collaborations where co-authors inevitably negotiate author order, among many other issues.

Acknowledgement appears to be the missing element sought by many "authors' editors". Although affluent institutions now employ editors to ensure that their researchers write successful grant proposal and scientific articles, these editors (and a far larger group that freelances in the open market) get little or no recognition. Perhaps authors don't like to admit the importance of editorial help to success in achieving publication. Authors' editors are invisible to the point where very few colleagues in developing countries even knew that such editors exist. Yet they are the ones with the accumulated experience and teaching materials that will make AuthorAID succeed.

Using ICT

To support an AuthorAID programme that would match scientific mentors and professional editors with developing world researchers, we have explored ICT, where new ideas and technologies emerge ever more rapidly. Beyond simply using a website and e-mail to match mentors with researchers, AuthorAID will use and modify software developed for manuscript tracking to connect authors, editors, and mentors who are far removed from each other, to share drafts and comments. An AuthorAID knowledge community can do much more. Its website can be a place to share materials and personal experience, and to create collaborations independent of any formal matching process. The demands of an AuthorAID knowledge community are likely to elicit continuing innovation from the creative geniuses who have elaborated wikis and blogs.

Demonstration project and website

A series of developments make us confident that the AuthorAID concept will succeed, be adopted for many problem areas, disciplines, languages, regions, and forms of written communication. Early support came from the Council of Science Editors, where the organization and its Task Force on Science Journals, Poverty, and Human Development adopted AuthorAID. Together we have exploited the concept of underwriting so that science publishers and others who are willing to provide continuing support for AuthorAID can help. In addition to JPHP, Inc, our own not-for-profit corporation, and the Council of Science Editors, AuthorAID has received contributions from Science, Nature, Cell, PNAS, Environmental Health Perspectives, and the Genetics Society of America. The Swedish International Development Agency made an AuthorAID planning grant in the spring of 2006. We have asked INASP (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications) to serve as "host institution" for a five year demonstration project, and they have sent the AuthorAID proposal to other development agencies. The demonstration will begin by offering editorial services to participants in two scientific research networks deeply involved with researchers in Africa as well as in other regions of the developing world: the Tropical Disease Research Programme at the World Health Organization and the International Foundation for Science. The networks will help identify promising manuscript projects and AuthorAID staff at INASP will match these with mentors and editors. INASP will also build AuthorAID's global knowledge community website and reach out to future AuthorAID participants through workshops in Africa. We await word about funding for the demonstration.

A demonstration project that will test the AuthorAID concept in the field is important to long term success, as careful monitoring will show what works and what does not. Because the demonstration project will build the website home for the global knowledge community, we are already moving beyond it to engage others to experiment with the concept. We feel strongly that AuthorAID can best fulfil its promise if all involved will encourage creative replication and adaptation. In that spirit, the knowledge community will invite everyone to use lessons emerging from the demonstration – for creating AuthorAID versions in any field of interest, to extend assistance to more groups of authors. We hope lessons from all such efforts will appear on the AuthorAID website to inform and stimulate further experimentation.

Helping to set up AuthorAID programmes

The Council of Science Editors has decided to dedicate space on its website to a less formal process of mentoring to help journal editors get promising manuscripts to where they can be published. The Forum of African Medical Editors has been particularly eager for this CSE contribution. The CSE Task Force on Science Journals, Poverty, and Human Development will be exploring other ways to advance AuthorAID.

The International Society for Environmental Epidemiology, with about 1000 scientist members around the world, will create an AuthorAID programme early next year to assist member researchers from developing countries write manuscripts that can get published.

Presentation of the AuthorAID concept seems always to elicit questions and requests: How can I get help now? Can we start an AuthorAID in our country? African colleagues have expressed the greatest interest, but the two latest requests for starting AuthorAID projects have come from Vietnam and Hungary.

We invite our colleagues at EASE to join in – by creating an EASE AuthorAID project, or in any other way.

This article is based on a talk presented at the Ninth General Assembly and Conference of the European Association of Science Editors, Kraków, Poland, 15–18 June 2006.

We thank Karen Shashok and Mary Ellen Kerans for teaching us a great deal about author's editors, in person during the June 2006 EASE meeting in Kraków, and previously through a particularly insightful article: K Shashok. 2001. Author's editors: facilitators of science information transfer. *Learned Publishing* 14(2):113–121.

Anthony Robbins and Phyllis Freeman (Co-Editors, Journal of Public Health Policy)
anthony.robbins@tufts.edu; phyllis.freeman@umb.edu

Inaccessible science literature in Eastern Europe

We live in a time of intensive global exchange of scientific information. What was just a dream only 15 years ago has now become an everyday reality. By some estimates, there are already more than 20,000 electronic scientific journals in the world, and this number continues to grow rapidly. In many respects this is the reason why Eastern European countries now have complete and easy access to scientific literature from the West. Currently all major East European universities and institutes subscribe to full-text databases from the major Western science publishers (often this became possible because of grants from Western foundations such as those of Soros and Gates). But there is another problem: Western scientists lack access to Eastern European scientific journals – and without such access the real comprehensive exchange of scientific knowledge is impossible.

The situation, as is the case with Western journals, can be improved by electronic versions of science journals from Eastern European countries. But the problem is that not many of these journals have electronic versions. The typical example would be Russia – still the most powerful country, in terms of the development of science, in Eastern Europe. It has thousands of science journal titles, but only a couple of hundred of them have electronic versions. This can be explained by several factors. In our opinion, the main constraining factors in the development of online versions of journals in many of the Eastern European countries are: financial (insufficient profit), organizational (absence of qualified personnel), technological (absence of proper hardware and software) and psychological ("internet-phobia" of many journal editors – often because of their age).

Obstacles

Some subjective, but also important, factors impede development of electronic scientific publications in many Eastern European countries: insufficient concentration of journals (no scientific publishing house there owns very many journals, mainly only a few dozen journals per publisher); most journals are published by research or educational organizations, not by commercial publishing houses, and a single university or institute may issue only a few titles (as this is usually not a profitable activity); electronic science publishing is mostly done by individual enthusiasts,

---

Correspondence

Shades of grey

In their recent *Handbook* chapter Paola De Castro and Sandra Salinetti give an excellent description of grey literature.[1] It is not a function of commercial publishing, and it is intended for practical purposes rather than prestige. Whether it consists of leaflets, teaching material or negative results of clinical trials, each form presumably has its own rules. This is why one should keep the process as simple as possible. The most important aspects are awareness of copyright law, careful checking of key points, and correct tables and figures.

Because access is nearly unlimited, however, there is a risk that material intended only for technical or publish

Authors' reply

In the open access era the awareness of grey literature as a fundamental source of information is increasing, hence the necessity to empower authors and issuing organizations to guarantee the quality production of all documents circulating under the umbrella term of grey literature (namely technical or research reports, operational procedures, statistical data, "datuments", etc). We are grateful to EASE for promoting the Guidelines for the production of technical reports (in which we are directly involved as authors and promoters), because grey literature is still a unique reference source for detailed and unbiased information or negative results or new publishing houses, and neither has a pre-existing market niche.

