

# EASE Digest

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In this issue of the *EASE Digest*, you will find articles reproduced from the open access *European Science Editing*, along with regular favourites.

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**From the editor**

2020 is going to be remembered for a very long time for the widest variety of reasons imaginable. The unprecedented effects of this global pandemic are far-reaching, touch every aspect of our lives and will be intrinsic to our societies and cultures for some time to come. I hope you all remain healthy and safe and now the reset button has effectively been pressed, I would like to send the very best wishes to you all for the coming year and whatever version of "normal" that brings.

*Lynne Rowland*

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Lang TA. An author's editor reads the "Instructions for Authors". *European Science Editing* 2020;46. DOI: 10.3897/ese.2020.e55817

## EDITORIAL

### An author's editor reads the "Instructions for Authors"

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#### Introduction

I've been a medical writer and author's editor for 45 years. I have read the instructions for authors in dozens of medical journals. I know what authors (and author's editors) think of these instructions, at least among those who know that journals actually *have* instructions for authors. For almost as long, I've been a member of four professional societies concerned with scientific publishing, and I know a lot of editors-in-chief of medical journals. I appreciate their desire to have authors follow the instructions when preparing manuscripts, at least among those editors who remember that their journals *have* such instructions and insist, at least occasionally, that they be followed.

A journal's instructions provide information on its purpose, readers, policies, and procedures; requirements for preparing manuscripts; and procedures for submitting manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> Here, I'm concerned only with requirements for preparing manuscripts and in why authors might ignore some of them. Mostly, I side with authors and marvel at what journals ask them to do to get published. (Besides, an editorial on *reasonable* requirements would not be nearly as interesting.) I do believe that authors should follow a journal's requirements for preparing manuscripts, but I also think that journals should realize how some of these requirements are perceived and should have more realistic expectations about what authors should be asked to do.

The examples here are word-for-word requirements that I have collected over the years. I've not identified the journals. I don't want to criticize specific journals, just to raise awareness about what appears to be a widespread concern. I do apologize for the bias toward English-language journals and for a certain amount of cynicism, which is an occupational hazard among those of us whose job is to find and fix weaknesses in other people's writing. It's a living.

Before I forget: links to the instructions for authors for 6,000 journals in the health sciences can be found at the website of the University of Toledo [Ohio] Mulford Health Sciences Library: <http://mulford.utoledo.edu/instr/>.

#### The Purpose of Manuscript Preparation Requirements

*Rules are useful, but the understanding of the reason on which a rule is based is better.*

Thomas Arthur Rickard,  
author of an early book on technical writing, 1908<sup>2</sup>

Manuscript preparation requirements are intended to create articles that meet professional publication standards; provide a consistent appearance for all articles published by the journal and sometimes across journals; and promote the accuracy,

completeness, and clarity of the text, tables, and images needed to report research.

In general, instructions for authors are very small subsets of very large style manuals. Instructions are as accessible as the journal that publishes them, but style manuals are separate print or electronic books and are not generally consulted by authors. Journals usually specify the manual they prefer, the two most common in medicine being the *AMA Manual of Style*, published by the American Medical Association,<sup>3</sup> and *Scientific Style and Format*, published by the Council of Science Editors.<sup>4</sup> Journals can include relatively few requirements in their instructions, so those they select are those they find important.

Not all requirements are equally important. The more important ones—which if not met could be reason for rejection (by the cold, unfeeling, and complex, electronic submittal process)—include those for reporting clinical and epidemiological research designs and activities (eg from the EQUATOR network;<sup>5</sup> word limits for abstracts and the body of the text; limits on the number of tables, figures, and references; bibliographic styles; and computer formats for text and image files.

The less-important requirements—which might result in mild-to-moderate swearing but not rejection—include information on the title page; the order of components in the manuscript (eg, where acknowledgements, figure captions, and tables are presented); the required type font and size, margin widths, line spacing, and line numbering; and copyediting rules, such as the bibliographic style (how references are formatted), whether subtitles, italics, and bolding are allowed, and of course, correct grammar and spelling.

Who should implement these requirements is debatable. Many authors are happy to leave copyediting to the manuscript editors at the journal (or to hire author's editors who provide copyediting as well as substantive editing before submittal), whereas some journals appear to be outsourcing copyediting to authors by including highly specific copyediting requirements in their instructions. (As an author's editor who charges authors by the hour to make journal editors happy, "highly specific copyediting conventions" are job security, but that's another editorial). In any event, irrespective of who is supposed to implement them, the requirements remain. But not all make sense.

Different journals have different needs, which may be reflected in their instructions. Journals with limited resources might want authors to do more copyediting and formatting, and better-funded journals might provide copyediting in-house to assure quality. Some requirements may accommodate a journal's page design, and page designs may differ among archival journals publishing original research (*JAMA, Journal of Experimental Psychology*), practice journals describing how to diagnose and treat various conditions (*Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine, Postgraduate Medicine*), and major multidisciplinary journals (*Science, Nature*) that have a more

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magazine-like design. There may also be good reasons for some of the requirements listed below and I'm just not aware of them. Maybe.

