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From the Editors' Desks

Message from the President

On behalf of Council and all EASE members, I would like to thank both Sheila Evered and Samantha Jeffery for all the work they have done for EASE in recent years.

Sheila did a terrific job contacting all our members with whom we had lost contact in 2004-2006, bringing many of them back to EASE, updating the database and generally establishing cordial relations with all our members. She also provided essential support for the conference in Pisa and its smooth running owed much to Sheila's efficiency. Sheila has many other commitments on her time and reluctantly decided that she could no longer act as our Secretary. For the past year, she has continued to run the membership and several related tasks, while Samantha has covered general enquiries and managed Council affairs. Samantha is now studying for an MA in art history.

Welcome to new post-holders

EASE's new Secretary is Mary Hodgson (see p18). We also have a new advertising manager, Diana Epstein. Diana's company, Di-Ep Biomedical Editorial Services Ltd, manages and processes over 2000 manuscripts per year.

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Thanks to our helpers in 2010 -

Reviewers Norma O'Flynn, Liz Wager, Paola de Castro, Elisabeth Heseltine, Eric Lichtfouse, and Marcin Kozak. If you would like to contribute to *ESE* by becoming a peer reviewer (for the Articles section only), please contact the section editor: stuart_handysides@hotmail.com.

Proofreaders John Glen, Maeve O'Connor, Carol Norris, Denys Wheatley, Sheila Evered, and Sandra Child. New proofreaders are welcome; please contact mcooter3@gmail.com.

Dates for your diary

The 2011 AGM will be held at 6.30 pm on Sunday 19 June 2011 (see inside back cover). A seminar/workshop will be run by EASE at the University of Barcelona on Monday 20 June 2011.

Science Editors' Handbook

With continuing developments in publishing and editing, your ideas for chapters are requested - please send them to Petter Oscarson (oikostech@ekol.lu.se).

Contributions for next issue

The copy date for the May issue is 15 March. Please send your contributions to the relevant editor by then.

Editorial

Show me the data

Lay public, writers and editors, and scientists alike want to believe that the data we read or see presented are “true” – free from error, manipulation, or spin. Sadly, as becomes more and more obvious, this is not always the case. *The Scientist*’s catalogue of retractions illustrates this amply. There are now so many retractions that *The Scientist* was moved to list 2010’s five most highly cited retracted papers, and the five “worst offenders”.¹ Is “scientific fraud” occurring more often, or are we just getting better at detecting it? According to a study published in the *Journal of Medical Ethics*, during the last 10 years in excess of 780 scientific papers have been retracted. Regardless of whether these retractions result from deliberate falsification or genuine error, the repercussions are grave, often curtailing the careers of those involved and possibly even affecting the scientific area as a whole.²

Why though, do a small minority of scientists falsify data? In his book *On Fact and Fraud – Cautionary Tales from the Front Lines of Science* David Goodstein lists three factors that have almost always been present in recent cases of fraud, and although these factors do not *per se* cause fraud, they do seem to be present when falsification occurs.³ Firstly perpetrators of fraud claim to be under “career pressure” – pressure to publish, and publish quickly. Clearly the need to succeed could be a motivating factor in fraud, but given that most scientists are under career pressure most of the time it does not explain why some scientists stray professionally while the vast majority do not. Secondly, scientists who commit fraud are usually convinced that they already know the answer to the problem, and so why bother to actually do the experiment properly when the results can more easily be hypothesized? Thirdly, as Goodstein points out, experiments are rarely repeated by others and, particularly in biology, are not exactly reproducible between subjects, thus leaving a lot of “wobble room” for massaged or even invented data.

In an ideal world fraud would be preventable by simple controls, but in a fast-moving and often high-profile research environment the pressure to publish results that have not been fully verified is high. Future research funding, careers, and professional profiles are all at stake. The suggestion that institutes should “quality control” the results issued from their laboratories is a good one, but it is not easy to imagine how this could be implemented,

or who should ultimately carry responsibility for policing the data. One could argue that ultimate responsibility for data integrity lies with principal investigators, and that they should make a written statement saying that all of the data has been verified. But, is examining every photomicrograph, FACS [fluorescent antibody cell sorting] plot, or statistical analysis that is associated with a research project a good use of their time, and who is to defend them against ambitious but dishonest post-doctoral fellows or students?

It would seem that there is no easy answer to detecting falsification, although clearly reviewers and editors have an important role in detecting duplications and alterations of images and data sets. In the end, the integrity of the research team as individuals and as a group is the key; without that, all data is meaningless.

Finally, it must be remembered that not all retractions are the outcomes of deliberate fraud. Take the recently reported events at the Jackson Laboratory – the authors of a study published in the *Journal of Immunology* in 2006 retracted their paper after realising that the wrong strain of mice had been used for a series of experiments, making the data uninterpretable in the experimental context.⁴ A single genuine mistake, which was repeated but not detected until it was too late, had devastating consequences.

Indeed, every retraction tells a different story.

Moira A Johnson

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Editing around the World

Building editorial capacity in low and middle income countries: the case of the *African Journal of Psychiatry*

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The under-representation of low and middle income (LAMI) countries in published psychiatric research is widely recognized. Related to this is scarcity and inequity of mental health research resources available to potential authors from these countries. One strategy to redress these imbalances and narrow the publication gap is to develop regional editorial capacity within LAMI countries. Small regional journals and their editors can be engaged and mentored to raise the quality and profile of these publications.

One important step is to work towards achieving international criteria for journal indexing within major databases such as Medline and ISI. Gaining indexation makes local research visible to the global community and this has the twin benefits of enhancing research capacity within LAMI countries and adding important data from these regions to the global literature on mental health. Also, it provides an evidence base to inform local decision making and policy development.

WPA Publications Taskforce

The World Psychiatric Association (WPA) Publications Taskforce was established in 2008 to promote the dissemination of research and the development of psychiatric journals in low and middle income countries. This was in line with the WPA's work plan 2008-2011. One of the main strategies adopted by the task force has been to work with selected editors of journals in LAMI countries. This has taken the form of workshops with the aim of providing guidance towards indexing within the major databases. Several journals whose editors have worked with this WPA project have achieved Medline indexation in the past two years. These include the *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* and the *African Journal of Psychiatry*.

A further strategy initiated by the WPA task force has been to pilot a project that provides funding to support a WPA Editorial Fellowship. It is envisaged that such fellowships are awarded to individuals who show potential to become future editors of journals in LAMI country contexts. Specifically, a fellowship is designed to facilitate the mentoring and training of such individuals by experienced journal editors who have, more often than not,

gained their own editorial expertise "on the job". In contexts where editorial capacity is limited, such capacity must be developed, and a skills transfer through mentoring is of utmost importance to ensure continuity and sustainability of local journals; this serves not only to prepare for eventual editorial succession, but also expands existing editorial capacity as a journal grows.

The case of the *African Journal of Psychiatry*

This journal was not always the *African Journal of Psychiatry*. It started out as the *Journal of Anxiety and Depression*, with Christopher P Szabo (CPS) taking over editorship in 2001. The publication needed a clearer identity in terms of location and discipline and became *South African Psychiatry Review* in 2002. An application for inclusion in Medline was made, but was unsuccessful.

At the March 2007 World Psychiatric Association regional conference held in Nairobi, Kenya, it was decided that *South African Psychiatry Review* would become the *African Journal of Psychiatry*. In August 2007 the first edition of the *African Journal of Psychiatry* was published, as an official publication of the African Association of Psychiatrists and Allied Professionals.

In March 2009 the *African Journal of Psychiatry* was selected for inclusion in the Medline database and in September 2009 it was included in the Science Citation Index (Thomson Reuters databases). Since August 2007 both the number of articles per issue as well as the number of issues per year has increased, with the journal currently appearing five times per year with seven or eight original articles per issue.

Interestingly, a similarly titled publication *The African Journal of Psychiatry*, an official publication of the then African Psychiatric Association, had been selected for Medline and appeared in the database from 1975 to 1981. It is no longer published.

With the support of the WPA Secretary for Publications (Helen Herrman), the editor of the *African Journal of Psychiatry* (CPS) secured a WPA Editorial Fellowship for a member of the existing editorial board, Jonathan Burns (JB), to join him in editing the September 2010 edition of the journal. The fellowship supported travel, accommodation,

and meals for JB to fly to Johannesburg for two full days of active mentorship. This was carried out during August 2010. The objectives were:

- For the editor to give the fellow a comprehensive overview of the history of the journal, as well as its development from a small local publication into a Medline indexed international journal;
- For the editor to explain the entire editorial process to the fellow, including details of obstacles, problems encountered, and solutions discovered through experience;
- For the editor and fellow to discuss current challenges faced by the journal as well as strategies for addressing these challenges and ensuring the future success of the publication;
- For the editor to train the fellow in the process of editing a full edition of the journal, using material accepted for publication and planned for that issue;
- In carrying out this first Editorial Fellowship, to publish a report of the experience that would be of use to the WPA Publications Taskforce as well as other journal editors wishing to develop editorial capacity in local situations;
- To plan further and potentially growing collaboration in editing the journal.

Training issues arising from the experience

Scope of training

It is important for training to be conducted on all forms of journal content including editorials, original articles, reviews, and scientific letters. These different forms of submission have different requirements and have different scientific and educational purposes. It is important for the fellow to appreciate these differences and also learn the format requirements for each form of content.

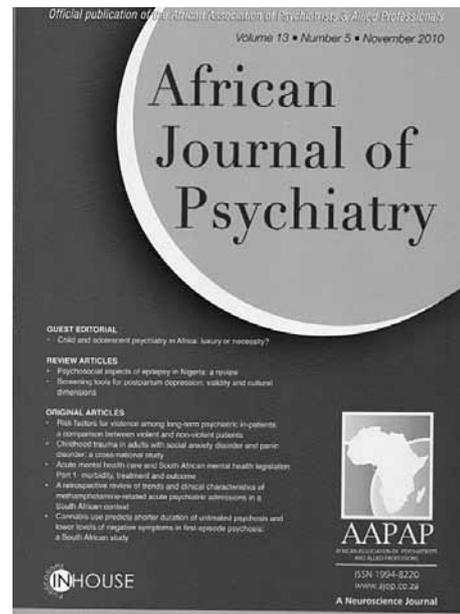
Training technique

A training technique that begins with didactic demonstration and moves towards supervised independent work is recommended. Thus, at the outset, the trainer demonstrates the process of editing an article while the trainee observes. This is a necessary step and should include examples of each form of content. The trainer and trainee may choose to continue this form of rather didactic teaching so as to give the trainee the opportunity to become more familiar with the trainer's style of editing. Where trainees have not had much experience of reviewing papers for publication in the past, this phase is vital (albeit a little tedious for the trainee).

The experience and skills of the individual trainee will determine the point at which the training can shift to independently supervised work. In this second stage, the trainee may work independently on a paper, referring to the trainer with queries as needed.

The final stage involves completely independent editing by the trainee, who on completion submits the edited paper to the trainer for checking. At this stage, the trainee is now sufficiently familiar with the journal style and that

of the editor and has mastered the editorial skills, and can function as an editorial assistant to the editor.



Challenges faced by a growing journal

The increase in the number of issues per year and an increase in the number of articles contained in each issue probably relates to the fact that the journal was “reinvented” as an international journal in 2007 and achieved Medline indexation in 2009. The volume of submissions to the journal has increased and the *African Journal of Psychiatry* now regularly receives submissions not just from a wide array of African countries, but also from countries outside Africa, demonstrating its growing international reputation. The Medline indexation brought with it an unexpected challenge – the technical ability required to transmit content to the National Library for Medicine. This might represent an obstacle in other settings.

Editorial capacity

This new growth brings some challenges, not least the problem of editorial capacity. From its origins as a small regional journal the *African Journal of Psychiatry* has functioned (and continues to function) as an almost “two-man show”, the editor and the publisher. The editor's workload includes all correspondence with authors and reviewers; all administrative tasks; planning of editions; all editing of accepted submissions; interfacing with the publisher on all issues. With the increasing volume of submissions, this threatens to become too much for one person to manage alone. The publisher is almost exclusively involved in production issues as well as the commercial aspects that fund the publication.

Several options present themselves. The first is for the editorial board to become more actively involved in sharing the editorial tasks that currently rest on the editor alone. Historically, membership of the editorial board seems to have been an honorary appointment – good for the curriculum vitae of members, but not really of much use to the journal itself beyond a positive association with

recognized academics. In recent times this has changed in so far as editorial board members are becoming more involved. However this may need to change further: the editor could (in consultation) alter policy to make membership of the editorial board conditional upon certain requirements (for example, editing a minimum number of accepted papers per year).

A second option would be to appoint one or more administrative/editorial assistants, who could be trained to perform editing tasks such as corresponding with authors and reviewers, as well as formatting papers to journal style. This option would obviously cost money, which is a problem for small journals. Introducing an electronic submission process with manuscript management might be more efficient and aligned with international practice, but it would alter the work flow and might be more disruptive than helpful, and probably still require a level of management.

The third option is for ownership of the journal to be transferred from private ownership to a large, established publishing house with an infrastructure and range of personnel to carry out the major portion of editorial responsibilities.