There are also some technical obstacles preventing the rise of electronic science publishing in many of the Eastern European countries: no uniform protocols for electronic scientific publication, when significant amounts of science lie in databases that are not matched to each other technologically or organizationally; no laws to ensure that uniform legal conditions apply to electronic publication of science; no common agreement yet reached for the protection of authors' copyright for the electronic editions; incomplete compliance with the Bologna Process in some parts of Eastern Europe, especially parts of the former USSR (the Bologna Process deals with, in particular, standards for storing and accessing dissertations); and difficult politico-economic conditions for science and education in many Eastern European countries. Thus it is difficult to hope for a large number of new electronic scientific editions from Eastern European countries to appear in the near future.

Indexes and registers

Could the Science Citation Index (SCI) provide Western scientists with the objective picture of the level of scientific development in Eastern European countries? We believe not. Of course, the data provided by SCI are accurate, but unfortunately they don't represent the complete picture, because only a small part of Eastern European science output is included in this index – basically only those journals that have English versions (less than one-tenth of the total). And, unfortunately, many Eastern European journals, including those well respected by local scientific communities, do not have this feature – a fact that significantly reduces their chances of getting into SCI.

The majority of Eastern European journals provide the abstracts in English. But the absence of full English text of a paper gives Western scientists difficulties in familiarisation with the full results of a piece of work, resulting in a sharp fall in citation of such papers by Western scientists. Science from Eastern Europe needs to be distributed in its entirety in English – so that it can be easily accessed. But until this situation improves, we can imagine some supplementary solutions. National "science citation indexes" in Eastern European countries could include local scientific publications written in national languages. Then we shoul-create interface(s) between citations of Eastern European authors in their national indexes and the international SCI database. In such a way a more comprehensive inclusion of scientific publications from East European countries into the global scientific process could be achieved.

Another supplementary action could be the establishment in each East European country of a national "register of scientific activity". Such registers have already been introduced in some countries and they can contain lists of local scientific and educational organizations together with some measures of scientific activity (such as numbers of researchers, educators and students, budget, information about structural divisions and scientific directions). These registers can also list the names of local scientists – authors of scientific publications – in both the national language and in English (including possible variants of English spelling) and contact information, position, research areas, information about her/his publications and other scientific achievements, participation in conferences, membership in scientific societies, numbers of doctoral students, etc. The national registers could also contain complete lists of the local scientific journals with detailed information on each of them (including their thematic orientation, editorial board, years of publication, contact information). And, of course, such national registers should also contain cross-referencing tools and be accessible in English – for familiarisation by foreign scientists.

Promoting comprehensive inclusion

We would also like to outline some other priority directions which would, in our opinion, promote more comprehensive inclusion of Eastern European science into global scientific development, simultaneously creating additional capacities for the development of science at national level. Among such technical and organizational directions could be an acceleration in the establishment of the national, unified, full-text archives of local scientific publications of different types (scientific papers, monographs, dissertations, reports, preprints, conferences proceedings, etc) and the creation on their basis of national scientific digital libraries with search opportunities in English (e.g. based on the Open Access EPrints or DSpace, metadata technologies). However, for successful movement in this direction there should be a major support at both state and grant-giver levels.

Among other, mostly economic and legal, directions, we would like to mention the necessity of development of modern economic models for profitable scientific electronic publishing taking into account specific national conditions in some of the Eastern European countries. Also, the development of modern electronic publishing technologies would allow reduction in costs during production of high-quality peer-reviewed electronic journals using internet technologies. Development of national legal frameworks regulating all parties participating in electronic publishing, and widening the use of the Creative Commons licenses, would also be highly desirable.

In the near future, we can envisage establishment of a close collaboration between the above-mentioned scientific electronic libraries of Eastern European countries, and even the creation of regional scientific information systems of some kind. Creation of such integrated networks of electronic information resources of digital libraries, and information centres would be highly advantageous for Eastern Europe, because it would ensure timely and authentic access to the bibliographic information and primary sources of scientific and technical literature in the region.

Through all of the above, intensification of cooperation, coordination and integration of Eastern European scientific activity with Western science, and facilitation of corresponding exchange of scientific information, could be achieved. This would also bring closer a "world level" of information services for Eastern European science, in the sense of both quality and efficiency of use and updating of the scientific information resources, and, thus, would seriously contribute to the further development of science worldwide.

The author is grateful to Roderick Hunt for help in the preparation of the presentation and its delivery during the Kraków Conference, June 2006.

Volodymyr Lysenko (Information School, University of Washington, Seattle, USA)
vlysenko@u.washington.edu

Communicating science to the general public

In the last sixty years man has landed on the moon, achieved nuclear fission, and discovered antibiotics. But how many inventions, while raising hopes up have ended up being failures? Who is to blame: scientists pursuing publicity or media searching for the hottest news around?

Scientists – society – journalists, without doubt a triangle of mutual discrepancies. Science journalists do not create their own stories but relay information acquired from scientists. They cannot prescribe therapies and they do not heal, but their reports can have profound effects since just as an inappropriate procedure might kill the patient, the same very scared patient might be killed by the words that prompt him to postpone crucial therapy. Today, newspapers and TV and radio stations devote a lot of attention to current health and medical issues, but to what end? Stories keep appearing under the umbrella of "Health". Although most of these stories are devoted to sport and physical activities, the disadvantages of smoking, and so on, very often many articles have little in common with health – they scare with names of diseases, horrifying descriptions of certain afflictions, visions of disability and death. Yet they draw the attention of millions.

Explaining the essence

Medical documentation is often associated with rather specific nomenclature, laconic language, and a penchant for acronyms, which hardly makes the information available to the lay public. But how can the essence of current medicine and medical developments be conveyed without either overcomplicating or, conversely, oversimplifying it? Genes, cytochrome p-450, monoclonal antibodies… They all look nice as pictures, but how to describe them to the people without a medical background? How can the essence of some diseases be explained? Not the flu or hay fever, but those disorders that affect the body and its physiology, such as urine incontinence or cancer? Not genes or monoclonal antibodies – but pain, suffering, and sometimes even shame.

In Poland, the true ambassador of cancer victims was not a journalist writing about the disease or an opinion-leader in medical science, but the host of one of the major Polish news programmes, Marcin Pawlowski. The whole country was with him during his struggle against the disease and the whole country bore witness to his death. In retrospect, the only answer to the question medical journalists must ask themselves – "how to describe cancer?" – is: ask the patient! Ask the human being behind the disease!