### Unsupported Requirements

- Some requirements are just baseless. For example, "Do not use personal pronouns" and "Do not write in the first person; that is, adopt the passive voice." A variation is to have authors refer to themselves as "the author." (This practice may be left over from very early journals, which were often written entirely by their editors, not by contributors. The editors could hide that fact by using "the author," rather than personal pronouns.<sup>6</sup> First-person pronouns were used in the very first journals, published in the late 1600s,<sup>6,7</sup> and they have been specifically encouraged in medical journals since at least 1900, in influential books by George Gould, one of the founders of the Association of Medical Librarians (now the Medical Library Association<sup>8</sup>) Maude Mellish, head of the Department of Publications at the Mayo Clinic,<sup>9</sup> and George Simmons and Morris Fishbein, longtime editors of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.<sup>10</sup> The passive voice was, for a while,<sup>11</sup> thought to be somehow "more objective" because it avoided the use of personal pronouns.<sup>6</sup> Research has since established that both personal pronouns and the appropriate use of the passive voice improve the clarity of a text.<sup>12,13</sup>
- Another baseless requirement is to avoid "split infinitives." The infinitive form of a verb has a "to" in front of it: "to edit." "Splitting the infinitive" means putting an adverb between the "to" and the verb: "to thoroughly edit." The "correct" form would be "to edit thoroughly." However, split infinitives have always been acceptable in English. The problem appears to have begun in 1864, with the publication of a popular book titled, *The Queen's English*, by Henry Alford, an English theologian and highly respected scholar.<sup>14</sup> Oddly enough, Henry didn't make the rule. In the book, he answered a correspondent who defended the use of the split infinitive, and Henry just said there was no reason to use them.
- Some journals request that authors "Avoid the main title/subtitle arrangement," which means not adding information after a colon at the end of the main title. However, information in this position can be useful, for example, "... : A Randomized Trial," "... : or "... : Part 3 of Evaluating Journal Instructions."
- Others decree that a title "Does not contain punctuation." This requirement may prohibit colons, but it also prohibits commas, which are as useful as colons: "Studying Addiction: Conceptualization, Assessment, and Findings" or "A Study from Mzuzu, Malawi," or "Diabetes, Obesity, and Hypertension in Risk Stratification Models." More useful would be to know whether the journal requires or accepts "declarative titles," which state the results in a sentence, or "informative titles," which tell what was studied.<sup>15</sup>
- A similar requirement: "Please do not use any . . . subheadings" [other than the introduction, methods, results, and discussion] or the "Discussion does not

contain subheads." Subheadings indicate the organization of a text, help readers find information, and provide "visual relief" in long articles. In addition, three subheadings are common enough in clinical research articles to be considered established: "Statistical Methods," at the end of the Methods, and "Strengths and Limitations of the Study" and "Conclusions," at the end of the Discussion. Again, research has established the value of subheadings.<sup>12,13</sup> Similar restrictions are sometimes applied to figure captions, which should be ". . . succinct (no more than 60 words)." I think figure captions are like titles: they should be as long as they need to be to identify the key aspects of the figure and as short as authors (and editors) can make them. A related requirement is that "All figure legends must be written in complete sentences." Why?

- Finally, another requirement that appears to be unfounded, is "Preferentially, the top left cell of a table should be kept empty." Other journals require that all columns have a heading, and I've never heard of any reason, much less a good one, why that particular cell should be left empty.

### Unclear Requirements

- I cringe when I read that "The *Journal's* reference style follows that of the Uniform Requirements," sometimes called the Vancouver Style, that was introduced by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) in 1978.<sup>16</sup> One problem is that the UR style is no longer found on the ICMJE's website; it's been moved to the National Library of Medicine's website.<sup>17</sup> Another is that the ICMJE now recommends the slightly different format used by the American National Standards Institute<sup>18</sup> and by the US National Library of Medicine.

More importantly, most journals requiring the Uniform Requirements, don't use it; they use a variation. The 1978 format was to list the first six authors and to add *et al.* for articles with seven or more authors. This format has not changed in 42 years. However, the most common modification is to list the first six authors (or 4, 5, or 10) unless there are more than six (or 4, 5, or 10), in which case, only the first three are listed, followed by *et al.* The *AMA Manual of Style*<sup>3</sup> and the *New England Journal of Medicine*<sup>19</sup> use the "first three" modification, for example; *Scientific Style and Format* uses *et al.* after 10 authors.<sup>4</sup>

- Other journals confuse authors by saying in one part of the instructions, "Authors are required to submit their manuscripts with the list of references displayed in the AMA style" and saying in another part to "Always list all authors, and do not use 'et al.' when listing your references." Still other journals say to use the Uniform Requirements and then give examples in a different format.
- Many journals provide examples of references in the desired format. However, these examples are not always helpful. The one below doesn't tell authors everything they need to know:

Pasteur LB, Houser D, Osler W, Welby M. The Pediatric Cardiomyopathy Registry. *Cardio-oncology*. 2004;98:297-308.

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When is “*et al.*” used in listing the authors? Should titles be in sentence case or in title case? Are journal titles abbreviated? Are abbreviated journal titles punctuated (ie *J. Med. Writ. & Graffiti*)? Should issue numbers be included? Should terminal page numbers be duplicated (eg. 145-8 vs. 145-148)? A better example:

Pasteur LB, Houser D, Osler W, et al. It was readable the last time I saw it: the dark side of author's editing. *J Med Writ & Graffiti*. 2004;98(4):297-9.

From this example, it's clear that “*et al.*” should be used after three authors, journal names should be abbreviated but not punctuated, issue numbers should be included, and terminal page numbers should not be repeated (and that subtitles are ok!).