Funding

Funding is a persistent challenge for an independent journal such as the *African Journal of Psychiatry*. With private ownership by an individual publisher, the extent to which a journal can expand is severely limited. The owner obviously needs to make a profit, and extra pages and extra

issues erode that profit. The owner's interest is therefore to control content length and number of issues. Then, unless a journal is big and prominent enough to have a large readership that is prepared to pay subscriptions, advertising must pay for the publishing costs. The major advertisers are pharmaceutical companies, and this introduces an ethical challenge, that of managing the relationship between an academic publication and the pharmaceutical industry (whose motivation is unashamedly profit-related). Funding through subscription seems unlikely to be successful, since the readership base is relatively small and payment becomes a barrier to access, especially within LAMI countries. Fortunately for the *African Journal of Psychiatry* the relationship between advertisers and content has been clearly defined. Advertisers advertise and content is an editorial responsibility. To date this has been respected, and is set to continue.

Conclusion

The idea of an editorial fellow as a means of developing editorial capacity in low and middle income countries appears to have merit. Within the context of individual journals it would appear to be a viable option for creating one of the requisite requirements of any publication – credible succession. Together with helping individual editors to achieve indexation, moving beyond individuals is imperative to ensure that successful publications continue to exist and continue to contribute towards indigenous knowledge that ultimately has global implications with benefits for all.

When I use a word: Masses and masses

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Some prefer to report drug concentrations in units such as mg/l and some prefer $\mu\text{mol/l}$. Toxicologists, who need an excess of molecules, prefer mass units. Pharmacologists generally prefer molar units and need just enough molecules. Immunologists often talk in mass units, if only because they don't know the exact molecular weight, but they only need only one molecule at a time. Homoeopaths talk in dilutions, not units of any sort, and they need no molecules at all.

Some seem to think that $\mu\text{mol/l}$ is the correct method in the *Système Internationale* (SI) and that mg/l is not, but that is not so. Both are acceptable in SI, but mg/l is a mass unit and $\mu\text{mol/l}$ a molar unit. Which is odd, because the word mole comes from the Latin word moles, which means mass. But a dispute of this sort was probably inevitable, for Moles (capital M) was a minor Roman deity, the personification of the hurly-burly of war.

The argument for using molar units is that usually one molecule of one substance reacts with one molecule of another, and so interactions between different substances can be more readily understood when their concentrations are expressed in molar units. Calculating the plasma osmolarity, for example, became simple when we started expressing concentrations of electrolytes, glucose, and urea in mmol/l.

If we changed from milligram drug doses to molar doses (just as we once changed from grains to milligrams) everything could be expressed in molar units, and it might help us to understand drug treatment a little better. But it would be a lot of bother and the cost in errors, at least during the period of changeover, would probably be high.

But reporting drug concentrations is a bit messy because of this dispute. I recently heard about a patient in whom the diagnosis of aspirin self-poisoning was delayed because the clinician misread the salicylate concentration, reported in mg/dl, as mg/l and was unfamiliar with mmol/l, in which the result was also reported. Actually the real problem was that the laboratory failed to mention the concentration above which toxicity was likely. Since we are unlikely to settle the argument about whether to report in mass or molar terms, I suggest that the following should be the international standard for reporting drug concentrations:

- Report both molar and mass units when possible (in some cases it won't be)
- Use the litre as the standard reference volume
- Report target ranges or the concentrations above which toxicity is likely.

Jeff Aronson

Viewpoints

The passive voice revisited

One's choice of grammatical voice – in English, between only two: active or passive – is an issue for writers and editors. Most, I trust, have relinquished the opinion that scientific findings must be presented [passive voice] in the passive voice. Why not be clearer and more concise by writing: Scientific findings no longer require the passive voice; they demand the active. The house style of the *BMJ* (British Medical Journal; <http://resources.bmj.com/bmj/authors/bmj-house-style>) is explicit: “Write in the active and use the first person [We/I] where necessary.”

A decade ago, biologist Rupert Sheldrake made an inquiry into the preferences of journals in the biological and physical sciences; he discovered that of 55 such journals, only two required the passive (*New Scientist*, 21 July 2001).

Can you find the passive voice used even in the Methods sections of *Nature Medicine*? Or, similarly, anywhere in *Scientific American*? Space in all established journals is limited; submissions are many. Switching most of the passive verbs for active ones will shrink an article considerably – not to mention making it clearer, especially to readers for whom English is a second language.

Many of us who teach or author-edit for writers with English as their second or third language observe, in general, their initial preference for the passive voice. My students and clients in Finland attribute this to their reading in the older literature, not recognizing the space-and-money-saving evolution in style. They used to bring me handbooks like Paul Leedy's 1988 edition of *Practical Research, Planning and Design*, which stated that any “intrusion of the researcher”, such as by first-person pronouns, “is particularly taboo”. Before then, I never consciously met the future passive, nor had ever produced one before meeting Leedy's recommended “The test will have been given before the students are permitted to read the novel.” These two constructions by themselves consume eight words, and four verb forms in a row offer a challenge either to read or create. Why not say “After the test/After taking the test, the students can read/will have permission to read the novel”? Something occurring after a test implies that the test has ended.

What is the passive voice?

At this point I should perhaps descend from my soap box and clarify what voice is. I am no grammarian and shy away from terminology ranging from “conjunctive adverb” up to the “pseudo-cleft sentence”. Most of us perhaps fail to recognize the passive or active voice.

First, let us establish that nothing called “passive tense” exists. English has several tenses, but only two voices. I think of the voices, metaphorically, like musical major and minor keys. I view the passive as minor, and active voice as major. Both are useful, one for the heavy lifting, to mix metaphors.

Passive voice, in its most recognizable form, involves two or more verbs. Yet “These species have appeared in the liver” is active; the passive is “These have been found in the liver.” Even guidebooks on writing include, as an example of the passive voice, “These have come from Sigma”, whereas an actual passive construction for this would be “These have been ordered from Sigma” because, as a test, one can insert a “by” plus an agent (“by us”) in the latter, but not in the former. Why not substitute the so-useful inanimate agent, instead: “The/Their source/supplier was/is Sigma.”

Some label as “passive verbs” verbs in either the passive or the active voice (usually to be, to have, to get, and such) that appear boringly often. For these, I use the term “first-draft verbs”—or “dull” or “overused verbs”.

Depending on the grammatical nomenclature, even the construction “there” plus a form of “to be” can earn the label passive, but more correctly, the there + to be structure occurs in what is called an “existential sentence” (see guides from Strunk and White to Michael McCarthy's 2006 *Cambridge Grammar of English*). I often refer to this as a conversational form – this “There is/was” space-filler. This existential structure to open a sentence does, however, allow us to end with the vital information: to create end-focus. In processing a first draft I always omit it.

“There were no differences in clotting” might change to “No differences occurred in clotting,” with a strong negative at the beginning and the same vital information at the end; or even “In clotting, no differences occurred.”

To lighten up the dull, dull topic of grammar – in his book *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*, Stephen King attacks the passive, saying that the passive voice is like a passive lover. Here in Finland, a colleague quoted this line from King, and a lively young Spanish woman studying biomedicine asked, “What is a passive lover?” As the teacher struggled to formulate a reply, a Finnish woman whispered something to the Spaniard, who cheerfully responded, “Oh, we don't have any of those in SPAIN!”

My approach

On the first day of class I ask the doctors to imagine themselves in the role of a journal editor. Their forthcoming issue must soon go to press, with 16 pages to fill. The three top articles on the short list, all equally excellent, would fill 8, 8, and 16 pages long. What is their choice? The immediate and overwhelming vote – coming in almost a shout from Reykjavik to Malta – has been “8 and 8!” So?

My next question is how to shrink that 16-pager. Most of the participants on my current writing course now suggest one method: change the passive to active voice. Many other tricks help in shrinking texts – for instance, banning wordy phrases (“in reference to,” “as a matter of fact”; these are listed in most writing guides) and avoiding a repeated “in this study.” Here, let us concentrate on voice.

My students' articles earn praise for concise, clear language from editors, reviewers, and their opponents at public PhD thesis defences. These people, not high school English teachers, are the judges who matter, as Ed Hull points out.

The inanimate agent

Back in 1988 Paul Leedy demanded the passive voice for scientific writing, he warned that "the researcher . . . should be anonymous. . . All of the action within the drama of research revolves around the data; they, and they only, speak." This brilliantly constructed sentence is invaluable in class as an example of active voice made possible by its two inanimate agents: "action" and "data". How, I wondered two decades ago and still wonder today, can anyone – in arguing for the passive voice – create such powerful active-voice, inanimate-agent line? And then he continues, dropping into the passive: "The passive voice . . . is used to indicate" rather than "The passive voice indicates". "Table 3 shows", "results indicate" are phrases we all use, but to make action revolve and data speak is truly impressive.

In later editions of his manual Leedy may have altered some prescriptions; in 1988 he provided as possibilities: "a survey was made of" something vs "The researcher made a survey of" something. In my online medical writing manual, developed since 1986 (www.helsinki.fi/kksc/language.services/AcadWrit.pdf), I comment that because any survey, once made, provides results, why not write "Our/the survey of X showed that Y" – with the inanimate agent "survey"? Beware that such agents cannot decide or

determine, but hypotheses can indeed predict.

Logic will trump any justification for most passives, except when they are hidden away in the middle of Methods sections. ("These cells were collected, spun down, plated, and chilled; they provided sufficient X.")

Some passive constructions that writing manuals consider irreplaceable are easy to transform into the active with inanimate agent, or by converting the verb into an adjective ("are needed" becomes "are necessary"). Some grammarians lump together inanimate-agent forms with other passive-voice forms. Quirk and Greenbaum's *University Grammar of English* recommends "The bottle contained . . . liquid" and "The will benefited . . . two brothers." Another guide calls the sentence "X necessitated Y" passive. A "passive clause" of course exists, but "a passive sentence" puzzles me. One sentence can include both passive-voice and active-voice verbs. "The liquid was poured into the tubes until they were full" has both. ("The liquid that was added filled the tubes"?)

Why, besides making articles shorter so that more can fit into each journal issue, prefer the active voice? For several reasons: because the non-native English-speaking community can more easily understand sentences in the active voice, and can also feel liberated from the past and learn to utilize the active. And because when seeking data, one's readers will more likely remain awake.

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Examples of going active

Passive	Active
More colloids are needed.	More colloids are necessary/vital.
A slight increase was observed.	A slight increase was observable.
There were no differences in clotting.	No differences appeared in clotting.
Untreated mice were used as controls.	Untreated mice served as controls.
In the same operation, Y was performed.	The same operation included/involved Y.
In X, a Y probe was used on the animals.	Animals underwent X with a Y probe.
Per visual field, six stained cells were found.	Six cells were present/evident/visible per visual field.
This effect has been shown in X.	This effect has been evident/apparent in X.
The first expression was then found.	The first expression then appeared/emerged.
X was observed in cells.	X was apparent in/occurred in cells.
Results suggesting the opposite have been presented.	Some results suggest the opposite.
Cells were compared using lasers.	Lasers allowed comparison of cells.
X correlated with Y, but no correlation between A and B was found.	X correlated with Y, but A did not correlate with B.
There was no decrease in X.	X did not decrease.
There is extensive evidence that ...	Evidence is extensive that ...

Macros for the terrified

Do I appear in this journal under false pretences? I'm not a scientist; I'm an engineer, and I haven't done any original research that I can report on. That said, I do think that anyone who does on-screen editing could benefit from reading this article.

If I were to do some original research, it would be to test editors' attitudes to using macros, but from my informal research, I suspect that a very high proportion either don't use macros at all or maybe use only two or three. More encouragingly, I think it would also show that many editors feel that macros could be of help to them – if only they could learn how to program them.

I want to challenge people to think differently. My thesis is that you do *not* need to learn how to program your own macros. All you need to do is (a) learn how to install and run macros, (b) work out what sort of macros would help you most, and (c) find the appropriate macros.

It's (b) that people find the most difficult. There are so many free macros available for editors to use that it's hard to know where to start. But let's go back a few steps.

What is a macro?

A macro is just a script that automates certain repeated tasks within Word documents. Computers are good at doing repetitive tasks, and they don't get bored, let their attention wander, and miss some of the words/phrases/punctuation/styles that they were supposed to be changing. They are also extremely quick!

So, the idea is that you let the computer do the things that can be done by rote while you concentrate on engaging with the text, working out what the author was actually trying to say, and seeing whether a small change in wording or punctuation could let a reader light straight away onto the author's intended meaning and not have to reread the sentence. Macros, for me, are tools that do the boring bits and allow me to concentrate on the really interesting parts of my job as an editor.

How do I load and run a macro?

Loading and running a macro is not that difficult to achieve, and there are instructions available – for example, in my book *Macros for Writers and Editors*, which is available free from www.archivepub.co.uk. There's a recipe to follow, and the more often you use it, the simpler it becomes.

And even if you do find the process of loading a macro difficult, it's actually using the macro that you're going to do mostly, and that's just a matter of clicking the appropriate keystroke.

Where can I find the macros I want?

Finding macros that will save you time and make your work easier is fairly easy. I have got together a free electronic book with over 220 macros in it, written by editors for editors, so just download the book (<http://www.archivepub.co.uk/book.html>), find the "How do I install a macro?" section, and get started.

Which macros would help most?

How do you know which macros will be most useful for your way of working? Or, more radically, would it be worth actually changing your ways of working to some extent to gain benefit from macros?