Too often the public does not have access to reliable information, and it is here that journalists can play a part. People in Poland, as elsewhere, are embarrassed to talk about urinary incontinence. When the weekly news magazine I work for, "Polityka", finally overcame its reluctance to write about such a "wet and smelly" topic, it generated massive interest among readers, and particularly among women, children, and elderly people. The article ended by including the telephone number and website address of the Polish patient association (NTM – To Live Normally). The association received dozens of phone calls from people who wanted to find help. Thanks to the article these patients found doctors and good advice.

Drama and danger

I do not believe in scaring readers into preparing them for coming pestilence (for example, bird flu), even though I appreciate that sometimes articles need to begin with some attention-grabbing introduction to put the point across. Generalizing is quite typical for the media, and maybe even necessary. There might be just one article devoted to breast cancer in a magazine and every one of the 100 women, each afflicted with one of the 100 various kinds of breast cancer, will assume the article is about her. About her and no one else! Dramatizing and thus raising the "temperature" of the text has become the main requirement when it comes to modern journalism, specialized journalism included.

However, the major breakthroughs of today might well later turn out to be a huge disappointment. Such dangers lurk especially in the overenthusiastic descriptions of brand new drugs and therapies. Conveying information is much easier than verifying it, a truism that often underlies fraud. Scientific fraud is not the invention of our times. The case of the South Korean biologist, Woo Suk Hanga, who lied in his publications about developing stem cells, is not the only case in the recent years. The sources of such appalling behaviour are many, but they mostly stem from the need to achieve fame and all the glamour that goes with it. Are we able to spot and fight scientific fraud, especially in the world of the internet, where anyone can publish anything that can be read by everyone the very same minute, even on the other side of the world? Medical journalism requires specific and rather broad knowledge of the matter that is being discussed in the text, and collaboration with experts contributes to its credibility and also helps to nullify doubts. Journalists must learn to identify true statements and observations from the numerous misleading and exaggerated claims. Yet scientific truth is not entirely objective – it is, after all, what the majority of the scientists in a field claim to be accurate and proven beyond doubt. As an extension of this, fraud is what scientists say it is.

Scandals that are overblown only exacerbate the conflict between those that say fraud is an exception and those that claim that fraud is widespread. For some, public denunciation of a scientist–conman is a ritual that cleanses the scientific world, but for others it is an incontrovertible proof that if one scientist lies then they all must be guilty of the same. The scientific world has indeed seen a lot of fraud, much of which occurs on the periphery and does not contribute to the overall progress.

Evidence-based medicine – this is what modern science and the academic press need to adhere to on a daily basis. And what about the media? Are we able to stay faithful to evidence-based medicine in the face of the contradictory information available via the internet? When writing about a topic, journalists have to ask themselves whether the information is something the public wants to read or hear about. Moreover, this information does not always equate with mainstream opinion. One should bear in mind the popularity of so-called natural medicine, the medicine that does not have a firm scientific basis. An ancient Japanese proverb says it all: baka ni tsukeru kusuri wa nai! There is no medicine to cure stupidity!

How to reconcile sound information, based on facts and available to everyone, with HOPE and its magical properties that a patient as a reader is searching for? Puzzled, I ask myself this every time I reach for a pen and start writing about medicine. And today, let me ask you.

This article is a shortened version of the presentation given at the Ninth General Assembly and Conference of the European Association of Science Editors, Kraków, Poland, 15–18 June 2006.

Pawel Walewski
P.Walewski@polityka.com.pl

Blogs, bloggers, blogosphere: introducing medical blogs

In December 2006 the first ever conference on Healthcare Blogging took place.[1] The event was targeted mainly at healthcare executives from hospitals, companies and organisations, in response to the need for a more consumer-oriented healthcare era. Beyond this, the event is also an indicator of the emergence of an important, yet still somewhat unconventional communication tool for medicine in general – blogging.

"Define it, please"

The most classical and widely used definition of blogs is that of "personal journals posted on the internet"; the name blog comes from weblog. Just like in a diary, the owner adds new posts on a regular basis. Blogs, however, are written in reverse chronological order, with the most recent posting on the website appearing first. They are not secret or private by nature like diaries are, because they are open to a public – be it the general public or a smaller selected audience.

A very important feature of blogs is that they are social and participatory: readers, instead of being passive consumers of information, can contribute to the blog and thus become active participants. The media world is discussing more and more this 'new media' which acts more like a place for conversation than a one-way information channel.

"I only trust numbers, so just give me the stats"

The emergence of blogs has also meant that dictionaries have needed to adopt new words, such as blogging, blogger, and blogosphere. "Blogging is another way of having conversations," claims an article from a survey on new media in *The Economist.*[2] There is also a search engine for blogs, called Technorati,[3] which is also a blog monitoring service, currently tracking 50 million blogs. According to them, a new blog is created every second of every day.[2] There are about 1.2 million posts daily, or about 50,000 blog updates an hour.

"Back to business … I mean, to medicine"

Blogs vary in reach from those that are widely read to those that are restricted to small circles of friends. They also vary in topic, from blogs purely for entertainment, to professional, specialized blogs. This latter category is where medical blogs fit in.

Many medical blogs have evolved due to a change in their function. They moved away from simple online diaries of health professionals to being complex science communication tools. As they increase in number and incorporate more varied topics and features, their presence in the medical landscape is emerging.

Here are some examples to illustrate how various and thus resourceful medical blogs can be.

- www.casesblog.blogspot.com is mostly a clinical oriented blog, with many medical commentaries and clinical cases written by doctors at Case Western Reserve University.
- http://randomreality.blogware.com/ is an award-winning blog that combines clinical stories with touches of real life of a London Ambulance Service doctor. Some posts are even written from the mobile phone in the ambulance.
- http://medicalmadhouse.blogspot.com uses a very personal touch to share the thoughts of a young doctor as he walks the path of his internal medicine residency.

- www.gruntdoc.com is a lively and friendly blog of an emergency medicine doctor who discusses medical cases, practical aspects of care and aspects of everyday life in the emergency room. He often links to various other blogs, websites or articles.
- www.codeblog.com is full of personal and often very practical nursing stories. It also encourages patients and other healthcare workers to share their stories.
- www.kevinmd.com/blog posts medical news and controversies touching all aspects of medicine be it policy, clinical or social. The author, a primary care physician, aims to initiate debate so it is interesting to read the comments from readers.
- cut-to-cure.blogspot.com and surgeonsblog.blogspot.com are two of the proofs that also surgeons appreciate and do blogging. These blogs have a lot of educational content, including images, but also discuss the socio-economic aspects of medicine.

Authoring a blog is a demanding task as it requires regular entries and consistency so that readers keep coming back to it. Therefore some blogs are short lived as their authors decide they cannot commit to this task anymore, for example shrinkette.blogspot.com or medpunit.blogspot.com.

"Sounds cool, but… so what?"

Blogging can have implications for science communication. For the readers, blogs provide educational information in a more real-life social atmosphere, promote critical thinking, and might stimulate medical writing. For the authors, they enhance writing, communication, collaboration, reading, and information-gathering skills.