### Unusually Specific Requirements

- I'm sure there's a story behind this requirement: “Avoid excessive use of abbreviations solely to reduce the word count.”
- I'm sure there's a story behind this requirement, too: “Abbreviations are permitted, but usually no more than five per manuscript (at the Editor's discretion), and then *they must be used on every page of the manuscript*. Abbreviations are *usually limited to terms in the manuscript's title*.” [Emphasis added.] It would be easier to say, “Don't use abbreviations.”
- Other “do and don't” requirements seem almost trivial and annoying. The do's sound like personal preferences:
  - In the acknowledgments: “Dr. should precede the name of each person with a medical and/or doctoral degree.”
  - “All confidence intervals are expressed . . . with a comma instead of a dash between values”
  - “Key terms should be in alphabetical order and separated by commas.”
  - “Adjectival key words should be changed to nouns.”
  - “Put spaces between the [nonsequential] reference numbers (eg 8, 11, 32)”
  - “Put 2 spaces between sentences.”
  - “. . . use a comma before the final item in a list.” (This, the “serial comma,” is important: “I like cooking, my family, and my friends” vs. “I like cooking my family and my friends.” Seems like too small of an issue to put into instructions, however.)
- The don'ts sound like “pet peeves”:
  - “Do not use ‘level’ when referring to a ‘concentration.’”
  - “Do not use 2-letter US Postal Service abbreviations”
  - “Do not use ‘conclusion’ as a heading.”
  - “Don't use ‘References’ use ‘Literature Cited’”
  - “Don't use “%tile” for “percentile” (from an annoying author, not a journal, but it belongs here and anyone who uses it should be fined heavily)

### Unusually Demanding Requirements

- Some requirements, although reasonable, can nevertheless be demanding, especially if encountered at the last minute: “All references that are 5 years old or more should be replaced with current literature, unless the referenced publication is a classic work that underscores the core subject.”

- Here's a journal that takes references seriously: “With your revised manuscript, send a copy of the title page of any work cited that was published before 1970 in the US and for all work cited published outside the US, regardless of year. For books, send copies of the copyright page and the first page of any chapters referenced.”
- The purpose of an abstract is to help readers decide whether to read the article.<sup>15</sup> Thus, information that does not help readers make this decision should not be included. My Award for Best Unrealistic Requirement goes to this one: “Manuscripts reporting original research must include a structured abstract of 250 words or less. . . In the *materials and methods, please give information regarding institutional review board approval, informed consent, and HIPAA compliance (U.S. studies). For studies involving animals, indicate appropriate committee approval*. Briefly state what was done and what materials were used, including number of subjects, sex, and age. *Also include the methods used to assess the data and to control bias, along with the statistical analyses performed.*” [Emphasis added.] Besides the fact that putting all this information into a 250-word abstract would be challenging, the information in italics is irrelevant in deciding to read the article.
- “Include sufficient technical information to allow the study to be repeated.” Although I believe the intent of this requirement is sound, I think it is increasingly unrealistic and is included more out of habit than value. The typical article in clinical medicine is 3,000 words, which is long enough to summarize the problem being addressed, the general methods used to address it, and the key findings, but rarely long enough to allow accurate replication. Supplemental information can be submitted on-line, and clinical research protocols are now available in trial registries. However, the published article is more often than not inconsistent with the protocol.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the article itself is an idealized account of the research. As Nobel Laureate Richard Feynman describes it: “We have a habit in writing articles published in scientific journals to make the work as finished as possible, to cover up all the tracks, to not worry about the blind alleys or to describe how you had the wrong idea first”<sup>21</sup>.
- Word limits may help production managers fit the text into templates that standardize the look of the journal. These limits may also force authors to say what they want to say in fewer words, which is a very good idea, and skilled editing can often shorten many texts by up to 30% without losing content.<sup>22,23</sup> But I've never understood why journals want to limit the size of the sections *within* an abstract or *within* an article. For example, “A structured abstract should have no more than 480 words. The aim should be no more than 20 words, the methods no more than 140, the results no more than 294, and the conclusion no more than 26 words.” Aside from the fact that 480 words is an unusually long abstract, why are these limits important? Why the specificity of 140, 294, and 26 words? Is someone going to count the words in each section? What happens if a section goes over the limit?



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Also, the above abstract is not a structured abstract; it's a typical informative abstract with a heading for each of the 4 standard sections (background, methods, results, and conclusions) instead of a single paragraph. The original structured abstract for an article reporting original research (especially randomized trials) has 8 headings; it contains more information than a typical informative abstract.<sup>24</sup>

Likewise, "The Introduction should not exceed 750 words" or "should be limited to 1.5 manuscript pages"; "The Discussion should not exceed 1500 words" or "not exceed 4 typewritten pages except . . . when approved by the Editor." A similar, if slightly less-arbitrary approach, was based on the average length of each section in a sample of articles. The researchers concluded that articles should consist of 30 to 32 paragraphs to "simplify scientific writing."<sup>25</sup> As a guide for newer authors, the recommendation may have value, but I think it is too simplistic, given the variability in documenting research activities, providing context, presenting data, reviewing the literature, and so on.

The "recommended" length of the sections of a scientific article based on the mean lengths of each section in 54 articles from 2 cardiology journals<sup>25</sup>

Section	Paragraphs, n	Words, n
Introduction	1 to 4	400
Methods	6 to 9	750
Results	4 to 9	1,000
Discussion	up to 10	1,500
Total	up to 32	3,650

**Unwise Requirements**

- The title is the most important part of an article.<sup>15</sup> It's the primary link between the topic and potential readers and is the part most often read and often the only part read.<sup>6,15</sup> Thus, it should be long enough to accomplish its purpose, which is to help readers decide whether to read the article. A good title for an article reporting clinical research ideally identifies: the study Setting, Patients, Intervention, Comparison group, Endpoints, and study Design and sometimes a Time period. (A useful mnemonic for these points is SPICED-T,<sup>15</sup> which is my version of the truly dreadful, "PICOTS"—Patients, Intervention, Comparator, Outcome, Time, and Study.<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, many journals put limits on titles: "Titles should be less than 12 words" or "No more than 15 words" or "Titles should be no more than 80 characters and spaces." These limits seem arbitrary and unwise. Consider a title: "Low-Air-Loss Beds vs. Foam Mattresses for Treating Pressure Ulcers in Nursing Home Patients: A Randomized Trial." This title has 16 words, 111 characters, and includes 6 SPICED-T criteria. The original title was "A Randomized Trial of Low-Air-Loss Beds for Treatment of Pressure Ulcers," which has 11 words, 72 characters, and 3 SPICED-T criteria. Are the additional 31 characters really that objectionable?