Editors can be involved in a huge range of different jobs, and even where two editors are doing the same job, they may well tackle it in very different ways, so I can't say, "You need to use such and such a macro." Let me try to give you a flavour of *some* of the things you might do – but then even if you feel that none of these is for you, please don't give up: there are so many macros that perform such different tasks, that you'll find a handful that will serve you well.

Let me suggest a few scenarios in which macros might be of help.

- You're reading the text and you see coming up a number – "6", say – and you need it to be "six", so you click somewhere on the line and run the NumberToText macro, and it's instantly changed. Then the text says "I've got 3 As, 2 Bs and 1 C" – so click, click, click (run the macro three times) and it becomes "I've got three As, two Bs and one C".
- How often do you change a comma into a full point and then make the next word start with a capital, or change a full point to a comma and then lowercase the following word – or change to a semicolon, or to a colon? In each case, all I do is place the cursor somewhere in the final word, and press Ctrl and Alt, together with the desired punctuation mark, and let the macros change the punctuation mark and sort out the case of the first letter of the following word.
- You're reading some text and you see a word or a phrase and think, "How many times does this occur?" If you run CountPhrase, it will answer that question, doing both case-sensitive and case-insensitive counts.
- You come to something that *looks* like a degree symbol, but you suspect it's not. Run WhatChar, and it tells you the ANSI code of the following character, its unicode number, and what font it is set in. For example, it tells you what each of the following characters is (in Century Gothic): | | | 1 0 0 ° °. They are (in turn) lowercase el, pad character (vertical bar), lowercase eye and number one, then number zero, capital O, proper degree symbol, and masculine ordinal (as used in N°). The macro spells out for you, on screen, if it's, say, a "lowercase el".
- You have a book made up of some prelims plus chapters 1 to 10, and an appendix, all in separate files. Even if the client wants them kept in separate files, wouldn't it be helpful to have all the text in one file to make it easy to search for something? One macro combines them for you. (There's also a macro that can split up one big file into separate chapter files.)
- Do you need to take all the pictures and diagrams out into a separate file, leaving behind call-outs: "<Figure

1.1 here>” etc. FigStrip does that. If you have to do the same with tables, there’s TableStrip.

- You see a word/phrase and you want to look back to the previous time it was used. Select it and, with one keypress, InstantFind will take you to its previous occurrence. What’s more, the word/phrase is now in the Find box, so by clicking Ctrl-PageUp and Ctrl-PageDown, you can jump through each and every occurrence in the text.
- You’re comparing two files: perhaps someone has made some edits to one of them, and you want to check/compare/implement them in the other file. So you make the two files visible on screen, perhaps with the tab Window->Arrange All. As you look through the edited file and find something interesting, you run the FindSamePlace macro, and it will jump immediately to the same place in the other file.
- You’re editing some text and each time you come to a reference citation “Bloggs and Brown 1997” or whatever, if you run CiteCheck, it looks through the reference list, finds what it thinks is the right reference and asks you. If you agree that it’s found the right one, it will unhighlight the reference (assuming that you highlighted them all before you started this process) so that you know that it has been cited. Then, at the end, if any of the references are *still* highlighted, you will know (or at least suspect) that these have not been cited. The macro also highlights every occurrence in the text of “Bloggs and Brown 1997” so that you don’t need to check it again when next it is cited.

Common word switching

You probably have a number of words or phrases that you often find yourself changing: “England” to “the UK”; “continually” to “continuously” (or vice versa); “that” to “which” (or vice versa); “dibenzene” to “dimorphic tribenzene”, “precholier” to “préchôlièr” (I made the last two up, but there may well be technical or language terms that you need to change regularly but are too dangerous to change by global find and replace).

With this customizable macro you create your own specific list, in a Word file, of all these pairs of words/phrases – as many of them as you like: England@the UK, continually@continuously, continuously@continually, which@that, that@which, dibenzene@dimorphic tribenzene, precholier@préchôlièr.

Then when you see a word/phrase that needs changing, put the cursor somewhere in the first word and run the macro; it reads the word/phrase and replaces it from the list – a simple concept, but a real time saver. And there’s no need to worry about your mistyping the replacement word.

Another version of this macro works on single characters, so you can use it to change “%” to “per cent” (it automatically makes it “percent” if the language of the file is set to US English), “°” to “degrees”, “&” to “and”, “+” to “and”, hyphen to en dash, en dash to em dash, etc. Add the symbols you want to change to your list; then, to use the macro, just place the cursor somewhere on the line

ahead of the symbol, and the macro will hunt until it finds one of the symbols on its list.

One macro with a thousand applications

The most powerful single macro is called FRedit – “find and replace edit”. It provides an easy way to do a sequence of global find-and-replaces (F&Rs) on a document. Simply create a list of F&Rs in a separate Word file (or open an existing one) and run the FRedit macro; it makes all the changes that you specify in your list, one by one, in a matter of seconds. As with the common word switching macro, you can have as many different lists as you like, for different jobs and different clients. Also, because the lists are Word files, it’s easy to change your lists at any time.

As with Word’s own F&R dialogue, FRedit also allows you to change formatting (bold, italic, superscript, subscript, small caps, and underline) and styles. For example, it can change CO₂, SO₂, H₂O, m/s², B.C., A.D., etc to CO₂, SO₂, H₂O, ms⁻², BC, AD, etc.

As with any powerful tool (a chain saw, for example) global find and replace can be extremely dangerous if not handled carefully. FRedit helps you there – it allows you to highlight any or all of the changes it makes, so you can see what has changed. What’s more, you can use different highlight colours for the various different changes.

(Another application of this highlighting is to use a set of global “changes” but not actually *change* the text, just apply various colours of highlighting to various words/phrases. I find this useful with “plain English” texts where I have a long list of no-no words/phrases such as “implement”, “going forward”, and “in conjunction with”. These are all highlighted so that as I read I can edit them out.)

Although the principle of this customizable macro is simple, you can do some quite sophisticated editing of Word files, especially if you use wildcard F&Rs. Don’t worry if you’re not an expert on wildcarding, because FRedit comes with a huge library of scripts, so you can cut and paste the various bits of script into your own script file for any given job – for example, hyphens to en dashes in number ranges, eliding numbers (6734–6756 to 6734–56), uneliding them (6734–56 to 6734–6756), automatically applying coding (<A>, , etc) to headings, moving footnote markers outside punctuation, etc.

Lots more where these came from

I hope these few suggestions fire your imagination and encourage you to look at the rest of the macros in my downloadable book (<http://www.archivepub.co.uk/book.html>). By picking the ones that best suit your way of working, you can save yourself a lot of time, and they will enable you to produce a more consistent output.

If you can’t find a macro that does what you want, do ask me because there might be other people wanting to do the same as you. If I then write a macro for you (no charge!), others can use it too.

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Reports of Meetings

METM10 – a jamboree for editors and translators

Mediterranean Editors and Translators Meeting 2010, Tarragona, Spain, 28-30 October 2010

I first came across the Mediterranean Editors and Translators (MET) group after I joined the translation team on *Actas Dermosifiliográficas*, a bilingual dermatology journal produced by Elsevier. My motivation for attending the first MET meeting was partly the wish to put faces on the other members of a team I had only met virtually and partly the need for guidance to improve the quality of my medical output.

What greeted me was a community of supremely professional editors and translators willing to openly share their expertise in order to provide better language services and promote the related professions. Most of the sessions offered were practice-based, with real working examples of the issues in hand presented by experienced professionals.

The 2010 MET meeting, “Facilitating knowledge transfer – through editing, translation, coaching”, was held in Tarragona, Spain, from October 28 to 30 at the Universitat Rovira I Virgili. Each year I have attended, the programme has increased in range, breadth, and depth, and this year was no exception.

Before

Pre-conference workshops were presented by academics and practitioners, many of whom work in the production of medical, scientific, and academic texts either in university language support services or with direct clients seeking publication in journals. For me, the pick of the bunch were:

- Ailish Maher and Luci Vásquez, “Revision matters: why, how and how much?” This workshop provided translators and editors with revision guidelines and a table comparing how the elements of transfer, content, language and style, and presentation are involved in various types of editing and translation tasks – and the table offers a handy framework for quoting the deadline and price for a job.
- Darko Hren’s two sessions on practical statistics for editors rolled back the darkness around many statistical techniques used in research and provided advice on how to spot the most common mistakes. I was relieved to be informed that while editors must be able to identify weaknesses and errors in statistics, they do not necessarily have to be able to resolve them.
- Philip Bazire on dermatology: a three-hour workshop on the anatomy of the skin and basic principles of dermatology that was invaluable for members of the *Actas* team and others.

The one shortcoming of the MET meetings is that delegates can only be in one place at one time. Luckily, many of the workshops are run on a rolling programme at the annual meetings, and the more popular ones are

repeated at various times of the year, mainly in Barcelona. The ones I missed at METM10 included “Righting citing” by Iain Patten, helping editors to spot referencing errors or misplaced citations and suggesting ways to resolve these issues; Alan Lounds on how genre analysis can support editors and translators of research articles in improving abstracts and introductions; John Bates on approaches to effective paragraphing; Marije de Jager and Dado Cakalo with pointers on how editors should deal with plagiarism in science writing; and Felicity Neilson with an introduction to editing medical texts.

During

The conference proper had a rich programme of plenary speeches, panels, and parallel sessions of knowledge updates and promising practices for editors and translators. The full programme can be viewed at <http://www.metmeetings.org>.

Plenary speaker Emma Wagner of the EU Directorate General of Translation delivered an overview of the European Commission campaign for clear writing, born of their earlier “fight the fog” campaign. This was of special interest to those who were working on bids for EU editing contracts.

The panels and parallel sessions included gems such as Mary Ellen Kerans and David Cullen’s presentation on use of the Springer Exemplar corpus. They explained how this collection of peer-reviewed journals can be used to inform lexical choices in translation and editing. Mary Ellen and David pointed out the qualities and possible shortcomings of the Springer corpus and then demonstrated ways to achieve better matches and more appropriate search results by refining search techniques and interpreting the results intelligently.

Other afternoon sessions included my knowledge update on sensitive language, comparing style guide recommendations to actual usage of non-biased language in medical texts and journalism, and education-oriented presentations discussing the criteria for excellence in modern English writing and genre awareness.

Paola de Castro spoke about how the Italian National Institute of Health (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome) is working with institutes and universities in the UK, Spain, Portugal, Colombia, and Brazil in NECOBELAC (the Network of Collaboration Between Europe & Latin American-Caribbean countries, www.necobelac.eu), to improve scientific writing, promote open access publication models, and foster technical and scientific cooperation and communication, specifically in the field of public health.

Another thread of the conference focused on presentation skills for researchers and speakers, with Joy Burrough-Boenisch and David Alexander advising on

the clear presentation of content in posters. They strongly suggested reordering information away from the typical IMRAD format that proves impossible to read from more than three paces, opting for some less-is-more, punch-them-in-the-eye principles that could also prove useful in other scenarios. Sara Freitas-Maltaverne ran a session on using storytelling principles in PowerPoint presentations, and Jean-Luc Doumont blew everyone away with his full-on approach to effective design, construction, and use of slides.

Posters on issues in translation, editing, and presentation were displayed in the coffee lounge, providing a surprising range of transferable tips on clarity and good communication.

Theoretical input was balanced by practical advice on issues like ergonomics, the best way to organize a work station – the practical aspects of multiple screens, docking stations, external hard drives – and peer-to-peer updates of tools available on the web for building quick-and-easy websites, improving organization, and increasing productivity.

The official schedule was supplemented by many opportunities for networking (and great food). Many members had come to the meeting in search of collaborators in linked portfolio areas ranging from a project to improve

the English communication skills of Spanish GPs, to bids for editing contracts and peer reviewing arrangements between translators and editors.

All contributors give their time and ideas freely in return for the benefits they receive from attending the meetings and most meetings are held in venues offered by MET supporters. As a result, the cost of these meetings is more than reasonable, keeping my trips from the UK comfortably within budget and making the investment-to-gain ratio highly favourable.

After

Plans are currently afoot for MET 2011 in Barcelona and the Spring Workshops will be listed on the website (<http://www.metmeetings.org>) soon. The benefits I have drawn from MET meetings lead me to strongly suggest you check out the website and put the event on your CPD plan for the coming year if you possibly can.

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Practical geoscience

44th Annual Meeting of the Association of Earth Science Editors, Victoria, BC, Canada, September 2010

A tradition of the annual meetings of the Association of Earth Science Editors (AESE) is a half-day or day long geological field trip led by local experts to explore unusual features of the terrain near the meeting site. Cultural stops are also included for the less geologically inclined.

Excursions real and virtual

The first trip was an exploration of urban geology that could be viewed on a short walk around the meeting site. The leader started with an explanation of the local stones that had been used to pave the entrance to the hotel, then pointed out other features of the bay and exposed rocks in the nearby gardens, all of which helped in understanding the geological development of Vancouver Island. The walking field trip was also a practical example of how easy it is to introduce non-specialists to principles of earth science.