Blogs can hold potential for medical education. For patients, they can serve as a support group by getting in touch with other patients, or as a platform to ask questions or discuss medical issues. This kind of communication can be a valuable tool to educate patients. For doctors or medical students, writing about previous patient experiences in the free – somehow natural – form of a blog can also be a learning tool, because writing helps to order thoughts, bringing up new questions and re-evaluating medical decisions.

There is no clear reaction from the medical media towards blogs, because a feature of blogs is to display unfiltered – not peer-reviewed – information and a subjective perspective based on personal experiences. Also, writing on a blog does not follow rules for style or structure. However, there has been increasing talk about the need, role and importance of personal knowledge in medicine, along with evidence-based knowledge.[4, 5] Blogs are a good platform for sharing this personal knowledge, and allowing active participation from readers increases the benefit.

The medical world, more familiar with formal protocols and evidence-based rules, still does not quite know what to make of the more creative approach of blogs. Even if it is not sure how big the impact of blogs will be in medicine, they have already gained a place out there in the "real" world. It is up to us if medicine makes the best of the potential of this new media. And considering that the Forbes magazine has a "best medical blogs" category every year, it must be something important after all.

This article is based on a talk presented at the Ninth General Assembly and Conference of the European Association of Science Editors, Kraków, Poland, 15–18 June 2006.

Irina Haivas, Student BMJ Student Advisor,
Gr.T.Popa University Iaşi, Romania
ihaivas@yahoo.com

Traian Mihaescu, Editor, BMJ Romanian edition,
Clinica de Pneumologie Iaşi, România
tmihaescu@mail.dntis.ro

References

1. The Medical Blog Network. 7 July 2006. http://www.healthvoices.com/conference
2. It's the links, stupid. 20 April 2006. http://economist.com/surveys/displaystory.cfm?story_id=6794172
3. Technorati: who's saying what, right now. http://www.technorati.com
4. Haivas I, Mihaescu T. 2006. A developing country perspective on personal knowledge and medical blogs as tools for personal knowledge sharing. http://bmj.bmjjournals.com/cgi/eletters/332/7534/129#127196
5. Sweeney, K. 2006. Personal knowledge. *BMJ* 332:129–130.

The Information Environment and digital repositories

Repositories enable self-archiving, the "green road" to open access. The architecture described in this paper is the Information Environment,[1] which is a way of representing the possible entities and relationships that enable people to use information effectively, be that information in repositories, journals, or data archives, and be it open access or held in subscription-based resources. However, given the focus of the workshop, this paper will concentrate mainly on the Information Environment as a national architecture for open access digital repositories for research papers.

The first question to ask is why would a national architecture be needed for digital repositories? There are two possible objections:

- Technically, so long as the content is in an OAI-PMH-compliant repository, then service providers can harvest it and build services for users. There is no need for an elaborate architecture.
- Even if there were such a need, it is international (like the research it seeks to support), not national.

To take these in reverse order. There is indeed a need for an international architecture but, given the realities of funding streams, national performance indicators and so on, the international architecture is likely, at least in part, to be built from national components. But is there a need for an architecture at all? The answer is yes, both at a strategic level and at a more operational level. Strategically, such an architecture provides a national focus for local or institutional work; definitions of best practice, standards compliance, and quality control; a basis for preservation work; and a level playing field for those wishing to share digital objects. Operationally, a national architecture can act as the basis for name authority, syntactic and semantic interoperability, persistent identifiers, use of complex objects, authentication and authorisation, de-duplication and version control.

Given these arguments, among many others, what national repositories architecture is proposed in the Information Environment? It is shown (figure) as a four-layer approach, with a sidebar of shared infrastructure services, which are the “glue” that hold the architecture together.

(1) Preservation—Entities working in this space offer archival storage facilities, such as the British Library’s Digital Object Management system.[2] The JISC-funded projects Sherpa-DP[3] and PRESERV[4] are also working in this space, developing the elements for an OAIS-compliant[5] but distributed model for preservation.

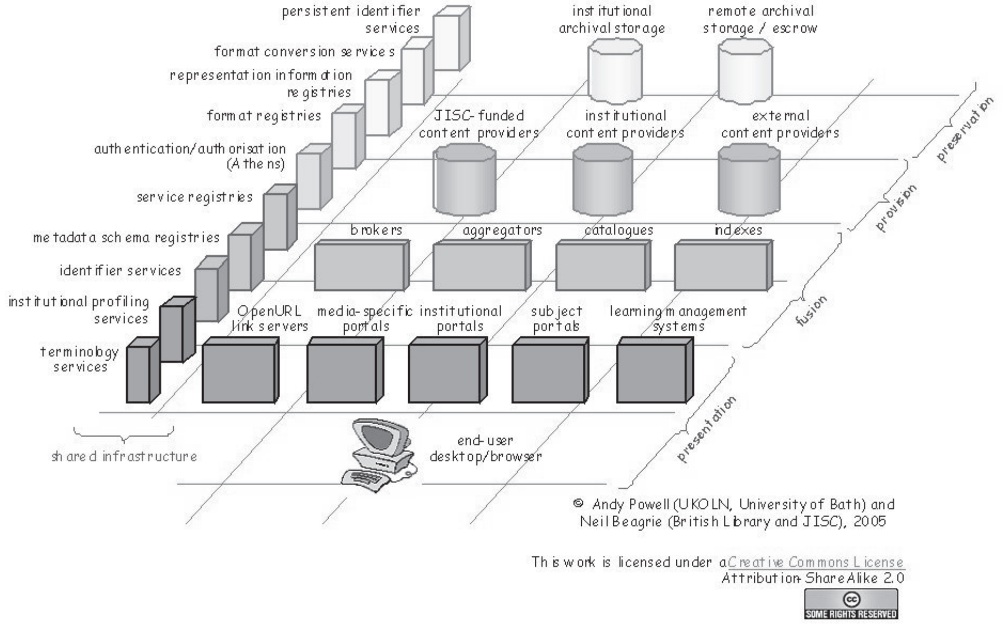
(2) Provision—Entities working in this space offer both management and access functionality for digital objects, such as repositories, journal databases, or data archives. Some will also offer archival storage, which illustrates that the Information Environment is a logical or conceptual map, and it aims to offer a services-oriented representation of information curation and access.

(3) Fusion—Services that harvest, aggregate or otherwise add value to the content made available in the provision layer. A library catalogue is one example. In the OAI-PMH model, this level is the home for the harvester and service provider, common examples being OAIster,[6] BASE,[7] and the UK national search service currently being scoped by the RDN/Intute[8] at MIMAS[9], drawing from the experience of the ePrints-UK project.[10]

(4) Presentation—Applications used by end-users within education: researchers, teachers, students, managers, funders. It is the domain of portals, virtual and personal learning environments and e-portfolios, virtual research environments, and so on. It recognises that people engaged in real tasks are likely to need information from a range of sources, and relevant tools, communication channels and other services, and control over this environment, in order to undertake those tasks.