- The most objectionable requirement I've collected is this one: "When applicable, refer to papers published in *The Journal of Wishful Thinking* from the past 2 years." Such a requirement appears to be "forced citation," a practice used by some journal editors to artificially increase the number of citations to the articles it publishes.<sup>27</sup> Often, such citation is an implied condition of acceptance, which pressures authors to comply. Forced citation is usually implemented in the editor's correspondence with authors, so to read it in the published instructions is unexpected and an unwise admission on the part of the journal.
- Another less-common but dysfunctional requirement is asking authors to "Please write the aim as the form of "To investigate or to study." However, "to investigate" says *how* the authors did in the study, not *why* they did it; it doesn't indicate an outcome. Readers know the authors investigated something, but so what? What they want to know is whether the authors determined or confirmed or predicted or explained something. It's the difference between "My purpose was to *wrestle* the alligator" and "My purpose was to *capture* the alligator." "Wrestle" is a "process" verb; capture is an "endpoint" verb (although, I suppose the actual "endpoint" depends on how well one wrestles with alligators).

Examples of verbs indicating *why* a study was done in contrast to those indicating *how* it was done

Why the study was done	How the study was done		
"To ..."	"We ..."	Resolve	Characterized
		Determine	Compared
		Confirm	Tested
		Explain	Measured
		Predict	Dissected
		Estimate	Reviewed
		Describe	Observed
		Differentiate	Interviewed
		Predict	Replicated
		Select	Prayed

**Recommendations**

I recommend that journals review their instructions periodically to make sure they know what they are asking of authors and to keep the instructions current. I also encourage them to open their "eyes": standardize, minimize, and summarize.

Standardization happens in fits and starts. Many of the conventions followed today by most journals come from early journals and printing conventions. The IMRAD format (introduction, methods, results, and discussion) was adopted only the late 1970s<sup>6</sup> Recent style committees updating the *AMA Manual of Style* and *Scientific Style and Format* have a general agreement to reduce the differences between manuals. Personal preferences need to be replaced by evidence-based or consensus-based guidelines, such as those introduced by the ICMJE.

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I also suggest minimizing the number of instructions. Focus on the most important ones and leave the lesser ones for later, after conditional acceptance.<sup>28</sup> The more requirements, the more details, and the more seemingly arbitrary instructions become, the less authors will follow them.

Finally, I suggest summarizing the instructions; make them easier to find, if not easier to implement. Pre-submittal checklists for authors are an example, as is the Proposed Universal Framework for More User-Friendly Author Instructions developed by EASE.<sup>29</sup>

As computer software becomes more sophisticated, many instructions will undoubtedly be implemented or revised automatically, which should make life easier for everybody. Until then, and probably even after, author's editors and manuscript editors at journals and publishers will continue to implement these requirements. Editors are neither authors nor readers, nor publishers, but they work on behalf of all of them, to keep everybody happy.

Publication really is the final stage of research.<sup>30</sup> If the research process begins with an idea and ends in publication, the shortest, least-expensive, and arguably most important stage of that process is manuscript preparation. Once the article is in the literature, it is there essentially forever, where it is often the only lasting record of the research. Instructions for authors (and author's editors ...) are thus critical in preserving and advancing the quality of the scientific literature.

### Competing interests

Tom Lang is an associate editor of *European Science Editing* and self-employed as Tom Lang Communications and Training International.

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## Meeting reports

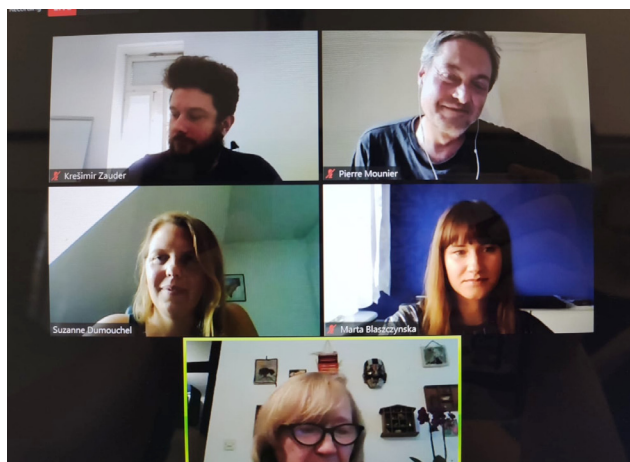
### PUBMET 2020 – The 7th conference on scholarly communication and publishing in the context of open science

16-18 September 2020, virtual conference hosted by the University of Zagreb, Croatia

This year's PUBMET conference was organized under stressful circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake in Zagreb. For the first time it was held virtually, which was very challenging, but it also opened some new possibilities, such as to include sessions from various cities and neighbouring countries.

The conference was organized by the University of Zadar, Department of Information Sciences; Croatian Association for Scholarly Communication (CROASC); University of Zagreb, Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology, and Ruđer Bošković Institute, under the auspices of the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education, OpenAIRE, SPARC EUROPE and European Association of Science Editors (EASE) and with the financial support of our sponsors Elsevier, Clarivate Analytics, EBSCO, Copernicus, Crossref, Springer Nature and American Chemical Society.

The pre-conference day started with NI4OS Europe training held by Jadranka Stojanovski, Alen Vodopijevac, Bojan Macan, Davor Davidović and Tomislav Lipić from Rudjer Bošković Institute, Emir Imamagić from University Computing Centre (SRCE) and Marijana Glavica from University of Zagreb.



PUBMET2020 conference from the host's view

Three workshops were held: good practices in academic writing (Vladimir Mrša and Dado Čakalo, CROASC), Plum X (Kate Patryak, Elsevier), and the legal basis of GDPR (Anette-Mette Somby, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences).