The second trip was a virtual one, showing the geological features surrounding the Dempster Highway, Canada's most northwestern road, which extends through the Yukon to the Mackenzie river delta. The real point of this visual excursion was, however, to explain how a multidisciplinary team of scientists had expanded their research expedition to write a 92-page guidebook that would be of interest to lay people, especially to geotourists. The team also developed a pamphlet-style geological map that highlighted 18 key features of this far northern area

(<http://ygsftp.gov.yk.ca/publications/yeg/yeg08/YEG/20-roots.pdf>). The pamphlet distilled information from the guidebook, was well illustrated, and was produced on material that could withstand being stored in the glove box of cars. For those editors who have as part of their mandate making scientific information available to the public, it was particularly satisfying to learn how much effort this team of researchers had put into bringing information about their research area to those outside the geological community. It was interesting for all to see the creativity that went into the design of the pamphlet-style map and how much content had been put into a very readable and visually interesting format.

Practical workshops

A new feature of this year's meeting was a series of three practical workshops, each dedicated to a different electronic tool: Adobe Acrobat Professional, the Google suite, and Adobe InDesign. When it comes to software, users tend to be self-taught. The purpose of these workshops was to extend users' knowledge in a more coherent way. The fourth workshop, "Geoscience 101", was an interactive session on various aspects of earth sciences, primarily for the non-specialist.

This reporter picked up a few tips for editing pdf files with Acrobat Professional, such as getting rid of the box

that is automatically created when using the text editing feature. The lack of standards continues to hamper effective use of this tool for editors. One can employ standard proofreader marks via “stamps”, although it is tedious to do so. Especially on long projects it is important to have a common understanding about the techniques to be used by all involved in the editing and production phases.

The head of a small, independent editing firm showed how she was able to save money by using the full set of Google products, including Google mail, documents, and calendar. She also uses Google’s Picasa to manage images both for client’s projects and for personal ones. She demonstrated how the Google suite had been used in organizing the AESE meeting and how using a public system did not interfere with restrictions that might be imposed by employers when their staff members are involved in volunteer activities.

Technical sessions

In addition to the workshops, there were six technical sessions of contributed and invited talks on various aspects of editing and publishing in the geosciences and on making scientific information available to the public. Many AESE

members work for federal, provincial, or state geological surveys, where the mission is to produce and publish scientific results and to serve the public directly.

In one such session on archiving, three case studies underscored that the objectives of all geoscience data repositories are preservation, accessibility, and utilization for today’s and tomorrow’s researchers and students as well as for the public at large. Data that deserve to be collected and protected for the future are not always found in well-formatted documents, as the speakers made abundantly clear. They described the challenges of dealing with formats that ranged from scraps of handwriting to geological artifacts (such as well cores and fossil collections) and with sources that spanned more than 150 years and were geographically dispersed across a nation. The role of the editor in creating systems of access to these materials has become ever more important with the advent of web-based catalogues and other such finding tools.

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Conferencing under fear

Fifth Regional Conference on Medical Journals in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, Karachi, Pakistan, 2-5 December 2010

Four conferences on medical journalism have already been held in the Eastern Mediterranean region (*ESE* 2004;30:18; *ESE* 2005;31:18; *ESE* 2009;35:14). When, during the third conference held in Shiraz, we decided to hold the fourth conference in Bahrain and the fifth one in Pakistan, no one knew that catastrophic flooding would affect most of Pakistan and several deadly explosions occur in Karachi.

When the first announcement of the conference was distributed, most of us hoped that the World Health Organization office in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, one of the bodies helping organize these conferences, would postpone the event to a better time or another place. Many of those who participated in the four previous conferences could find good reasons not to participate in the fifth in Karachi, and only a few foreign delegates attended – the brave hearts! A few of them could not sense the threat, but most could understand the situation but did not give in to fear. Delegates came from the UK, Croatia, Spain, Switzerland, Egypt, Iran, and other countries in the region.

When we arrived in Karachi airport, we were warmly welcomed and taken to our residence – the guest house at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan, two minutes away from the Congress venue. The campus was apparently a very secure place and we spent most of our time there. I heard from other delegates that their hotels used a high level of security too. On the few occasions we went out of the campus, our bus was escorted by armed military guards.

Similar to previous congresses, there were three pre-congress workshops (on medical writing, medical editing,

and biostatistics) and four short workshops during the conference (on online and open-access resources, quality assessment tools for systematic reviews, journal indexing, and publication ethics). Talks were on publication and content quality, scientific research in the region, peer review and its alternatives, AuthorAid initiatives in the region, ethics of research and publication in the region, journal indexing, and evidence-based journalology. There was also a session for poster presentations. The difference I saw was that this time most of the delegates were more involved in discussions and congress activities.

During the conference, EMAME Executive Board members were elected, and participants had a lively discussion on future strategies of the association. Among the recommendations were: establishing national associations of medical editors in member countries; sharing information, knowledge, and experience with fellow editors in the region; organizing local meetings and training activities employing trainers available in the countries and the region; promoting gender balance on editorial boards of journals to ensure optimal representation of the community served by the journal; establishing journal websites and keeping them up to date; and supporting capacity-building in the region on medical publishing.

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Scholarly outputs in health sciences: publication process and open access

NECOBELAC Project Training Course, Rome, 18-20 October 2010

The training course organized by the NECOBELAC project (see *ESE* August 2009;35(3):81-2) aimed at improving the production and quality of scientific documents and at increasing the visibility and availability of research results by supporting open access publishing initiatives. Project partners collaborate to organize and realize training activities for future trainers (T1 courses), who will then replicate training modules at local level (T2 courses).

The T1 training course held in Rome had three sessions: NECOBELAC project activities and future actions; experiences and group work; reports of group works, sustainability of project activities, and final evaluation. About 30 professionals from selected Italian institutions attended; they have already been involved in the issues at stake and committed themselves to replicate the course at local level, thus guaranteeing a larger and longer impact and the sustainability of the project. Such derivative courses can be flexible, including – if necessary – additional modules, and have a longer duration, according to local requirements.

Maps and repositories

On the first day of the course Paola De Castro (Project Coordinator, ISS) illustrated the aims of the project, describing in detail the training programme and the role of future NECOBELAC trainers. Creating awareness on the importance of scientific writing and the open access publication model could lead to new scientific collaborations. Daniela Marsili (ISS) talked about the implementation strategy of the project and the development of cooperation among the EU-LAC countries.

The use of conceptual maps in training and their application to the project modules was presented by Reme Melero (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid). A topic map represents information using “topics”, “associations”, and “occurrences” and has a triple subject-predicate-object structure. Publication process and open access are represented by topic maps that use the Ontopia technology as the framework to represent and offer a graphical visualization of the structure of the training courses. Carlos Agudelo (Director, Instituto de Salud Pública, Bogotá) reported some experiences of scientific and technical collaborations in Latin American countries to improve scientific writing.

The second day of the course included an introduction to scientific knowledge dissemination through journals. Abel Packer (BIREME, Brazil) reported experiences of some LAC editors of public health journals, focusing on editorial policies (open access), peer review process, ethical issues, research communication, and cultural differences, and presented data from SciELO Brazil, the electronic library covering a selection of Brazilian scientific journals. The SciELO experience for the diffusion, dissemination and access to scientific information in LAC countries was also the subject of Lilian Nassi Calò's (BIREME, Brazil) speech.

Elisabetta Poltronieri (ISS) described DSpace ISS, the ISS digital institutional repository: it currently holds about 30,000 items and aims at providing access to the full text of publications within the framework of the open access environment. Together with its own publications, DSpace holds a selection of bibliographic data provided from Italian partner institutions in the field of public health.

After a presentation of the two main NECOBELAC training modules “Scientific publication” and “Open access” by Paola De Castro and Reme Melero, aiming at creating awareness among the participants on the importance of both issues for the dissemination of information in public health, the future trainers were encouraged to propose and solve practical editorial issues, working in small groups and using the newly acquired skills. In particular, they were asked to discuss and draw up a training programme at local level.

The third day was devoted to discussions, evaluation, and results. Any working group presented its own proposal. This was a central moment of the course, interactive and productive, in which both trainees and trainers examined and discussed the core issues of the training course, possible solutions, and the role of future trainers.

Celina Ramjoué (Directorate-General for Research, EU) discussed the role of the EU in disseminating scientific information, in particular of open access public health information across Europe, and related European framework research programmes.

Bogotá Declaration

At the international training course for trainers (T1) that took place in Bogotá, Colombia, in November 2010, NECOBELAC project partners and other academic and public health institutions in Latin American countries approved and signed the “Bogotá Declaration” (available at www.necobelac.eu) in the four project languages. Course participants representing institutions from seven Latin American countries (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru) committed themselves to replicating the training experience in the institutions of their countries, while the NECOBELAC project partners representing European (Italy, Spain, Portugal, United Kingdom) and Latin American (Brazil and Colombia) institutions committed themselves to providing advice and tools to achieve these objectives.

In 2011 an intensive programme of training activities will involve other health-related institutions in Europe and in LAC countries, promoting new contacts and strengthening already established scientific collaborations. Courses are planned in Spain, Portugal, the UK, Argentina, and Mexico.

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Book Reviews

La Rédaction Médicale. 5th edition. Hervé Maisonneuve, Gérard Lorette, Annabel Maruani, Michel Huguier. Doin éditions. Wolters Kluwer. France. 2010. 215 pages, [price], ISBN 978-2704012848



Now in its fifth edition, *La Rédaction Médicale* is designed to familiarize medical researchers (especially junior researchers and postgraduate medical students) with the conventions of medical writing, especially the basic qualities of scientific writing in general: clarity of style, rigor in expressing facts, modesty in making claims, and brevity. Along with this useful information, it also states rules and principles that

must be observed, and “recipes” that could be applied for successful publishing. The authors (internationally known medical researchers and experts in medical writing) do not take a dogmatic stance; rather, they act as good-will advisers.

Chapters and appendices

Each of the 23 chapters opens with a table summarizing the main points of the chapter, and a few sum-up tables are also interspersed within most chapters. A useful list of references ends each chapter. As can be seen, *La Rédaction Médicale* is an extremely rich volume, full of very useful information on an extremely wide arrays of topics, all related to the world of medical researching, writing and publishing. They range from the definition of an “original article” (chapter 1) to the presentation of recommendations to authors and reviewers, and of issues related to good practice and ethics (chapter 23).

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 present, discuss, and clearly define the different types of medical papers (original papers, case reports, review articles, postcasts and vodcasts, doctoral theses, editorials, letters, documentary research). Chapter 5 is devoted to documentary research: where and how to find the appropriate references, alert lists, Cochrane Library, and international databases. Chapters 6 to 12 deal with the different sections of an experimental medical research paper: the introduction and its structure, the methods section, the results, how to present tables and figures, the discussion section, the list of references and the title. Chapter 13 examines research paper abstracts (making the difference between an informative and an indicative abstract), while chapter 14 focuses on conference abstracts.

Chapter 15 gives useful recommendations on how to prepare posters. Chapter 16 presents a clinical research plan on drug trials. The fundamental characteristics of a good research paper (precision, clarity and brevity, correct use of verb tenses, avoidance of the passive voice and of emotional expressions) are analysed and illustrated with apt examples in Chapter 17, while Chapter 18 discusses the concepts of authorship and conflict of interest that are so hotly debated

these days, especially in the field of medicine. The last chapters deal with the choice of a journal when submitting one’s paper; the thorny issue of how to respond to reviewers; how a scientific journal functions; biomedical electronic journals; and recommendations to authors, reviewers and good practice.

The book ends with two appendices: “Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals: writing and editing for biomedical publication”, and a list of abbreviations used in French biomedical writing (and their English equivalents).

Minor details

Some minor observations could be addressed in a further edition of *La Rédaction Médicale*. Throughout the book, the authors use the word “reviewer” in italics, and it is only on page 169 where they explain why they use this English word instead of the French word “relecteur” – I feel this explanation should have been given at the outset, or the French word could have been used throughout. Also, “reviewer” is not, properly speaking, an “anglo-saxon” term, as the authors say (page 169); it is rather an “Anglo-American” term. Another expression which should have perhaps been translated into French is “peer review”: why not say “révision par des paires (aveugles)”. I know it is longer, but at least it is French!

Perhaps more information could have been provided about the impact factor and how it can be manipulated so that junior researchers can beware of this widespread bibliometric concept, and about the concept of plagiarism, only very briefly mentioned on page 88.

In regard to the famous prime directive of today’s academia: “Publish or perish” (page 3), I believe that “in English” should be added after “publish”, as publishing in French or Spanish is not as prestigious as publishing in today’s scientific lingua franca.

In chapter 13, the authors might have explained what an *indicative* abstract is. They do explain what an *informative* abstract is, but only on page 107 do they define an *indicative* abstract. Moreover, because the title and the abstract are the first sections scientists in general read, I would have placed the chapters on the title and on the abstract before all the others. But this is a question of personal choice.

I wonder whether the recommendation given on page 162 (call the journal directly in case one’s article is rejected) is realistic. If the researcher lives in France and the journal is a French journal, this may be feasible, but would not an email be a better option? If the journal is an English-medium one and the researcher a non-native English-speaking scientist, it may be easier – or less difficult – to argue in writing rather than orally. Defending one’s arguments and viewpoints is not easy, much less so on the telephone.

In chapter 17 the authors refer to the different “chapters” of a research article as if they were talking about a PhD thesis when they, in fact, refer to the different “sections” of a research paper.