The shared infrastructure services are those, largely invisible, services that enable everything else to work together. Examples include authentication and authorisation services, such as those offered by Athens[11] and, increasingly, via distributed SAML-based approaches using, for example, Shibboleth.[12] Registries and directories also sit here, such as the OpenDOAR[13] directory of open access repositories, which will be invaluable for both ingest and resource discovery services (in the presentation layer) that need to know what repositories are out there and what their attributes are. Other examples of services in this area are file format registries, service registries and metadata schema registries.

Using components defined in terms of the Information Environment, it is possible to support a range of digital object lifecycles, and a range of workflows for people who use those objects. The Information Environment offers a starting point for solving the hard problems that arise when repositories (and other content providers) are linked together.


persistent identifier services
format conversion services
representation information registries
format registries
authentication/authorisation (Athens)
service registries
metadata schema registries
identifier services
institutional profiling services
terminology services
shared infrastructure
institutional archival storage
remote archival storage / escrow
JISC-funded content providers
institutional content providers
external content providers
brokers
aggregators
catalogues
indexes
OpenURL link servers
media-specific portals
institutional portals
subject portals
learning management systems
end-user desktop/browser
preservation
provision
fusion
presentation
SOME RIGHTS RESERVED

© Andy Powell (UKOLN, University of Bath) and Neil Beagrie (British Library and JISC), 2005

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons License
Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0

JISC / UKOLN Information Environment

Thanks to those involved in the Information Environment, and those who attended the workshop, for their invaluable contributions.

Neil Jacobs
n.jacobs@jisc.ac.uk

Websites

1 The Information Environment is a JISC-funded initiative, undertaken by UKOLN in the UK: JISC: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/; UKOLN: http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/; Information Environment: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=ie_home
2 British Library Digital Object Management: http://www.bl.uk/about/policies/dom/homepage.html
3 Sherpa DP: http://ahds.ac.uk/sherpa-dp/
4 PRESERV: http://preserv.eprints.org/
5 Open Archival Information System: http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/nost/isoas/
6 OAIster: http://oaister.umdl.umich.edu/
7 BASE: http://www.base-search.net/
8 Resource Discovery Network: http://www.rdn.ac.uk/
9 MIMAS: http://www.mimas.ac.uk/
10 ePrints-UK: http://www.rdn.ac.uk/projects/eprints-uk/
11 Athens: http://www.athensams.net/
12 JISC Shibboleth briefing paper: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=pub_shibboleth
13 OpenDOAR: http://www.opendoar.org/

Green, gold, or neither: author attitudes and behaviour regarding open access

The Open Access movement is commonly considered as having been born out of the Budapest Open Access Initiative in 2002. However, its birth also represented the culmination of a number of earlier initiatives that were carried out with the active involvement – to varying degrees – of researchers/authors, librarians and university administrators.

What got the OA movement going? Certainly one important factor was the "serials crisis" which became a matter of concern to the three communities named above during the 1980s. It was characterized by increases in serial pricing and in the number of new journal titles being issued, the combination of which led to increased subscription cancellations which in turn led to increased pricing (and on and on). According to a study by the Association of Research Libraries, serials pricing rose by 273% between 1986 and 2004, as compared to the overall rate of inflation of 73% (http://www.arl.org/stats/arlstat/graphs/2004/monser04.pdf).

In the years prior to the appearance of web-based e-journals, the arrival of the widely foreseen electronic journal was keenly awaited as a possible solution for breaking this vicious circle. The promise of paperless production and distribution that were expected to lower costs all around was generally seen to offer a definitive solution to the serials crisis. However, when commercial e-journals finally began to appear in the mid-1990s, it became apparent that publishers were not able (or, in some cases, willing) to reduce pricing.

The steadily rising prices, which resulted in increased numbers of subscription cancellations, meant that the results of scientific research often carried out with public funding – were available to fewer and fewer scholars. The negative impact of these trends on researchers – as both authors and readers – was twofold: fewer readers led to fewer citations; fewer subscriptions led to lessened access to the world's production of scientific literature.

The three communities cited above – research libraries, university administrators and researchers/authors – already sensitive to what they perceived as the inequities of traditional scholarly journal publishing, began championing changes to the system. Four early actions were:

- Defections by members of editorial boards, beginning in the late 1980s, whose principal objective was to reduce the exorbitant prices of journals. This challenge most frequently took the form of editors and members of editorial boards of commercially published journals "abandoning ship" and setting up similar titles to be published elsewhere. By the late 1990s, some of these efforts received economic backing from SPARC [see below] to get them started.
- Creation in 1997 of the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), an advocacy group begun by the Association of Research Libraries, whose mission was to provide support for lower-cost journals competing with high-priced titles, in an attempt to "correct market dysfunctions in the scholarly publishing system"(http://www.arl.org/sparc/).
- Preparation and dissemination in 2000 of the Public Library of Science Open Letter. This document was signed by 34,000 scientists worldwide who threatened publishers with withdrawing their continued cooperation – as authors, editors, referees, reviewers, etc – if journals failed to grant "unrestricted free distribution rights" to research reports [the deadline of September 1, 2001, passed with little effect] (http://www.plos.org/about/letter.html).
- Publication in 2000 of strategies for reducing the pricing of scholarly publications and for greater author involvement in the publishing process, as laid out in the Principles for Emerging Systems of Scholarly Publishing (Tempe principles) (http://www.arl.org/scomm/tempe.html).

In 2002 these different strands of protest converged with the signing of the Budapest Open Access Initiative (http://www.soros.org/openaccess/index.shtml), the aim of which was to increase the impact of scientific works by increasing access to them, thus benefiting researchers in their double role of author and reader. This goal was to be achieved through:

- publication of articles in Open Access journals (Gold route), or
- self-archiving of articles by the author (Green route).

The Gold route

The initial resistance to submitting works to OA journals was due primarily to:

- widely perceived notion of lower quality control and subsequent loss of prestige;
- lack of appropriate OA journals in given fields;
- threat of author-pay business model.

These issues have been addressed to some extent in the past few years. For instance, OA journals are now covered more fully; many are now highly regarded in their field; and some funding bodies now agree to pick up the tab for publishing the research results. However, the growth of these journals, while steady, has not been spectacular due in part to the challenge of finding appropriate financial models.

The Green route

In this option the contradictions of author behaviour are striking. This is all the more perplexing considering both the inherent interest of this community in increased visibility of their work and its potential for attaining the goal of OA. As Peter Suber remarked, "Of all the groups that want open access to scientific and scholarly research literature, only one is in a position to deliver it: authors."