A group of speakers, Pierre Mounier (OPERAS Coordinator), Maciej Maryl (Institute of the Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences), Suzanne Dumouchel (French National Centre for Scientific Research) and Krešimir Zauder (University of Zadar), presented the OPERAS infrastructure and services used for promoting open scholarly communication in the fields of social sciences and humanities.

SPARC Europe session was led by Vanessa Proudman, who gave some highlights from her organisation and its four-year strategy. Romana Matanovac Vučković (University of Zagreb) spoke about the new directive on copyright in the Digital Single Market 2019/790 and Ignasi Labastida i Juan (University of Barcelona) gave an overview of copyright and licensing policy recommendations.

Duncan Nicholas as a new president of EASE presented the association's recent activities and future plans.

Parallely, PUBMET2020 short talk session was held, covering the topics of innovations in scholarly publishing, transparency and research integrity, editorial and peer review policy, open data, metadata organization and e-learning.

The conference was opened on 17 September by the chair Jadranka Stojanovski University of Zadar/Institute of Ruđer Bošković/CROASC), Vladimir Mrša (University of Zagreb/CROASC) and Marijana Tomić (University of Zadar). We also remembered our dear colleague and friend Jon Tennant, who tragically died this year in Bali.

First keynote speaker was Johan Rooryck (University of Leiden), a Coalition S ambassador, who gave an overview of Plan S principles, goals and policies.

Next, a panel on the role of small/national publishers and journals organized by CROASC was held. The panellists Alen Ježovnik (University of Primorska), Neven Duić, Daria Pašalić and Andreja Brajša-Žganec from University of Zagreb, Jadranka Stojanovski (University of Zadar/Ruđer Bošković Institute) and Dalibor Jakus (PR and communication specialist from Zagreb) together with professor Rooryck talked about various aspects of scholarly communication, from new trends in digital publishing, research integrity, open peer review, to the ways of enhancing the trust in science.

The second session was hosted by Ana Marušić (University of Split), joined by Ksenija Baždarić (University of Rijeka) and Vedran Katavić (University of Zagreb), who talked about publication integrity, especially in the COVID-19 era, and plagiarism detection.

Arianna Becerril Garcia from the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico gave a talk as a second keynote speaker about empowering academy-owned non-APC open access publishing.

The focus of the third session, hosted by Draženko Celjak from the University Computing Centre (SRCE) in Zagreb, was how to connect the national OA publishing platform with the national (data) repository platform. Daria Pašalić as the Editor-in-Chief of *Biochemia Medica*, Miroslav Milinović and Palma Dizdarević from SRCE, and Ljiljana Poljak from University of Split Library presented various aspects of research data managing and sharing.

The third keynote speaker was Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe from



the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who gave insights into how to transform libraries into open publishers.

In the last session Mirjana Brković, Ljubomir Paskali and Branko Milosavljević talked about the repository of scientific publications and doctoral dissertations at the University of Novi Sad.

Friday (18 September) started with the fourth keynote speaker, Marin Dacos from the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, who talked about their open science plan.

A panel on open science policies and national infrastructure was hosted by Franjo Pehar (University of Zadar) and Vladimir Mrša. The panellists were Ivan Marić (SRCE), Vladimir Bermanec (National Council for Science), Ivanka Stričević (University Library in Zagreb) and Josip Faričić (University of Zadar).

The next session was hosted by Miro Pušnik from the University of Ljubljana, who discussed with his colleagues Mojca Kotar and Janez Štebe, as well as Dunja Legat (University of Maribor Library) and Peter Sterle (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport) the new Research and Innovation Strategy of Slovenia 2021–2030.

In the session from Skopje, Zoran Janevski (Cyril and Methodius University), Sead Džigal (International Balkan University), and Goce Arsovski and Bardhyl Jashari from Metamorphosis Foundation talked about challenges of open and online education in North Macedonia.

Saša Madacki and Lejla Hajdarpašić from the University of Sarajevo addressed the protection of sensitive information and personal data that may affect public opinion or public security in the light of open access.

In the sponsors' block, Josef Jilek from Clarivate Analytics showed novelties in bibliographic analysis, and Edmond Hajrizi (University for Business and Technology in Pristina) shared his experience of the Elsevier Digital Commons platform.

Last, but not least, was a session organized by the University of Osijek, where Miha Kovač (University of Ljubljana) and Zoran Velagić (University of Osijek) presented the results of surveys of the reaction of publishers to the COVID-19 crisis.

The conference was closed by Jadranka Stojanovski and Vladimir Mrša, who concluded that it had been very successful thanks to the engagement of all organizers, speakers, workshop leaders, hosts and sponsors, and that it was attended exceptionally well, with almost 300 participants in total.

Due to the pandemic, we were not able to arrange a field trip, but we organized a 5-km virtual PUBMET2020Run (or walk). The participants were asked to share their results or photo/video and the best one was awarded with a free registration for PUBMET2021. We hope to see you all in Zadar next year!

**Jelena Viličić**

*Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology  
University of Zagreb, Croatia*

**Lovorka Čaja**

*Centre for Scientific Information, Institut Ruđer  
Bošković, Croatia*



**Multitasking or how to be present on social media and follow the conference at the same time**



**This year's PUBMET2020 Run winner**

## Peer Review Week 2020: online meetings organized by the EASE Turkish Regional Chapter

23 September 2020

The EASE Turkish Regional Chapter organized two online meetings as part of Peer Review Week 2020. The first was a panel discussion on “Trust in Peer Review”, which was held on 23 September 2020.