Many useful pieces of advice

These minor details apart, I wholeheartedly agree with Fiona Godlee, editor of the *BMJ*, who, in the preface of this 5th edition says that we should all look for help when writing (a medical paper), and this book contains many useful ideas and pieces of advice. With chapters on the IMRAD structure, stylistic considerations, the functioning of scientific journals, the criteria needed to qualify as an author, instructions to authors, etc, this book guides us in the methods necessary for the planning and the writing of a medical paper. It will help researchers – especially junior researchers and graduate students – to enhance the quality of their papers so that they are understood, accepted, and eventually published.

This very well written and organized volume will also serve as an excellent teaching resource, not only to those who teach medical writing in French, but also to those who teach medical writing in *English* – either as a primary course

text or as a reference. Instructors with limited background in scientific writing at this level will particularly appreciate the clear explanations and rich lists of references for further reading. Additionally, instructors who live outside France, where the book was produced, will find it highly useful – provided, of course, that they can read French.

It is a pleasure to see *La Rédaction Médicale* being expanded and revised. It will make an excellent addition to any collection of books on medical writing. I teach English for medical purposes to Spanish-speaking medical graduates, and I am eager to start my next course next year so as to include in it some of the valuable information *La Rédaction Médicale* offers. I am convinced that this additional advice will help my students become more successful researchers and writers of scientific articles.

At the authors’ request, authors’ rights will be donated to the Association for the Development and Research in Medical Writing (ADERREM).

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Manual for editors of health science journals. Cairo: World Health Organization. Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, 2009. 77 p. \$15.00 ISBN 978-92-9021-688-9; 978-92-9021-689-6 online



It is difficult to say exactly how many biomedical journals are published in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (among them Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia). The preface to this manual says over 300, but this is likely to be an underestimate. Even this figure shows that journals from this region constitute a sizeable share of

international publications in health sciences. Most of these journals are relatively young and need to reach out to a wider audience, receive more diverse and better manuscripts, and have better visibility by getting indexed in well-known indexing services.

Does this sound familiar to you, although you are not the editor of a Middle Eastern journal? Although this manual was developed by the Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME), it is a manual for any editor of a new, and naturally small, biomedical journal anywhere in the world. Many parts of the book are useful for editors of established journals. How did the manual come into existence? Since its establishment in 2001, EMAME has tried to improve the knowledge of editors in many ways. One was to form an Education and Training Committee, which met in 2006 to draft a guide for editors which was subsequently edited by other EMAME members, tested in different workshops, and published in 2009 by WHO.

The manual is organized under three p’s: Policy, People, and Product – the things an editor must consider when starting or promoting a rather new journal. The Policy section is the longest, since the authors believed that general journal policies are the essential foundations on which new editors must build their journal. These start with the reason for the journal’s existence, and continue with its scope, target audience, governance, ethics, etc. This might be a good reminder to editors who know how to handle a journal on a day to day basis, but do not pay enough attention to the larger perspective. Failing to see this has led to the publication of journals which either do not have enough audience or do not get enough submission to warrant their timely and regular publication.

The People section defines the roles of different people in the journal and in carrying out the policies outlined in the first section. Since there is not a universal agreement on the terminology and definitions of editorship functions, the manual tries to build a uniform terminology, at the same time explaining some of the alternatives used in journals. Interestingly, “readers” is one of the parts of this section, and this shows the manual’s attention to a very essential stakeholder in a journal; editors sometimes easily forget that the journal is published for the readers, and not the authors!

The Product is the last (and shortest) section of the manual. This section defines the role of the editor in planning ways to ensure quality and timeliness of the publication.

Annex 4. Checklists

Mechanical editing

- Ensure the manuscript is complete: all pages, figures and tables are included and required house style has been followed.
- Check the title page includes all necessary information (article title, authors' names and affiliations in full and linked, address for correspondence).
- Check the abstract is of the correct length and key words listed.

Copy editing

- Check the format of headings and paragraphs is correct and appropriate.
- Ensure the grammar, spellings and punctuation are correct and consistent with house style.
- Check the abbreviations included are appropriate and are spelled out the first time they are used.
- Ensure the use of italics, bold and quotes is appropriate and not excessive.
- Ensure units are included where necessary and used correctly (e.g. SI units).
- Check figures and tables referred to in the text are in correct numerical order.
- Check that the number of tables/figures is not excessive and comparable to the length of the paper.
- Check that tables have clear titles and column headings.
- Ensure that all abbreviations in tables are explained in the legend.
- Ensure that drawings and photographs are clear and of good quality and the caption agrees with what the figure shows.
- Check that all references in the text are also included in the reference list in the correct order, and all those in the reference list are mentioned in the text.
- Ensure that all references are in the correct format in line with journal style.
- Mark up the text ready for layout (indicate where figures, tables, etc., are to appear in the text, add journal information as required).

Technical editing

General

- Edit for conciseness and clarity of text (eliminate repetition and unnecessary text, ensure good grammar, simplify language, avoid pomposity/verbosity).
- Edit for accuracy (check errors of fact, ensure specific statements are backed up with relevant references, check numbers/percentages, additions, cross references with tables/text/abstracts, references).
- Edit for consistency – layout/check correct level of headings/check appropriate text under each heading (IMRAD).
- Edit tables/figures for accuracy and ease of reading/understanding.
- Ensure correct units are used where necessary and that they are the correct ones (preferably SI units).
- Apply house style.
- Compile queries for authors.

The Checklists annex will be helpful to editors at all levels

The book is designed as a learning tool to be used in a workshop, or for self-study. Each section starts with learning objectives for the editor and finishes with a couple of questions. These are usually very practical and directed towards the editor's own journal, such as "What support could you provide to reviewers?" and "Do you have an annual schedule for your journal?" Sometimes, though, they are more general: "Are there any other ethical issues ... that you can think of?" Each part also has "resources and further reading".

Of the four annexes, probably the most interesting one is annex 4, Checklists. This annex goes over different levels of editing (mechanical editing, copy editing, technical editing, and proof checks), and provides a checklist to

ensure that the editor does not miss anything important. This will probably be useful also to a more experienced editor of a well-established journal.

This manual – available as a pdf at <http://www.emro.who.int/dsaf/dsa1034.pdf> – provides a good learning tool for new editors all around the world. It can be a handy source for an editors' training course or workshop, as it has been tested in several country-level workshops before being published.

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EASE-Forum Digest: September to December 2010

You can join the forum by sending the one-line message "subscribe ease-forum" (without the quotation marks) to majordomo@helsinki.fi. Be sure to send messages in plain text format; the forum software does not recognize HTML-formatted messages. More information can be found on the EASE web site (www.ease.org.uk). When you first subscribe, you will be able to receive messages, but you won't be able to post messages until your address has been added manually to the file. This prevents spam being sent by outsiders, so please be patient.

During the last quarter, discussions on the forum have ranged from my hobbyhorse of using plain language in science, and transliteration (revisited), to practical points arising when articles are put online as and when they are accepted.

Why can't scientists do things?

I have an aversion to pomposity and I encounter a lot of it in my work. This is why I was irritated when a journal's copy editor had changed the word *done* in a proof of an article I had edited to either *performed* or *conducted*. The journal is published by Wiley-Blackwell. There seemed to be no logic as to what the journal's copy editor considered was performed and what was conducted. The only rational was that on no account was the word *done* to appear anywhere in the article, even when it was the more correct word. Goodman and Edwards in their book *Medical Writing: A Prescription for Clarity* state: "if you mean no more than *do*, then that is a less misleading word to use' (Gowers). *To carry out* is a better verb to apply to ordinary action than *to perform*."

I related the incident on the Forum, where the subsequent discussion largely centred on the use of appropriate words. Marjorie Monnickendam quoted further comments made by Sir Ernest Gowers (quoted in chapter 5 of the 1973 *The Complete Plain Words*), who gave three reasons for why many writers prefer complexity to simplicity:

- A feeling that all common words lack dignity
- An author's tendency to retain in maturity the adolescent's love of the long word
- The perceived danger of being precise.

Françoise Salager-Meyer said that although she had been taught that in general you *make* a thing, *do* an action, and *perform* a required task or a work of music, a linguistic analysis might reveal that current fashion (= sounds better, "more scientific/academic") favours *perform* over *do*.

According to Angela Turner, the *CBE Manual* says that *perform* can often be replaced by *do* or more active verbs and gives the example "He performed an appendectomy", which could be changed to "He did an appendectomy"

or "He removed the appendix". Paul Neate also made the good point that better style is to use a more direct active construct: one can do a study of such and such or one can study it, or one can do an analysis of such and such or one can analyse it.

Although it is interesting to explore good style, what I actually asked members of the Forum was whether they thought changing words in the way I had described was impinging on the author's voice. The general consensus, strongly expressed by HPS Kalra and Karen Shashok, was that if changes do not clarify an ambiguity the author's choice of words should be respected. Margaret Corbett believed that text should not be changed unless a definitive source could be quoted for why such changes were necessary. Likewise Angela Turner saw no excuse for a copy editor changing good English to what is perceived as "correct scientific English", but she did not consider an author's style to be sacrosanct. There are cases where grammar and syntax are all right, but editing can make the style more readable and concise – cases where, for example, authors repeat words and phrases that have they pick up from other scientific papers and use them ad nauseam, especially in the passive voice. Such words might include *perform*, *exhibit*, and *utilise*, which could be replaced by shorter alternatives or other more specific verbs.

So why did the Wiley-Blackwell copyeditor make the changes in the proof I received? Margaret Corbett, who uses the Wiley-Blackwell style sheet, noted that it made no statements about the use of *do* or *done*. Lorna O'Brien suggested that the *AMA Manual* (Section 11.2.2, *Expendable words and circumlocution*) might be the source of this copy editor's zeal, as it urges avoidance of roundabout and wordy expressions, stating that *carry out* should be avoided and *perform* or *conduct* preferred. Although there was no mention of *do* she surmised that the copy editor had picked up the idea that things are performed or conducted in preference to any other verb.

There was a happy ending to the story (for me at least). When, emboldened by the opinions expressed on the Forum, I took the matter up with Wiley-Blackwell, they agreed that there is absolutely no need to change words such as *done* and assured me that their copy-editors and in-house freelance co-ordinators would be informed not to change too much of the text in future.

But there is always another challenge around the corner. What, I asked the author, did the word *cognate* in the following sentence convey that *similar* or *related* would not convey: "B cells require cognate interaction with CD4+ helper T cells to develop high affinity antibodies against protein antigens". The (tongue-in-cheek) answer was that *cognate* is the term used in the scientific immunological literature. Its use shows that you belong to the inner circle of people who know what they are talking about. If the inner circle wants to avoid becoming marginalized it should read <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/usingPL/sciences/whiteman.cfm>.

Format of foreign language articles cited in English reference lists

The Forum revisited the topic of how Russian names and article titles should be written in reference lists in articles written in English for the third time this year (see *ESE* 2010;36(2):48-49 and *ESE* 2010;36(3):77-78 for summaries of the previous discussions). The ISO and UNESCO systems had been recommended for transliteration of authors' names and article titles to the Latin alphabet. In the new discussion Elisabeth Heseltine confirmed that ISO 9 is the internationally accepted method for transliteration and that Wikipedia has a useful article on transliteration. Sylwia Ufnalska, however, warned that another system of transliteration, which was developed by the American Library Association and Library of Congress (ALA-LC), is used by North American libraries and the British Library.

Views differed slightly on the answer to Alina Chitova's question as to how Russian articles should be listed, probably reflecting different methods used between disciplines and journals. Elisabeth Heseltine thought the alphabetical order of the works cited should follow the order of the Roman letters. Each work listed should begin with the authors' names and the original title in transliterated letters followed by a translation in brackets, which should be square brackets, according to Sylwia Ufnalska. Françoise Salager-Meyer thought that it would be better to write the author's names and title in the original Russian version rather than in a transliterated version, with the translation given either immediately below the original Russian text or in a footnote.

Alina works at St Petersburg State University, where she teaches Russian post-graduate students how to write scientific research articles in English, and she also asked for suggestions about which on-line publications might be interested in articles on Russian-English language applied linguistics/translation theory. Françoise provided a list of potential journals but thought that *Babel*, the international journal of translation published by Benjamins, was the most obvious candidate.

Numbering pages in articles online and using an e-ISSN

Journal pages are numbered consecutively in a paper journal when it goes to print, which presents no difficulties as all the material is published at the same time. But how are pages numbered when articles are published online when they have been accepted for publication, and shortened versions of the articles are subsequently published in the print version? This was the question raised by Arjan Polderman, whose journal *Pharmaceutisch Weekblad* was about to switch to an online-first system. Pippa Smart suggested that Arjan adopt the system used by the PLOS and BMJ group journals: although the pages in individual online pdfs are numbered, articles are allocated an article identity (DOI) and cited with reference to the volume number and the article identity. Pages in the print version are then, as before, given consecutive numbers when the issue is compiled.

Arjan had also asked when a separate e-ISSN is useful. Pippa explained that the use of a p-ISSN for the print version and e-ISSN for the electronic version when both versions were identical was useful for library subscriptions. When, however, the electronic version and print version were different products, as would be the case with Arjan's journal with different lengths of the articles being published in the two mediums, an e-ISSN is essential to clearly differentiate the two publications within any library or licensing agency system.