The early obstacles confronted by authors attempting to self-archive versions of works they had submitted for publication were the reluctance of publishers to give permission for it, and the lack of suitable repositories for doing so. However, both impediments have lessened in the past few years. Many publishers now allow self-archiving, though often with imposed conditions such as which version can be used and when and where the text can be posted. (The SHERPA project (http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php) lists publishers' policies.) Likewise, the lack of repositories no longer poses the problem it had: the past two years have seen a large increase, especially of institutional repositories in universities and research centres.

This steady removal of obstacles would seem to suggest that large amounts of scholarly works are now available in either subject or institutional repositories. But the growth has been disappointing, primarily due to author's lack of co-operation in depositing works for reasons (frequently grouped under the heading of "author inertia") such as:

- indifference;
- resistance to changes in procedures, imposed requirements, learning a new system, changes of habits, etc;
- concern about loss of control, plagiarism, problems with publisher, etc;
- opposition to the principle of OA, sharing work, mandated archiving, etc;
- lack of awareness or understanding of OA, knowledge of procedures to be followed, time needed for archiving, the technical means for depositing material, etc.

Factors such as age, professional status, field of study, nationality, and type of research performed can also influence the degree to which authors accept or reject OA.

Organizations that have created repositories are obviously interested in compliance with OA objectives, if nothing more than at least to justify the cost and effort involved. In order to fight against author inertia, institutions recommend:

- increasing marketing efforts;
- increasing training;
- creating services for assisting authors;
- establishing policies to encourage or require compliance (carrot or stick).

Several trends will undoubtedly help as well:

- recent requirements by numerous funding agencies for the results of financed research to be self-archived;
- word-of-mouth "marketing" among researchers carried out by colleagues who have benefited from self-archiving, for example, through increased citation rates.

In order to work towards 100% OA compliance, authors must be convinced of the benefits of self-archiving. For their part, institutions, having established institutional repositories, must set in motion vigorous advocacy efforts to encourage and assist authors in depositing their works.

The introduction of electronic journals a decade ago was also met by resistance from some quarters. But it is unlikely that anyone would now willingly return to print-only journal access. The road toward OA via the Green Route may be slow and uneven, but it now appears inevitable.

Alice Keefer
alice.keefer@ub.edu

Selected references

Harnad, Stevan. 2005. Fast-Forward on the Green Road to Open Access: The Case Against Mixing Up Green and Gold. *Ariadne*, 42. <http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue42/harnad/> (Consulted: 14 July 2006)

JISC/OSI Journal Authors Survey Report. Truro, UK : Key Perspectives, 2004. http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/JISCOAreport1.pdf (Consulted: 14 July 2006)

Pathfinder Research on Web-based Repositories Final Report. Bristol, UK : Mark Ware Consulting, 2004. [Publisher and Library/Learning Solutions.] http://www.palsgroup.org.uk/palsweb/palsweb.nsf/0/8c43ce800a9c67cd80256e370051e88a/$FILE/PALS%20report%20on%20Institutional%20Repositories.pdf (Consulted: 14 July 2006)

Rowlands, Ian; Nicholas, Dave. 2005. New journal publishing models: an international survey of senior researchers. Publishers Association: International Association of STM Publishers. http://www.slais.ucl.ac.uk/papers/dni-20050925.pdf (Consulted: 14 July 2006)

Rowlands, Ian; Nicholas, Dave; Huntingdon, Paul. 2004. Scholarly Communication in the Digital Environment: What Do Authors Want? London : CIBER. http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ciber/ciber-pa-report.pdf (Consulted: 14 July 2006)

Suber, Peter. 2004 The Primacy of Authors in Achieving Open Access [Correspondence]. *Nature*10 June. http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v426/n6962/full/426015b.html (Consulted: 14 July 2006)

Swan, Alma. 2005. Open Access Self Archiving: An Introduction. Truro, UK : Key Perspectives. http://eprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/11006/01/jiscsum.pdf (Consulted: 14 July 2006)

From the Literature

Publication misconduct flowcharts

COPE (the Committee on Publication Ethics) has recently published a series of flowcharts designed to help editors handle cases of suspected publication misconduct.[1] The flowcharts are based on the COPE guidelines for editors and on COPE's experience of providing advice on a wide range of publication misconduct cases submitted to the committee by editors over almost 10 years.

The flowcharts recommend courses of action for editors faced with suspected plagiarism, data fabrication, redundant publication, undisclosed competing interests, ethical concerns about research, or authorship changes. In each case, separate flowcharts outline actions to follow when concerns arise during the review process (e.g. if a reviewer suspects plagiarism) or after publication (e.g. if a reader alerts an editor to redundant publication) since the best course of action and possible outcomes often depend on the stage of publication.

Background to COPE

COPE was founded in 1997 by a group of journal editors who felt they needed a sounding board to discuss cases of publication misconduct. Since then, COPE has grown from an informal, largely British, "self-help" group to an international organization with over 250 member journals and a formal constitution.

COPE's activities are funded by membership fees set on a sliding scale depending on the size of the journal. It is also supported by several science publishers who take out membership on behalf of their journals. Members are entitled to submit cases and to attend the quarterly meetings at which anonymized cases are discussed. Summaries of these cases, and COPE's recommendations, are published in an annual report, which is available on the COPE website (www.publicationethics.org.uk). Although most members are biomedical journals, and most come from within Europe, COPE is open to journals from any scientific discipline or geographic area.

Editors' responsibilities in cases of suspected misconduct

The COPE code of conduct states that "If editors suspect misconduct … then they have a duty to take action" and notes that "This is an onerous but important duty." Fortunately, serious breaches of publication ethics and cases of fraud are relatively rare, but this means that many editors feel poorly equipped to deal with them, since they have no previous experience of handling such cases and most journals have little or no "institutional memory" to draw on. The "onerous duty" of pursuing an institution to ensure that a proper investigation takes place may cause particular problems for part-time editors of small journals, who tend to be busy people with limited administrative support. Even for larger journals with in-house staff, pursuing such allegations can be a headache, and some cases have dragged on for several years.[2] The new flowcharts outline each step needed to achieve resolution, which may accelerate the process, and they also provide hints for avoiding future problems.

While most editors will hope to face cases of the most serious breaches of research or publication ethics only rarely in their careers, the flowcharts also cover more common problems such as requests to add or remove an author at a late stage in the publication process (or even after publication). Handling such requests systematically should ensure that due process is followed, may help to educate authors about their responsibilities, and should reduce the risk of journals becoming embroiled in authorship disputes, which may have potentially serious legal (and therefore financial) consequences.

Avoiding litigation may be a major incentive for publishers to support their editors in becoming COPE members or at least consulting the guidelines and flowcharts, and one major publisher has already incorporated the flowcharts into their guidelines for editors.[3, 4]

COPE hopes that, armed with the flowcharts, journal editors will feel more confident to confront possible breaches of publication ethics and will be more likely to handle them appropriately. This is an important responsibility for editors, who may sometimes be tempted not to pursue cases of alleged wrong-doing, especially concerning papers they do not intend to publish. If editors simply reject papers without raising their concerns, then it is likely the authors will resubmit elsewhere and the concerns may never be addressed if subsequent reviewers or editors are unaware of the problems. Responsible editors therefore need clear mechanisms for dealing with cases of suspected misconduct, and the flowcharts aim to provide these.