The panel was organized and moderated by Cem UZUN who is the chair of the EASE-TRC, council member of EASE, journal selection committee member of the “Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) Turkish Academic Network and Information Center (ULAKBIM) TR-Index” and the previous editor of *Balkan Medical Journal*. The panellists were Cenk DEMIRDOVER (Editor of *Turkish Journal of Plastic Surgery*), Taner Kemal ERDAG (Editor of *Turkish Achieves of Otorhinolaryngology*), Gizem KAYAN (Editorial Development Manager at *AVES Publishing House*), Oguz KILINC (Editor of *Turkish Thoracic Journal*), Ali SAHIN (Publications Director at *AVES Publishing House*), Mustafa SECIL (Editor of *Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology*) and Orhan YILMAZ (Editor of *KBB-Forum, Turkish Journal of Geriatrics, ENT Case and Safran Medical Journal*). The technical assistance was provided by the *AVES Publishing House*.

Those subjects were discussed in addition to answering the questions from the participants:

- Tips for credible peer review and criteria to assess quality of peer review.
- Solutions for finding suitable reviewers. Are difficulties in finding suitable reviewers push journals to work with relatively less experienced reviewers? How should editors manage superficial reviews?
- Double blind, single blind or open peer review: which one works best? Experiences of panellists.
- How can editors secure the credibility of content that went through rapid peer review during the pandemic?
- How to increase the competence of reviewers and editors to provide a trustworthy peer review process?
- How does preprint publication effect the overall peer review process?
- Bias in peer review: how to approach “suggested reviewers”?
- What is the role of reviewers in detecting ethical misconduct? Suggestions to reviewers.

The number of registration to the panel was 734 and 412 people watched the live discussion online. The video of the panel has just uploaded into the EASE-TRC YouTube channel (<https://youtu.be/piYNbnP2iKI>).

The second event was a webinar on “Peer review process and TR Index”, which was held on 24 September 2020 by TUBITAK ULAKBIM. One of the members of the EASE-TRC, Sibel Tabanlıoğlu organized the webinar and it was lively broadcasted via TUBITAK ULAKBIM YouTube channel, which was simultaneously uploaded to its video list for further access (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvgsxTDIEiw>). The slides of the presentations will also be published at the events page of TR Index (<https://cabim.ulakbim.gov.tr/etkinlikler>).

Initially, Mehmet Mirat SATOGLU, the Chairman of ULAKBIM, spoke on the importance of peer review and gave information about their activities. The chair of the webinar was Ertugrul KILIC from *Istanbul Medipol University*. The speakers were Emine OZMETE from *Ankara University*, Canan ULUOGLU from *Gazi University*, Zeynel CEBECI from *Cukurova University* and Ali Ekber SAHIN from *Hacettepe University*.



They presented those topics beside answering the questions of the participants:

- Peer review process
- Ethical evaluation of a manuscript
- Importance of statistical evaluation during peer review
- Influence of journal peer review process on selection for TR Index

About 500 participants watched the live webinar and more than 2100 people watched its recording in 24 hours.

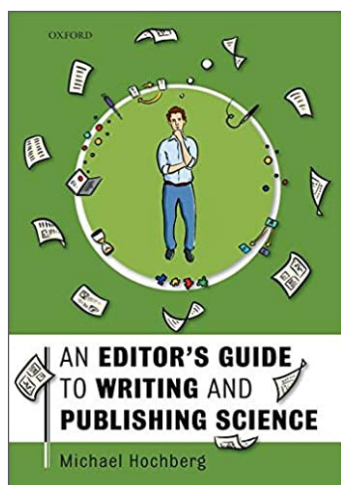
We, the EASE-TRC think that those two meetings on peer reviewing had great attention in Turkey and they were useful for answering the questions of the participants who were mainly editors or researchers serving as reviewers at scientific journals in Turkey or in the world. We would like to thank to the organizing committee of the “Peer Review Week 2020” (especially to Bahar MEHMANI) for their encouragement and support.

**Cem Uzun**

## Book reviews

### An Editor's Guide to Writing and Publishing Science

Michael Hochberg, Oxford University Press 2019. ISBN 978-0-19-880479-6



The author is the founding Editor and a former Editor-in-Chief of *Ecology Letters* and this book, based on his considerable experience as both research scientist and editor, provides a useful addition to the topic of writing and publishing scientific papers. The stated aim is to support the development of writing and publication skills 'for advanced undergraduates, graduate

students and professional researchers in both the life sciences and physical sciences'. I suggest that it will also be useful for anyone involved in the teaching of scientific writing, and for those in science research, in research administration, or involved in any way with journal editing who may still be unclear about the recent and rapid changes in the publishing landscape.

The text comprises thirty chapters grouped into six main sections. As the book has about 220 pages (plus glossary and references) each chapter is necessarily short, and some topics are therefore described rather superficially. Within each chapter there are sub-headings, lists of important points, highlighted text boxes, occasional exercises, and amusing cartoons to lighten the read. The overall presentation is clear and reader friendly. The reader may choose to work through the topics systematically, or to focus on the parts where their own knowledge needs improvement, or simply to open the book at almost any page and glean some useful information.

*Before you begin* sets out some simple but important messages for novice writers: the need for timely publication of novel results, the balance of quality and quantity, choosing literature citations and avoiding plagiarism. The chapters within *Writing a great paper* then guide the reader from getting started and planning the paper, through writing the

various parts from the Introduction to the Conclusions, as well as the key issues of Titles and Abstracts that will lure the reader. These aspects have been covered in greater detail in several other textbooks, and this may explain why the author has opted for brevity here. For instance, there is very little about compiling figures and tables, or of the need for detail in describing Methods, although in my own experience as a journal editor I have found that problems here often contribute to papers being rejected. The author does, however, encourage the writer to identify and study published articles that are of excellent construction and to use them as models to guide their own writing strategy; I think this is excellent advice.