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Silvia Maina – EASE web editor



Silvia graduated in Pharmaceutical Chemistry at University of Torino and, as a direct consequence of her studies, found a job in Istituto Biologico Chemioterapico, an Italian pharmaceutical company. She soon found out that she got bored with research but was fascinated by everything related to books, journals, and scientific publishing. Therefore, in 2002, she joined C.G. Edizioni Medico Scientifiche, where she worked as medical writer,

proofreader, and editor. In 2006 she moved to SEEd medical publishers, where she currently works as a commissioning editor. In 2009 she decided to join EASE, to share her passion for editing and publishing with many other people and be updated on what happens in the editorial world outside Italy. Her life as an editor is now full of books and journals – the ones read for inspiration and education, the ones edited, and the ones imagined with authors, clinicians, and SEEd's colleagues.

Silvia lives in Torino with her husband and her two black cats – who have found that proofs are a wonderful place to sleep.

My Life as an Editor – Matko Marušić



How and why did you become a journal editor?

In 1991, when Croatia became free, I started the journal with a romantic idea of “influencing the culture of a troubled nation”. (Before free elections this would have been unthinkable.) I envisioned that a national journal in English that would serve as “doors and windows

between Croatia and the world”: doors – to open the way for international criteria into Croatia; windows – for the world to see that we were not a savage Balkan tribe but an ancient European culture with good science. It happened that I started the journal almost simultaneously with the start of war in Croatia. The separation of Croatia from former Yugoslavia resulted in military intervention and a five-year long war. Besides publishing on the medical aspect of the war (military medicine, public health, and human rights aspects), we contributed to peace-building efforts and post-war reconciliation. This proved that the editor is not only an executive producer of a journal but can be significant in social, cultural, and political life.

What did you love about your job, and what did you dislike?

I am a southerner, and like and dislike things intensively. In such an intensity I liked the fact that my position enabled me to teach my authors, to help them publish; the authors want to publish, which gives the editor an opportunity to help them acquire skills in research methodology, data presentation, collaboration, responsible conduct of research, and other important things. Equally intensively I hated all kinds of interventions to publish papers that were not worth publishing. Although I was experienced in living in an undemocratic society, I was surprised by the multitude and intensity of such events. The more the journal became important and respected, the more such pressures grew. I have never yielded, and the issue finally exploded into an ugly scandal that has lasted for seven years and still is not over. Both the good and bad aspects proved to be abundant, and the 18 years of my work added to the intensity of my emotional life.

What was the happiest moment in your career as the editor?

When Richard Horton, the editor of *The Lancet*, came to visit, and I took him to my home town of Split, which I adore, and where I grew up at the bottom of society. So, my lifelong dream was to contribute to Split’s transformation into a European-level Mediterranean beauty. Dr Horton delivered a fantastic lecture, “The seven mortal sins of publishing” to a packed audience. For years afterwards, colleagues congratulated and thanked me; I saw this as a

clear sign that a small event could have enormous impact on scientific culture.

What was the most difficult editorial decision you have had to make?

I resigned from the (unpaid) job I adored. It was extremely ugly, painful, and sad. I did it under a terrible danger that the journal would be overtaken by the people who wanted to misuse editorial freedom and everything we achieved during the last 20 years. We were on the verge of defeat and I thought that my resignation might help ease the pressure because I suspected that much of the aggression was aimed at me personally. The pressure did not cease – but we saved the journal. I miss my beloved journal, and I will never make peace with that feeling.

What important changes have you seen in the world of editing during the course of your career?

Electronic publishing. It took me some time to start appreciating it, because I focused on reading. However, the key to e-publishing is not reading but finding information. The advancement in that respect is fascinating and extremely useful.

What makes you happy or sad about the progress in the publishing industry?

Our journal is able to follow modern publishing trends, which makes me happy. Myself, I lag behind, which makes me sad. However, I turn this into humour, because my younger collaborators enjoy seeing the boss lagging behind them in technology. So, I aggravate my problems, make them incautious, and wait for them in the areas where I am stronger. Older people are stronger in the ability to make hard decisions, to stand pressure, to think strategically. My successors still sometimes turn to me for advice; I charge them with the obligation to teach me, for example in using “Dropbox”. Lots of fun.

Do you have any advice for young editors?

Two points. First, do not stop thinking of what is the true niche (purpose) of your journal. Science is much wider, much more versatile, than it looks at first glance. So, a smart editor can find the niche for his or her journal by watching the journal’s position in the “science versatility spectrum”. In other words, do not compete with the bigger and better in mainstream science; find where you are special, interesting, and internationally important.

Second, never, ever, get tempted to be influenced in your decisions by anything except science. Only perfect honesty, and honest objectivity, makes a good journal. Once you start “trading” and making deals, there is no return. There are no deals in editorial work.

News Notes

News Notes are taken from the EASE Journal Blog (<http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com>). Please email items for inclusion to John Hilton (hilton.john@gmail.com) or Lionel Browne (lionel.browne@sfep.net), with "News Notes" as the subject.

TinyURLs may be given to save space and aid reading; full URLs (clickable links) can be found on the EASE Journal Blog.

Who's who

The ORCID Initiative (Open Researcher and Contributor ID; www.orcid.org) has been formed by a group of publishing and research organizations with the mission of resolving author-name ambiguity. It is building a registry of unique identifiers for individual researchers, with an open and transparent linking mechanism with other author ID schemes. The aim is to make ORCID an industry standard that will clarify researchers' output, enhancing the scientific process and helping with research funding, as well as helping to create new research services.

The US National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI), part of the National Library of Medicine (NLM), is addressing the same issue within PubMed (www.pubmed.gov). A new system, called PubMed Author ID, will require authors to register and to identify their research articles in PubMed, thus allowing NCBI to link alternative names and spellings. The anticipated launch for PubMed Author ID is in mid-2011.

Friends in open places

When peer reviewers are suggested by a paper's authors, the feedback is likely to be more positive than when the journal editors chose the reviewers. That may not be surprising, but a new study published in *PLoS ONE* (2010;5(10):e13345) has found evidence of this occurring

even when an open peer review system is used. The journal looked at was *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics*, published by Copernicus Publications on behalf of the European Geosciences Union. On *Nature's* news blog (blogs.nature.com/news/thegreatbeyond) the paper's author, Lutz Bornmann, based at the Max Planck Society in Berlin, said: "The danger is really that an author suggested their best friends. Alternatively – and more charitably – the reviewers selected by authors could be in a better position to know a good result in their field when they see one, compared to those selected by journal editors."

A trial of open peer review at the *BMJ* showed that it did not affect the quality of the review but did lengthen reviewing time and make it harder to recruit reviewers. This and other studies of peer review were summarized on the Society for Scholarly Publishing's Scholarly Kitchen blog (tinyurl.com/openpeerreview).

Download Map



Watching it happen

There are many ways of measuring the popularity and impact of a journal or an article. While citations and impact factors are important, it can take many months to get any useful data, so publishers and editors use measures such as page views ("hits"), downloads, social bookmarking, and blog trackbacks, to gauge impact. The publisher Springer has taken this a step further, with the development of a real-time display of download activity. A dedicated website (realtime.springer.com) displays a live feed of article downloads, so eager editors can watch as the new issue of their journal is consumed (or

not). You can also view downloads by geographical region or keyword tag cloud. And if that's not exciting enough, there's an interactive Tetris-like visualization of journal icons falling from the sky.

Preserving data

Scientific data can be lost because of the storage medium (fragile or obsolete) or because researchers weren't aware of its value. In November, *Nature News* reported an attempt to reduce the risk of data loss, launched to coincide with the biennial conference of the Committee on Data for Science and Technology (www.codata2010.com) in Stellenbosch, South Africa. The project is a global inventory of threatened data and was instigated by Elizabeth Griffin, an astronomer at the Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics in Victoria, Canada, and William Anderson, an information specialist at the University of Texas at Austin and an associate editor of the *Data Science Journal* (www.codata.org/dsj). A task group hopes to catalogue data by the simple technique of asking scientists what they've got in their vaults.

How much does peer review cost?

UK academics spend 2-3 million hours a year reviewing each other's work, according to a report by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) Collections (www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/Reports/valueofukhe). The cost of this time to UK universities is estimated at £110m-165m (€130m-195m) a year, in addition to £30m (€35m) spent on editors and editorial boards, and £110m (€130m) spent on journal subscriptions. The report urges publishers to recognize the contribution that universities make to the publishing process and to see universities as partners rather than customers.

Fakery and geography

A study published in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* (2010;15 November, online) compared the two flavours

of retraction: fraud and error. The analysis of all 788 papers retracted from PubMed since 2000 found that those retracted for fraud (about 25%) were more likely to appear in publications with a high impact factor, and about half came from “repeat offenders”, compared with 20% for erroneous papers. Fraudulent research papers were also more likely to have multiple authors. An unexpected finding was that scientists from the US are considerably more likely to publish fraudulent research (about a third of the total were US-based retractions) than scientists from elsewhere.

Submission fees

A recent report from Knowledge Exchange (www.knowledge-exchange.info) puts the case for introducing submission fees as part of open-access publishing. Most established open-access journals prefer to rely on article processing fees, but the addition of submission fees may help organizations defray costs as they move to an open-access model, especially for journals with a high rejection rate. The report, *Submission fees – a tool in the transition to open access?*, found that submission fees are already common in some disciplines (for example, economics), but acknowledges that more research is needed to gauge authors’ and funding agencies’ support for such a system.

ISMTE and EQUATOR join forces

The EQUATOR Network (www.equator-network.org), an international organization that promotes good reporting of medical research, is working with the International Society of Managing and Technical Editors (www.ismte.org) to develop tools and training to support journal editorial staff. In an article in the society’s newsletter *EON* (<http://tinyurl.com/29ybuc6>), ISMTE past-president Jason Roberts explains how poor reporting undermines biomedical research and how journal offices can help by instigating policies to minimize omissions, inaccuracies, obfuscations, and biases in published research. The organizations hope to make these tools available in other

languages, through a collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (www.paho.org).

Editor ethics survey

A survey of science journal editors at Wiley-Blackwell revealed that the ethical issue of most concern to editors is redundant publication, while issues such as plagiarism and data fabrication were not major concerns. Most editors felt confident in their ability to handle such issues. The study, published in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* (2010;35:348-353), concluded: “Most editors of science journals seem not very concerned about publication ethics and believe that misconduct occurs only rarely in their journals.” Perhaps of most concern was that awareness of publishing guidelines was generally low. Most editors only knew about specific journals’ instructions.



Do editors have value?

Are editors necessary? Technology giant IBM decided to test whether its online marketing material benefitted from editing. A sample of content was edited by a senior editor and posted to a random sample of website users. Another group of users saw the unedited version. Reassuringly, the edited versions had 30% more “click-throughs” in the month after posting. Describing the study on the Writing for Digital website (writingfordigital.com, 4 July 2010) IBM.com’s Editor in Chief, James Mathewson, explained how it took an editor to make a crucial change (replacing “subjects” with “citizens”) in the American Declaration of Independence.

Access to journal articles

The Publishing Research Consortium (www.publishingresearch.net) has published findings from a study of how researchers access scientific

information. The report finds that researchers in all disciplines, across the world, rate journal articles as the most important type of information, and they can usually get access to them, with the exception of “data sets, data models and algorithms”. The study, which looks at geographical area, subject discipline, type of institution and author characteristics, provides a fascinating overview of what scientists are looking at.

Editors’ conflicts of interest

A study published in *PLoS Medicine* (2010;7(10):1000345) highlights an important conflict of interest for editors and publishers of medical journals: clinical trials supported by the pharmaceutical industry generate citations for the journal and income from reprint sales. Researchers at the Nordic Cochrane Centre analysed the financial support of articles published in six major medical journals: *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *Archives of Internal Medicine*, *BMJ*, *JAMA*, *The Lancet*, and *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM). NEJM had the highest proportion of fully industry-supported trials (32%), while *BMJ* had the lowest (7%). Removing these studies from the impact factor calculation decreased impact factors by 15% for NEJM and 1% for *BMJ*.

Only two of the journals disclosed data on reprint sales: *BMJ* (3% of total income) and *The Lancet* (41%). As Richard Smith, ex-editor of the *BMJ*, points out in a blog (tinyurl.com/35h7u63), “We are all more interested in the conflicts of interests of others than we are in our own”. An accompanying editorial in *PLoS Medicine* quotes Marcia Angell, an editor at the NEJM for 20 years, who came to the ominous conclusion that “it is simply no longer possible to believe much of the clinical research that is published, or to rely on the judgment of trusted physicians or authoritative medical guidelines.”

To retract or not?

When is retraction appropriate? A recent feature article in the *BMJ* (2010;341:c6985) highlights the case of a 2001 paper supporting the use of the antidepressant paroxetine

(Seroxat) in adolescents. The drug was later withdrawn from use in children, and a group of academics are trying to persuade the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* to retract the paper on the grounds that it misrepresents the trial results. But the lack of clear fraud or error, the usual reasons for retraction, make it a complex decision.

As the former chair of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Harvey Marcovitch, says: "There are very many papers where, if you looked at the data, you could argue that the conclusions are not justified. If you used retraction whenever that happened you'd be continuously retracting." *The Scientist* magazine has published its top 10 retractions of 2010. The clear "winner", in terms of citations, was the retraction of the 1998 *Lancet* paper on the link between the MMR vaccine and autism (640 citations), while the most prominent retractor was Nobel laureate Linda Buck, who had a 2006 *Science* paper and a 2005 *Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences* paper retracted due to inconsistencies with data and problems reproducing findings by a co-researcher.