Competing interests: Liz Wager drafted the COPE flowcharts and is also an author of the Blackwell guidelines for editors.

Liz Wager
liz@sideview.demon.co.uk

References

1 Committee on Publication Ethics. Flow charts. http://www.publicationethics.org.uk/flow-charts
2 Wager E. 2005.What can editors do if they suspect research misconduct? *European Science Editing* 31(2):49-51.
3 Graf C, Wager E, Bowman A, et al. 2007. Best practice guidelines on publication ethics: a publisher's perspective. *International Journal of Clinical Practice* 61(s152). http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1742-1241.2006.01230.x; http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/toc/ijcp/61/s152
4 Blackwell Publishing. http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/Publicationethics/?site=1

EASE-Forum Digest: October - December 2006

The following is a selection from the interesting topics that have been discussed on the EASE Forum recently. Unfortunately space does not permit coverage of all the discussions.

Is there much ado about nothing at the end of the line?
Aleksandra Golebiowska asked two questions. The first was, are there any rules in English about not leaving one- or two-letter words at the end of a line? The answer was "no", but Mary Ellen Keran's intriguing "rule", learnt during her ancient training in newspaper journalism, nevertheless deserves a mention: pages should not end with the end of a sentence or paragraph, so as to encourage readers to turn over the page.

The second question was, are there any guidelines about words that should not be separated from each other? In summary, the answers were that the following should not be separated: initials from names; a name from a modifier (e.g. Louis XIV and Samuel Browne, Jr); chemical names from their prefix (e.g. [alpha]-tocopherol), although very long chemical names maybe split; genus from species, at least when the genus is abbreviated. In addition, acronyms, abbreviations, dates and page number ranges (e.g. 34–56) should not be split if possible.

The discussion diverted to word divisions at the end of a line. Here were no shortage of rules and, predictably, British and American English have different ones. But the number of rules and their inconsistency between resources revealed a chaos.

Kathleen Lyle contended that US usage follows pronunciation and UK usage follows etymology, e.g. democ-racy (US) vs dem-ocracy (UK). That was too simple for Mary Ellen, who gave de-serv-ing as an example of where US usage does not follow pronunciation but separates according to morphemes. Some (not all) British dictionaries, on the other hand, divide it syllabically: de-ser-ving. In general she considered that some English word divisions are based on morphemes, some are based on syllables and some are merely aesthetic conventions. For example, the last syllable of elevated is "-ted" but the British convention to split is based on the morpheme "-ed". Aleksandra asked if the division of "-ed" didn't depend on whether it is pronounced (as in "divided") or not (as in "worked"). "Well, no," said Mary Ellen, the "-ed" pronounciation rule wasn't followed by the OUP spelling and word-division dictionary she used. Meanwhile Aleksandra had consulted three reputable British English dictionaries and found de-mo-cra-cy, de-moc-ra-cy and dem-oc-racy. The American dictionary Webster's had de-moc-ra-cy.

Judy Baggot had also noted various options in different publications based either on etymology or phonemes, but the basic rule she had used (from a word division supplement (1976) to the British Government Office Style Manual) was that you should be able to guess the meaning of the word that had been divided from what appeared on the first line, so as not to break up your train of thought while you were reading. Notwithstanding, Judy thought that the best advice is always to avoid dividing words. By this stage Mary Ellen had reached the same conclusion, adding that readers could easily get used to occasionally seeing lines that were slightly spaced out. Andrew Smith propounded the same view. He thought that unless you are working with particularly small column widths or particularly long words, a typesetter can turn off the auto-hypenation module in their software and manipulate satisfactory spacing. URLs are the exception to this: long filenames and hierarchical directory structures sometimes require three lines without a break. In this situation, he warned, "normal" hyphenation is also out, as the hyphen could be mistaken for part of the URL itself, leading to the link not working.

As a reader and proofreader Aleksandra was not too worried by failure to adhere to word division rules, but felt that what must be avoided are silly word breaks that leave just one or two letters on one line, or word fragments that can easily be misread. For example, there is a village near Sheffield called Penistone, and she had seen it in the local newspaper divided as Penis-tone! Judy Baggottt and Hugh de Glanville recommended Collins Gem Dictionary of Spelling and Word Division (but only the 1985 edition). This also includes a section on words that should not be split, e.g. "theatre". Perhaps it would be a worthwhile investment for the *BMJ*, in which Hugh had recently seen the split "the-atre".

ICMJE needs to give more guidance on acknowledgements

Mary Ellen Kerans referred to the increasingly common requirement by journals for authors to show that a person named in the acknowledgements has given written consent for inclusion there. Although this becomes more complex when different authors' editors have been involved at different stages in a manuscript's journey to publication, she believed that all conscientious involved parties want to be acknowledged and it is in the interest of editors and readers that they should be named. The question was how to achieve this efficiently. She suggested that it would be sufficient if she appended a statement to her invoice to the author with a request that her work be acknowledged. Patricia Reichert pointed out that the real-life situation is that only the big journals ask for consent but she thought Mary Ellen's suggestion and wording a good idea.

Elisabeth Heseltine thought that the ICMJE guidelines' requirement of written consent for acknowledgements was a useful safeguard. For example, statisticians could in this way avoid being held responsible for authors' interpretations of their analyses that were contrary to their own interpretations. As an editor at the World Health Organization, she had always refused to be acknowledged, even if she had completely rewritten the paper. It was her understanding that the acknowledgements were only for contributors to the scientific content of the paper. This intrigued Iain Patten, who wanted to know how one decides whether somebody should be listed as an author or simply acknowledged for their scientific contribution. He thought that in some cases acknowledgement serves the purpose of publicly recognising a relevant contribution and in others it is in the service of transparency. Substantive editing would fall into both categories, but what about "critical reading of the manuscript"?

All people associated with a paper should receive credit and be publicly accountable for their work was the view firmly held by Karen Shashok. This would include authors, statisticians, lab technicians, translators and copyeditors (and why not peer reviewers and in-house editors?). As a freelance authors' editor and translator she always insists that her name appears in the acknowledgments. When the journal's instructions to authors require a signed permission she delivers a signed permission letter, which she has standardized, to the authors with her completed work. She had recently encountered a journal that required authors to indicate whether, if English was not their native language, they had had the manuscript checked by a native speaker. The journal also required all personal acknowledgements to be removed from the acknowledgements. The editor had refused her requests that she be acknowledged. She considered these conflicting requirements to be a breach of transparency and accountability.

Mary Ellen saw a distinction between a person who edits for an author and one who edits for a journal. The first is to be acknowledged and the second not. Editors and readers need to know who has had a hand in producing the manuscript, but once it is accepted by the journal, further editing by copyeditors and technical editors is part of the quality process.