The chapters within the sections *Choosing where to publish* and *Submission and decision* provide a clear summary of journal publishing and how journals operate. The text describes how this has changed over recent decades, particularly with open access, preprint servers and data sharing. The information here offers a useful update for many experienced science authors, and novice writers will find guidance for navigating their way through submission procedures, and of potential risks such as predatory journals.

The two final sections, headed *Challenges* and *Opportunities*, bring together a miscellany of topics relating to publication in journals. There is a helpful chapter on reviewing manuscripts. For the novice writer the detailed explanations of peer review, citation metrics, collaborating, and career development through engaging in the scientific community, social media and writing non-primary research papers add greatly to the 'how-to' chapters of the earlier sections.

I will recommend this book to students on my own scientific writing classes, with the caveat that it should be complemented with other texts on the minutiae of writing for English language journals.

**Alan Hopkins**

*Independent consultant and former Editor-in-Chief of  
Grass and Forage Science*



## A Guide to the Scientific Career: Virtues, Communication, Research, and Academic Writing

Shoja MM, Arynchyna A, Loukas M, et al, editors. Wiley Blackwell

A Professional-Conference-in-a-Book, particularly suitable as a gift for any graduate or protégé/e, but refreshing reading for more experienced professional scientists as well.

Every professional beginning a career needs great mentors. The quality of the advice we receive early on can determine the quality of our work, connections, research, and relationships, but sometimes finding the right mentors to follow or consult can be a struggle. Later in our careers, it can be helpful and reassuring to discuss work issues with like-minded colleagues, whether those issues are technical, political, or research-related.

This remarkable book aims to provide mentorship and advice in an honest, direct tone, from colleague to colleague. It is a stunning compendium of professional advice from more than one hundred contributors spanning the globe from Turkey to the West Indies, New Zealand to Europe to India, and the US to the UK. A wide range of viewpoints are represented, and advice is available on every topic imaginable that might be of interest to young and continuing scientific professionals. Reading this book is basically like attending a conference – you can pick and choose the topics that most interest you at the moment, and leave others for later.

As the preface says, “The topics have been chosen to be pragmatic and to enhance a career in academia, whether focused on didactics, basic science, or clinical research.” To help the reader advance speedily, some of the best web resources are cited for professional organizations, standards bodies, and so on.

It is unlikely that any one of us will find all seventy-four (yes, 74!) chapters riveting – however, I think this book offers such a broad scope that, like any professional conference, it will provide food for thought for every reader. Like a conference, the chapters are offered from a wide range of contributors to appeal to various levels of professional. Youngsters might lap up every page – this book would make an extremely suitable graduation present! But this book will stir up ideas in seasoned scientists, as well. I love to attend conferences for their re-energizing effect, and I think this book could do that for many scientists. Sometimes you are just hearing (or reading) something that you already knew, but it helps to hear it again in a new context.

If the book is slanted towards any one scientific discipline, it's heavier towards the medical/biological fields, but as medicine and biology are instinctively compelling to all of us (whereas computer science or physics might not be), I do not find that to detract from the content at all. The biological and medical examples for ethics, data manipulation, use of illustrations, and so on, are compelling and easy to identify with.

I have attempted to categorize and summarize the main ideas in the following chart.

<b>Your Brain, Hopes, and Dreams</b>	Defining and Re-Defining Success, Vision Statements, Leadership Attributes, Your Confidence and Your Career, Career Satisfaction, and even the Spirituality of Research
<b>The Soft Skills to Further Your Career</b>	Manners in Academics, Emotional Intelligence, Communication Skills, Charisma, Collaboration, Cooperation, Personal Branding, Honesty and Truth in Academic Research and Writing, Recognition, Peer Review, Interview Skills, Writing a CV, Networking and Professional Meetings
<b>Pitfalls and Dangers</b>	Conflicts of Interest, Manipulative People, Ethics, Plagiarism, Gender Issues, Research Regulations, Animal and Human Research, Treatment of Missing Values, Research Fraud, Scientific Misconduct
<b>Resources and Methods</b>	Grants and Funding Sources, Clinical Methods, Finding Suitable Journals, Open-Access Publishing, Dealing with Rejected Manuscripts, Resources and Databases, Statistical Analysis, Reference Management Software, Meta-Analysis
<b>Writing and Presenting Skills</b>	Grants and Proposals, Literature Reviews, Types of Articles, Issues with Authorship, Writing for Your Audience, Writing Tips (several chapters on a variety of types of documents), Using Illustrations, Figures, and Supplemental Materials

Some of the topics step usefully outside the usual boxes. For example, there is one about stirring up creativity and novel hypotheses – how many scientists have sat down with flow charts and concept maps to rethink their research avenues? That kind of bilateral thinking could be useful!

I commend the book, too, for codifying guidelines and rules on some difficult topics that people may have hesitated to write about, in the past – how to deal with difficult colleagues, how to visualize a successful future, how to budget for your research, how to address missing data.

A chapter by a prison-experienced psychologist even deals with the topic of manipulation, and how to deal with manipulators you may encounter in your professional or personal life.

Overall, I think this is the kind of book that would get many reads in any department office, and would be a refreshing sort of book to pick up now and then in any office, in those between times when you aren't ready for the next task, but feel like hearing what a colleague has to say. It is particularly interesting to have a book like this on the shelf in COVID-19 times, with so many of us working in isolation.

Christa Bedwin



## Resources

### The joys of teaching engineers and consulting scientists to write - part one

**Christa Bedwin**

*ChristaBedwin@gmail.com*

After twenty years of editing science, research, education, and engineering, some of my favourite people to edit for are engineers and consulting scientists. I love their functional, scientific approach to language, and their logic. By and large, they don't accept rules unless they know why and how something works, preferably, in detail.