Positive approach to negatives

A new series of open-access journals has been set up to publish negative results across various science disciplines. The All Results Journals (www.arjournals.com) were founded by Harvard chemist David Alcantara, who is seeking to provide an outlet for research results that were unexpected or unexciting and which might otherwise have been discarded or rejected. The journals are entirely open access with no author fees. Perceptions of these journals as repositories of "experimental junk" have been countered by the team's insistence on methodological rigour and peer review.

A science "unjournal"

Computational chemist Jan Jensen from the University of Copenhagen has proposed an "unjournal" called *Open Science*, following the recent trend for "unconferences". Jensen

defines an unjournal as a "facilitated, participant-driven journal centred on a theme or purpose ... that tries to avoid one or more aspects of a conventional publishing, such as loss of copyright, high fees, [list your favourite pet-publishing-peeve here]".

Papers would be published and an open peer review system would operate for two months, during which the paper could be revised. At two months the content would be fixed and the paper would get a "score". Thereafter the score would increase with citations, and the paper would always be available for comment and additions of links and new data formats. The proposal was posted on Jensen's Molecular Modeling Basics blog, molecularmodelingbasics.blogspot.com.



Give us your data

Nature Publishing Group has announced a new project to encourage prepublication data sharing in *Nature Precedings* (precedings.nature.com), its open-access repository. The goal is to improve best practices among researchers. The project, a collaboration with the Human Microbiome Project (nihroadmap.nih.gov/hmp), will allow scientists to post data alongside metadata and any ethical, legal, or funding aspects. Documents are permanently archived in a citable format for other researchers to cite if they re-analyse the data. In a separate project, called Community Standards, Nature Publishing Group is exploring community authorship of standards documents. In a similar spirit, open-access publisher BioMed Central's *Trials* journal has created a new series called "Sharing clinical research data" (www.trialsjournal.com/series/sharing).

Multilingual science

Science-Metrix has developed a multilingual classification of scientific

journals. The "Ontology Explorer" allows users to visualise the links between specialties in 18 languages, thanks to the efforts of a team of volunteer experts. Eric Archambault, Science-Metrix president, hopes the tool will "foster discussion and research on the contemporary scientific system, and promote a greater understanding of science dynamics". Science-Metrix used Thomson Reuters' Web of Science and Elsevier's Scopus classify over 15,000 journals. To use the Ontology Explorer, visit www.science-metrix.com.

Spellcheck woe

The Urban Dictionary (www.urbandictionary.com) defines "spellcheckese" as the garbled language created by spellcheckers or automatic word correction software, usually the result of hurried communications. That would never happen in your journal, of course, but most editors are aware of the false sense of security that a spellchecker provides. The *New York Times* newsroom blog, Times Topics (topics.blogs.nytimes.com), has recently included a regular "When spell-check can't help" feature highlighting some phrases that cleverly avoid spellcheckers (and inattentive editors) by the simple tactic of including the right word in the wrong place. Alongside the classics (affect/effect) are phrases like "tow [toe] the line" and "straightened [straitened] circumstances". The discussions following the blog show that in some cases readers actually prefer the "wrong" word.

Protocols exchanged

Nature Protocols, a journal devoted to publishing the best quality scientific methods, has expanded its scope with the launch of Protocol Exchange. An extension of the journal's Protocols Network online feature, Protocol Exchange (www.nature.com/protocolexchange) is an "open resource where the community of scientists pool their experimental know-how to help accelerate research". The aim is to "unlock" the wealth of methodological

knowledge in labs and share it. Protocol Exchange is free to use and protocols are posted under a Creative Commons license. See blogs.nature.com/natprot for more details.

This is news about science

A satirical science news story by *Guardian* blogger Martin Robbins became the most read article on the British newspaper's website in a week filled with domestic political events. The popularity of the article (<http://tinyurl.com/2uf27ds>), a highly entertaining blog entitled "This is a news website article about a scientific paper", took its author by surprise, and he wrote a thoughtful follow-up (<http://tinyurl.com/38uwl3g>), explaining why he'd written it, and what he thought was wrong with science journalism and how it could be "fixed". Robbins' main complaints were with news organizations, but science journals were criticized for issuing an embargo and then not publishing the article on the embargo date or putting it behind a paywall.

Editors talk

The journal *Biogeosciences* (www.biogeosciences.net) is the journal with the most total citations in the environment and ecology field, according to Essential Science Indicators, the research evaluation tool developed by Thomson Reuters. On the Science Watch website (sciencewatch.com), the *Biogeosciences* editors talk in some depth about how they achieved this by focusing on interdisciplinary research and making use of the interactive, open-access approach of the journal's owner, the European Geosciences Union (www.egu.eu).

Poster repository

Faculty of 1000, the post-publication peer review organization, has launched a new project called F1000 Posters (f1000posters.com). The website, launched in December as a prototype, is designed to be a repository for posters from medicine and life sciences conferences, giving poster presenters and scientific societies the opportunity to make work more widely and permanently available. Each poster is available as a PDF and as a text summary.



Peer review debates

The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP) international conference in September featured a robust debate about the benefits and problems of peer review. The debate, along with other presentations at the conference, is available on the society's website (<http://tinyurl.com/2wqqgzf>). The general conclusion was that while the peer review system has failings there is a reluctance to abandon it in favour of post-publication review. A summary of the debate was published in *Research Information* magazine (www.researchinformation.info), accompanied by an interview with Faculty of 1000 editor, Sarah Greenem, who describes F1000's

version of post-publication review. Another expert on the subject, Vivian Siegel, ex-editor of *Cell*, *PLoS Biology*, and other journals, describes her experiences (good and bad) with peer review in a superb talk as part of Columbia University's Scholarly Communication Program (<http://tinyurl.com/promiseofpeer>).

Science Editor blogging

If you enjoy *European Science Editing*, you'll also like *Science Editor*, published by the Council of Science Editors (www.councilscienceeditors.org), the US equivalent of EASE. The *Science Editor* team recently started an Editor's blog (csescienceeditor.wordpress.com), which includes a report of recent Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) forum held at the US National Academy of Sciences.

Just imagine...

If you ate more than you intended over the holiday period and are considering strategies to shed some weight, you may be interested in a study that appeared in the 10 December issue of *Science*. Participants who imagined eating chocolate and cheese were less likely to overeat the real versions. The authors suggest the techniques could be applied to other addictive behaviours, such as smoking. It makes you wonder if obsessive editing could be cured by sitting at your desk pretending to edit, but not actually changing anything.

Lionel Browne
John Hilton

EASE Training Course update

By the time you read this, a group of enthusiastic editors should have attended the workshop in Warsaw, hosted by Edward Towpik and run by Pippa Smart. A full report will appear in the May issue.

If anyone is interested in hosting (or attending) this course in their country, please contact Joan Marsh (jmarsh@wiley.com).

EASE will be offering this course in Tallinn as an adjunct to our 2012 Congress.



Venue for the course in Warsaw

The Editor's Bookshelf

Please write to annamaria.rossi@iss.it or pennyhubbard@gmail.com if you wish to send new items or become a member of the EASE journal blog (<http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com>) and see your postings published in the journal.

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Bornmann L, Daniel HD. **Do author-suggested reviewers rate submissions more favorably than editor-suggested reviewers? A study on Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics.** *PLoS One* 2010;5(10):e13345. The aim of the article is to test whether there is a potential source of bias in the manuscript reviewing in public peer review at the interactive open access journal *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics* (ACP). Public peer review (author's and reviewers' comments are publicly exchanged) is supposed to bring a new openness to the reviewing process. Results have shown that editor-suggested reviewers suggested by editors rated manuscripts between 30% and 42% less favorably than did author-suggested reviewers. Journal editors should then consider either doing without author-suggested reviewers or, if they are used, bringing more than one editor-suggested reviewer into the review process. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0013345

Stanbrook MB, Hébert PC. **Disseminate time-sensitive research faster.** *CMAJ* 2010;182(1):9. Traditional dissemination processes used by researchers, policy-makers, regulators and journals may prove inadequate for health professionals and the public, particularly during health emergencies or for reporting possible new risks of widely prescribed therapies. Communication of important research findings with immediate implications for public health needs improvement. The important steps of peer review and

revision should be accelerated, and at the same time their quality and integrity should be ensured, as these are even more essential during health emergencies to ensure credibility. doi: 10.153/cmaj.092077

Rosenfeld RM. **How to review journal manuscripts.** *Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery* 2010;142(4):472-486. Reviewing manuscripts is central to editorial peer review. A common complaint by nearly all journal editors is the difficulty in finding competent reviewers to assess an increasing volume of submitted manuscripts. Topics covered in this article include: responding to a review invitation, crafting comments to editors and authors, offering a recommended disposition, dealing with revised manuscripts, and understanding roles and responsibilities. doi: 10.1016/j.otohns.2010.02.010

ETHICAL ISSUES

Drazen JM, Van Der Weyden M, Sahni P, et al. **Uniform format for disclosure of competing interests in ICMJE journals.** *JAMA* 2010;303(1):75-76. Information included in disclosures of conflict of interests helps the reader to understand the relationships between the authors and various commercial entities that may have an interest in the article contents. This editorial is published simultaneously in all journals that are members of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), announcing a new disclosure format that all of them will use. doi:10.1001/jama.209.1542

Emerson GB, Warme WJ, Wolf FM, Heckman JD, Brand RA, Leopold SS. **Testing for the presence of positive-outcome bias in peer review: a randomized controlled trial.** *Archives of Internal Medicine* 2010;170(21):1934-1939. Two versions of a randomized

controlled trial that differed only in the way the main finding was described (positive finding or no difference) were peer reviewed by 210 reviewers of two journals (*Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* and *Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research*). Three forms of positive outcome were observed: reviewers were significantly more likely to recommend the positive version for publication; they detected more errors in the no-difference version; and they awarded higher methods scores to the positive version, even though the two versions had identical methods sections. doi:10.1001/archinternmed.2010.406

Feldman BJ. **Fraud could be more common than thought.** *APS News* 2010;19(8):5.

Letter to the American Physical Society's *APS News* saying the physics community needs to start to seriously and openly discuss issues concerning the motivation for fraud; it suggests a need for more discussion of fraud and ethics in graduate curricula and also the need for holding supervisors to a higher standard of supervision and ethical training. The importance of reproducibility is also emphasized.

Hamilton CW. **Don't get spooked! How to collaborate with a professional medical communicator (and avoid ghostwriting).** *Archivum Immunologiae et Therapiae Experimentalis* 2010;58(4):255-261. Reviews relevant guidelines and provides practical tips for authors interested in collaborating with medical communicators (ie, medical writers and editors). It addresses a series of questions, such as what to expect from medical communicators, how to evaluate them, and how to collaborate ethically and efficiently with them.

Pollock RE, Ewer MS. **The integrity of authorship: doing the right thing.** *Cancer* 2010;116(17):3986-3987. Examines the balance between

industry support and integrity of authorship. All articles submitted to peer-reviewed journals should be accompanied by full acknowledgement of industry-financed contributions, so that editors and readers can clearly note any relationship that could influence objectivity.

doi: 10.1002/cncr.25268

Shewan LG, Coats AJ. **Ethics in the authorship and publishing of scientific articles.** *International Journal of Cardiology* 2010;144(1):1–2. The detection of and interest in scientific fraud in publishing increased from 55 articles concerning fraud in 1983 to 167 in 2009. Since January 2009, the *International Journal of Cardiology* has required all papers it publishes to carry a statement that all authors adhere to its principles of ethical publishing and should cite and agree to a published statement of ethical authorship and publishing. Since then, the number of fraudulent cases has begun to fall and, more important, cases have been easier to deal with, as the authors have agreed how their cases should be handled. doi: 10.1016/j.ijcard.2010.07.030

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Editorial. **New APS policies enhance access to journals.** *APS News* 2010;19(8):1–3.

The editors of the American Physical Society's journals *Physical Review Letters*, *Physical Review*, and *Reviews of Modern Physics* have announced a new policy by which all US public libraries are given free online access to all APS journals. They are also allowing free access to the first experimental papers from the Large Hadron Collider. These will be available to anyone under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 license and will apply to any LHC papers coming out of CERN in 2010.

Lewandowski D. **Google Scholar as a tool for discovering journal articles in library and information science.** *Online Information Review* 2010;34(2):250–262.

Measures the coverage of Google Scholar for 35 major library and information science journals from 2004 to 2006, and collects information on the types available (abstract, preprint full text, free PDF, and PDF for a fee). Google Scholar was able to index 100% of the articles for only eight journals, although for most journals the coverage ratio was over 95%. It cannot be a substitute for abstracting and indexing services, but it can greatly aid in obtaining full texts of those publications available. doi: 10.1108/14684521011036972

Pool R. **Preserving research for the future.** *Research Information* 2010;August/September:10–11. In 2008, a survey went from the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP) to its members and in 2010 the Oxford University Press (OUP) surveyed its customers, the librarians, to determine their thoughts on the long-term preservation of digital content. Preservation refers to ensuring electronic scholarly literature remains accessible to future scholars, researchers, and students, even if a publisher ceases operations. The results of both surveys were inconclusive. The issue of payment for digital preservation activities is crucial. A stronger role for governments is also advocated: one initiative could involve the modification of copyright laws to enable digital preservation.

Specht CG. **Opinion: Mutations of citations.** *The Scientist* 2010;16 September.