The ICMJE guidelines also state that editors should ask authors to identify the entity that paid for the writing assistance. I believe this change to the guidelines, introduced in February 2006, is directed at a scenario whereby ghostwriters are employed to write covert advertising articles for drug companies. These ghostwriters and their employers are not mentioned, or are not connected, in the published article, which carries the names of authors who will have clout with prescribing doctors, and who may or may not have conscientiously approved the contents of the paper. Anybody who merely offers language assistance to authors has been caught up in the same net. The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) needs to untangle this net and differentiate between genuine writing assistance, prevention of concealment of drug company involvement, acknowledging as a means of giving somebody credit and acknowledging as a means of making it known that somebody was involved and has a responsibility.

Should permission be sought to record presentations at conferences?

Moira Vekony wanted the forum's views on members of an audience recording presentations on webcams attached to laptop computers. This activity had been noted at the EASE conference in Kraków. She was keen to point out that these actions had not been sanctioned by EASE, and permission had not been sought from EASE.

Most of the contributors to the discussion thought it was a courtesy to ask speakers before you record their presentation. Liz Wager considered this would not be necessary if the recording was for personal use. New technologies have only made the process of note taking easier and more visible. Aleksandra Golebiowska also felt that recordings were not necessarily sinister if they were for the purpose of personal note taking. A Bulgarian colleague who takes photos of slides at conferences told me he does this because he becomes tired listening to English and the photos are a memory aid for him.

"Conference paparazzi" was the term coined by Terry Clayton, who said that he often attended conferences where voice proceedings were recorded as a matter of record. Otherwise some people might record just because they enjoy playing with new technology. He drew a distinction between creatively borrowing from the work of people who had inspired you and outright copycatting, which he strongly criticized.

Some people who make a living from presenting, however, contended it was unfair to post slides on a website where there would be a risk of somebody else using the material. A fear was expressed that other people could reproduce the seminar as their own, but Reme Melero queried whether anyone who put together material from another workshop would be able to give a seminar without the relevant knowledge and experience. Paola De Castro would rather not share her slides because they would lose their effectiveness without the oral comment and might be misinterpreted and misused by others. Mary Ellen Kerans was not sure that anyone would be able to make sense of her slides if they had not attended her presentation. If the posted, unaccompanied slide presentation was to be a viable genre for communicating knowledge, she thought presenters would need instructions on how to prepare slides for posting on the internet.

Terry and Mary Ellen brought to the fore that the teaching professions give away a great deal by sharing and borrowing and only ask for polite recognition in return. Terry said that when he had the privilege of presenting at conferences it is his intention and hope that the audience will try to replicate and apply the knowledge he is able to impart. If anyone borrowing from him was working for commercial gain, either they would be working in a different market, in which case he would suffer no direct financial loss (and what could I do about it anyway?), or if they were working in the same market he was challenged to be better than they were.

The copyright issue was not explored in depth. Reme recommended the websites http://creativecommons.org/ and http://sciencecommons.org/projects/publishing/index.html.

With reference to the clear potential for plagiarism, Mary Ellen quoted Miguel Roig's view that some slides leave references vague and borrow from other presentations without appropriate acknowledgement. Karen Shashok referred us to Edward Tufte's website: http://www.edwardtufte.com/bboard/q-and-a-fetch-msg?msg_id=0002V4&topic_id=1&topic=.

Moira did not receive a clear answer to her question of whether EASE should have a rule banning the use of video recording equipment in lecture rooms. All these issues surrounding presentations are likely to become important in the future. Money is to be made for organizations that arrange conferences (both not-for-profit and commercial) by selling conference workshops and seminars online. How do I know this? This is the next project that the editor-in-chief of the journal from which I have just resigned is developing for the conferences and seminars he organises, with the help of "unrestricted educational grants" from the pharmaceutical industry.

Reasons for rejection of a message to the forum

Only members of EASE may participate in the EASE forum. Recently some people have been posting their messages simultaneously on the EASE forum and on other forums. This creates a problem when a person who is a subscriber to the other forum, but not to the EASE forum, replies to the message because this message is bounced to the EASE forum list moderator. List membership is based on e-mail address. If you are not able to send messages to the list the following reasons are possible:

- You are not a subscriber;
- Your subscription has been made using a different e-mail address. This is quite common as employers, jobs and email accounts change. Some people use several email accounts which can cause confusion;
- Your subscription has not yet been registered. On a moderated list the subscription has to be registered manually by the moderator.

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. More information can be found on the EASE web site (www.ease.org.uk).

Elise Langdon-Neuner (compiler)
langdoe@baxter.com

Discussion initiators

Aleksandra Golebiowska: algol@ciop.pl
Mary Ellen Kerans: mekerans@telefonica.net
Moira Vekony: mjv@dunascripts.com

Correspondence

Shades of grey

In their recent *Handbook* chapter Paola De Castro and Sandra Salinetti give an excellent description of grey literature.[1] It is not a function of commercial publishing, and it is intended for practical purposes rather than prestige. Whether it consists of leaflets, teaching material or negative results of clinical trials, each form presumably has its own rules. This is why one should keep the process as simple as possible. The most important aspects are awareness of copyright law, careful checking of key points, and correct tables and figures.

Because access is nearly unlimited, however, there is a risk that material intended only for technical or medical staff could be misused; hence uncontrolled worldwide dissemination becomes possible.

Proposing a set of guidelines may be optimistic, but a minimum set is desirable. Provided that the two aspects, awareness of copyright laws and validity of information, are respected, should there be an attempt to formalize the process?

Marie-Louise Desbarats-Schönbaum
Desbarats@planet.nl

1. De Castro P, Salinetti S. 2006. Writing and issuing grey literature: old and new responsibilities. In: Maisonneuve H et al. (ed.): Science editors' handbook, ch. 1-3.6. West Clandon, UK: European Association of Science Editors.

Authors' reply

In the open access era the awareness of grey literature as a fundamental source of information is increasing, hence the necessity to empower authors and issuing organizations to guarantee the quality production of all documents circulating under the umbrella term of grey literature (mainly technical or research reports, operational procedures, statistical data, "datuments", etc). We are grateful to EASE for promoting the Guidelines for the production of technical reports (in which we are directly involved as authors and promoters), because grey literature is still a unique reference source for detailed and unbiased information or negative results which cannot be found elsewhere. Responsibility for validity of information and respect of copyright completely falls on authors and issuing organizations, therefore the only way to "formalize" the process is to make them aware of the implications behind it.

These issues were debated during the International Conference on Grey Literature (Harnessing the Power of Grey) held in New Orleans on 4–5 December 2006. At a roundtable on quality issues, it was agreed that a new version of the guidelines would be released shortly, as well as translations in other languages; English, French and Italian versions of the guidelines are already available at www.glisc.info.

Paola De Castro and Sandra Salinetti