Just like general information, citations can accumulate heritable mutations. Citation variants – which can comprise the author's name, journal, volume, first page number and year of publication – arise through a variety of mechanisms similar to those described by molecular genetics in genetic terms. As citation variants are often found in publications that cite one another, they seem to be heritable between scientists. The high incidence of wrong citations reflects the fact that information they contain is, to some extent, redundant.

<http://www.the-scientist.com/news/display/57689/>

Way D. **The open access availability of library and information science literature.** *College & Research Libraries* 2010;71(4):302–309.

To examine the open access availability of research in library and information science (LIS) research, a study used Google Scholar to search for articles from 20 top LIS journals published in 2007. The results showed a lack of archiving of articles, with their not being deposited in institutional or subject repositories at a high rate. This is despite the finding of a previous study that 90% of LIS journals allow some form of self-archiving.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Hartley J. **The anatomy of a book review.** *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* 2010;40(4):473–487.

Provides a full account of the procedures used to write one specific book review. The process involves three main stages: reading, scanning, and making notes about the text; writing an initial rough draft of the review; editing and polishing it several times to produce a final version. Examples illustrate this three-stage process and comments cover the language used in reviews.

Habibzadeh F, Yadollahie M. **Are shorter article titles more attractive for citations? Cross-sectional study of 22 scientific journals.** *Croatian Medical Journal* 2010;51(2):165–170.

In the instructions to authors, journals' scientific editors usually advise that the titles of articles should be concise for better clarity of the message and a greater attractiveness to readers. This study aimed to investigate the correlation between the length of the title of a scientific article and the number of citations it receives. Results show that longer titles are associated with higher citation rates and this association is more pronounced for journals with high impact factors. doi: 10.3325/cmj.2010.51.165

Rebholz-Schhmann D, Kavaliauskas S, Pezik P. **PaperMaker: validation of biomedical scientific publications.** *Bioinformatics* 2010;26(7):982–984. PaperMaker is a web-based service that helps authors of a biomedical scientific publication to improve their manuscript prior to submission to a journal. It analyzes the document, checks consistency parameters, and gives author feedback on the appropriate use of specialized terminology and references. It also analyzes the proper use of acronyms and their definitions and provides Gene Ontology and MeSH categorization of text passages. At the end of this interactive analysis, the author receives a final summary of findings, the manuscript in its corrected form, and a digital structured abstract.
doi: 10.1093/bioinformatics/btq060

PUBLISHING

Arriola-Quiroz I, Curioso WH, Cruz-Encarnacion M, Gayoso O. **Characteristics and publication patterns of theses from a Peruvian medical school.** *Health Information & Libraries Journal* 2010;27(2):148–154. Assesses the characteristics and publication pattern of theses published in biomedical-indexed journals by medical students of a private university in Peru with the highest scientific research production. Data relate to 482 medical theses registered in various databases between 2000 and 2003; of these, 85 (17.6%) were published in biomedical-indexed journals. Most of them (80%) were in Spanish and published in local journals, and 17 theses (20%) were published in foreign journals. The percentage of published theses in biomedical journals at this university is comparable with those from developed countries (Finland and France, for example). These results cannot be generalised to all medical schools in Peru.
doi: 10.1111/j.1471-1842.2010.00878.x

Chaudhuri J, Thohira M. **Usage of open-access journals: findings from eleven top science and medical**

journals. *The Serials Librarian* 2010;58(1):97–105. Outlines usage patterns of open-access and hybrid-open-access journals in selected scholarly publications, and analyzes more than 1100 citations from eleven top science and medical journals for the years 2004, 2006, and 2008. The 11 high-impact journals included eight traditional, one open-access, and two hybrid-open-access journals. In most cases, usage of open-access journals increased from 2004 to 2008.
doi: 10.1080/03615261003623070

Harris S. **East meets West as research grows.** *Research Information* 2010;August/September:14–15. In this first of a two-part focus on China's research and publishing, people involved in research and in supplying research content in China were asked about their experiences of Chinese research and information access. Over the past 10–15 years Chinese researchers have been making great progress in scientific research and publishing, with a dramatic rise in the number of articles coming out of China. According to ISI figures, China's annual output is now second only to the USA's. China is the fifth most frequently-cited source country. The second article (http://www.researchinformation.info/features/feature.php?feature_id=288) focuses on the challenges and opportunities for Western and Chinese publishers in China.

Poeschl U. **Interactive open access publishing and peer review: the effectiveness and perspectives of transparency and self-regulation in scientific communication and evaluation.** *Liber Quarterly* 2010;19(3/4):293–314. The advantages of open access (OA), public peer review and interactive discussion are demonstrated by this description of interactive OA peer review by the journal *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics* and some other interactive OA sister journals. Interactive OA peer review with a two-stage publication process and public discussion effectively resolves

the dilemma between rapid scientific exchange and thorough quality assurance.

Salo D. **Who owns our work?** *Serials* 2010;23:191–195. The role of intellectual property rules in scholarly communication is becoming increasingly complex, and research is becoming more collaborative and innovative. As a result, authorship and ownership criteria are being challenged, while institutions, funding bodies, and libraries are emerging as stakeholders in the publishing process. This article looks at where publishers fit into this question.
doi: 10.1629/23191.

RESEARCH EVALUATION

Bornmann L, de Moya Anegón F, Leydesdorff L. **Do scientific advancements lean on the shoulders of giants? A bibliometric investigation of the Ortega hypothesis.** *PLoS One* 2010;5(10):e13327. The Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset says that top-level research cannot be successful without a mass of mid-level researchers on which the top ones rest. According to this hypothesis, highly-cited and medium-cited papers would refer equally to papers with a medium impact. Should research funding be focused on elite scientists or rather aim at generating scientific capabilities among the scientific community? The question here was addressed from a bibliometric perspective, analyzing field-specific journal sets covered by the Scopus database for 2003. It showed that highly-cited papers more frequently cite highly-cited papers. These findings support the so-called Newton hypothesis - seeing further only by standing on the shoulders of giants.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0013327.

Klavans R, Boyack KW. **Toward an objective, reliable and accurate method for measuring research leadership.** *Scientometrics* 2010;82:539–553.

This article proposes an alternative method of measuring research leadership for an actor, be it a university, state, or nation. Results from this method have been compared to results calculated by use of a traditional journal category-based approach for determining leadership. The method is based on highly cited reference papers, rather than journals, and defines three different types of leadership: publication leadership, reference leadership, and thought leadership. The comparison provides evidence that this method more accurately portrays the actual patterns of research leadership at the national level.
doi: 10.1007/s11192-010-0188-6.

Van Noorden R. **Metrics: a profusion of measures.** *Nature* 2010;465:864–866.

Within the past decade, the development of scientific performance indicators has accelerated rapidly, accompanied by the ready availability of online databases such as the Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar. The author offers a survey of this evolving situation: from the impact factor to the *h*-index and its more than a dozen variants and to the increasingly popular class of measure called “evaluative informetric”. This last metric gives heavier weight to citations from papers that are themselves highly cited.
doi:10.1038/465864a.

SCIENCE

Baggerly K. **Disclose all data in publications.** *Nature* 2010;467:401. Three clinical trials at Duke University in the USA were suspended late last year following a protracted investigation. The problem was their inability to reproduce the “genomic signatures” used to select cancer therapies. Is it the job of journals to help maintain reproducibility as a cornerstone of the scientific process?

Stefan M. **A CV of failures.** *Nature* 2010;468:467.

The CV of a scientist does not mention his or her failed exams, unsuccessful fellowship applications, rejected projects, or papers never accepted for publication. The author suggests one should compile an “alternative” CV of failures, that could include every rejected application, project proposal, and paper. Keeping it visible has two purposes: to remind each scientist of his or her own setbacks and to help other colleagues to shake off a rejection and start again.
doi: 10.1038/nj7322-467a

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Armbruster C. **Implementing open access: policy case studies.** *Social Science Research Network* 2010;October 14.

We are approaching the end of the first generation of open access implementation. This report evaluates progress by focusing on a few cases, including the University of Zurich, the Wellcome Trust, UK PubMedCentral, SCOAP3, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and the Austrian Science Fund. It examines the impact of open access on digital scholarship, with suggestions on what we can learn from such cases.

Chavalariasab D, Ioannidis JPA. **Science mapping analysis characterizes 235 biases in biomedical research.** *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2010;63(11):1205–1215.

Many different types of bias exist in medical research and publishing. This systematic mapping analysis of over 17 million articles from PubMed found 235 bias terms and 103 other terms used commonly in articles about bias. The title or abstract of more than 100 articles each contained 40 terms. Clusters of terms were organized into macroscopic maps showing the distribution of bias types. Some

bias terms (confounding, selection bias, response bias, publication bias) appeared increasingly over time.
doi:10.1016/j.jclinepi.2009.12.011.

Courant PN, O'Donnell JJ, Okerson A, Taylor CB. **Improving access to research.** *Science* 2010;327(5964):393.

A report issued by the US House of Representatives Science and Technology Committee's Roundtable on Scholarly Publishing in January 2010 recommends that journal articles derived from federal research funding should be made publicly available as quickly as practicable (generally, in a year or less after publication). The report calls for each US funding agency to develop public access policies and focuses on the critical role of peer review, the need for continued engagement among stakeholders, and the importance of fostering innovation.
doi: 10.1126/science.1186933.

Shrager J. **The promise and perils of pre-publication review: a multi-agent simulation of biomedical discovery under varying levels of review stringency.** *PLoS One* 2010;5(5):e10782.

A web-based review process must be carefully designed to allow for easy filtering of publications based upon their review type and quality. The author used a multi-agent simulation of treatment selection and outcome in a patient population to examine how various levels of pre-publication review might accelerate or hinder scientific progress. The results do not answer the specific question but show that both completely unreviewed and very strictly reviewed scientific communication seems likely to hinder scientific progress.
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0010782.

Thanks to John Hilton and John Glen.

**Anna Maria Rossi
Penny Hubbard**

EASE Business

EASE seminar in Barcelona

On 20 June EASE will run a seminar on peer review ("How to review and get reviewed") in the Faculty of Library and Documentation of the University of Barcelona, as part of the doctoral programme "Information and Documentation in the Knowledge Society".

The course is aimed at graduate students, teachers, and editors. It will cover topics related to the roles of reviewers, types of peer review, guidelines for reviewers, ethical issues related to the evaluation of articles. In a practical session, participants will act as referees. At the end of the seminar, playing "the game" that EASE presented at ESOF in 2008 will show the obstacles that need to be overcome to get peer reviewed and published.

The audience is expected to include local editors, to whom EASE will present the association and its activities as a way to broaden its visibility and increase membership. Attendance is free.

For further information or if you are interested in attending, contact Reme Melero (Rmelero@iata.csic.es).

List your publications

Are you aware that the EASE website has a page where members can list their publications, either recent or not-so-recent. Your contributions are welcome - go to www.ease.org.uk

French EASE members meet

With a festive pre-holiday spirit much in evidence, 11 members and prospective members of EASE met in Paris on 13 December for an informal discussion followed by lunch at a local restaurant. Three people had journeyed from Besancon, Nantes, and Lyon in order to be there. As usual at EASE gatherings, topics ranged freely over a wide variety of issues: electronic vs print publishing; the shortcomings of certain academic publishers (who shall remain nameless here); the merits of different types of software for journal and peer review management; problems associated with language, translation and being an author's editor; how to improve contributions from developing and under-represented countries; courses that teach science writing skills; and coping with budgetary constraints. Several participants brought along sample copies of their journals and reports to show.



Editors who lunch: Alison Clayson, Hervé Maisonneuve, and Brigitte Milcendeau

Both the location of the next EASE conference (Tallinn, 2012) and the proposed theme of digital publishing generated enthusiasm. Several people also commented on the new improved EASE website and expressed a willingness to offer news and articles for ESE.

When the wine and the apple crumble (a new French favourite!) had disappeared, we all agreed that it would be fun to meet again in the spring, and so we shall.

-Alison Clayson

News from Members

Eric Lichtfouse reports: Our journal *Agronomy for Sustainable Development* (ASD) has been spotted by Thomson Reuters. ASD indeed achieved the highest percent

increase in total citations in the field of Agricultural Sciences. See article published in the November issue of *Essential Science Indicators*: <http://sciencewatch.com/inter/jou/2010/10novAgrSusDev/>.

Mary Hodgson – new EASE Secretary



Continuing a recent tradition for keeping this position within the family, our new Secretary is Joan Marsh's sister, Mary Hodgson. Mary lives in Cornwall, south west England, with her two daughters and husband Mike. Mike works for a gold mining company with assets in Brazil so is away from home much of the time. Mary runs a small equestrian business called HorsePlay from the family home, which fits in well with the family's own horses and competition activities. Both children are now established in school, so Mary has agreed to take on the EASE secretariat for us to run alongside her other commitments.

Previously, Mary worked for a European funded economic development agency called LEADER, which accessed funds from the European Structural Funds to support local projects in tourism, farming, food manufacturer, bio fuels, and community capacity building. Following the success of this work, Mary and a colleague formed a commercial e-business company, Kingsbury Shaw, and soon had clients around the world from West Cornwall to the Seychelles and Cape Town, specializing in the management of tourism destinations. Kingsbury Shaw were instrumental in developing the infrastructure for the English Tourist Boards EnglandNet project, which set out to link up England's regions in a national database and promote them through all forms of new media.