This baffles some of my fellow editors, who find these type of clients confusing or complicated to work with, and so I began to teach courses on how to navigate editing relationships and content in engineering and consulting science (eg geologists, environmental scientists, coastal engineers).

I also teach courses to engineers and scientists who are working in industry, to learn to write the specific kinds of documents they need to work on, better: safety documentation, industry reports, government reports, grant proposals, client e-mails, and so on. Almost everybody receives some grounding in how to write academic papers in the course of gaining their university degrees, but practical, readable writing for reporting and client communications may be neglected.

Here is a summary article of some responses to the common questions editor and technical writer colleagues have asked me. I am always delighted to discuss this topic further – please feel free to write to me! I'm easy to find on the internet.

**Q: Aren't engineers "difficult"?**

I find engineers to be generally very thoughtful and considering people, always looking at a problem from a number of angles and challenging dogmatic ideas. This matches my own approach to life and to language, so I love discussing English with engineers.

Conversations with high-IQ scientifically-minded people are great, if you also get into the "vibe" of thinking that way. It is a different kind of analytical, methodical thought than is typical of literature majors, who have been trained in a completely different way of thinking.

In my experience, working with dozens of editors and hundreds of consultants, the problems usually arrive when editors insist on applying academic or linguistic sort of protocols in discussions with people who are used to practical problem-solving in the real world all day, and primarily want to know how and why. These people have been trained to follow experimental evidence and mathematical proof. Throwing long lists of rules or reference books at this type of thinker does not satisfy their need to know "how" or "why."

I love the engineering approach to language. Engineers are taught to invent, to innovate, to question. They spend all day optimizing the efficiency of various systems. And isn't

that essentially exactly the same process editors go through when we edit? We read each sentence, and question if it is doing the best possible job to communicate. Should we trim words? Add a comma? These are all functional decisions aimed at speedy, clear transmission of information.

Ergo, if you ask me, editors and engineers are a natural match!

So to answer the question, are engineers difficult?, I suppose that I If you are a dogmatic, authoritarian sort who can't bear to be questioned and to reasonably and scientifically debate why one word choice or text layout or document format is preferable to another, or give the reasoning behind your rules, then you might not like engineers—they want reason with their rhyme. However, if you can switch your approach to discussing our linguistic work to a more functional, experimental, machine-minded way, then you might find as much delight in engineers and consulting scientists as I do.

#### **Special benefit to working with engineers and scientists**

Another factor at play in editing for consulting engineers and scientists in English is that you get to work with plenty of brilliant people from all over the world, because they travel (and immigrate) a lot for work. Their English might not be perfect, but that might be because it's their fourth, fifth, or sixth language!

I find special delight in editing the poetic language of clients with romance languages as their first language. Sometimes a French-, Italian-, or Spanish-first-language writer delivers sentences so beautiful and musical that I find it a shame to reduce the word count with ruthless efficiency, though chop and straighten I do. But as I make the science easier to read, I take a few moments to enjoy the flowery elegance of romantic and unusual uses of our language.

**Q: Won't it put editors out of business if all the engineers and scientists learn how to write better?**

There is nothing to fear. We will never run out of work here, because there will always be, in our lifetimes, a lot of work for consulting scientists and engineers to do, and they will always need to write reports, memos, and procedures for that work. They also need to communicate well with clients, each other, and the public.

#### **Good Reasons to Teach**

Even if you mentor and teach some of your individual clients to be much better writers, even if they become such

great writers that they don't really need you any more, fear not! There will be plenty of new consultants to appreciate your gifts. And as we all know, one client who values you will often refer you to many more clients.

Another point is that often, if you hold a class to teach people how to do what you do, the result is that they value you more because they understand better that you are doing more, with a deeper background, to their manuscripts than they know how to do themselves. The general public often misunderstands what editors do, exactly. So teaching classes about how what you do will often result in your clients valuing your work more highly. Not everyone has a passion or a skill for editing. And many working scientists are so busy that it makes cost-benefit sense to hire you to

take the language review off their hands.

Ergo, there is absolutely no need to hold back. It's well worth it to share all of our trade secrets with our clients. Mentor away! It is more likely that the result of you teaching your clients how you make their writing better will be increased appreciation for you, not a loss of work. I also love it when I see clients, or whole research groups of clients, improve their writing over the years. They still send it to me to edit, but they're getting better all the time. It's just good for everybody.

*Agree? Disagree?*

I'd be happy to hear from you and discuss. In the next edition, I will offer an example of how to use some specialized tips for teaching engineers and scientists to write.

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## Articles of interest: Tom Lang and Donna Stroup discuss the term "double-blind"

In July, my co-author, Donna Stroup, and I published an article in the journal *Trials*, titled "Who knew? The misleading specificity of 'double-blind' and what to do about it."<sup>1</sup> In the article, we document several problems with the term "double-blind" used in reports of randomized trials. Because the term has no standard or widely accepted definition, agreement about which groups are blinded is poor. Nevertheless, many readers assume—incorrectly—that they know which groups are blinded. Thus, the term is ambiguous at best, misleading at worst, and, in either case, interferes with the accurate reporting, interpretation, and evaluation of randomized trials.

Realizing that authors and readers are not receptive to banning the term completely, we suggest eliminating the use of adjectives that modify "blinding"; a trial would be described as either blinded or unblinded. We also propose that authors report in a standard "Who Knew" table which groups or individuals were blinded, what they were blinded to, how blinding was implemented, and whether blinding was compromised. The table can replace much of the text need to describe blinding in a trial and has the potential to improve how research is reported.

In sum, "double blind" has little to recommend its continued use. Eliminating the use of adjectives that impart a false specificity to the term would reduce misinterpretations, and recommending that authors report who was blinded to what and how in a standard table would require them to be specific about which groups and individuals were blinded.

We are also pleased to report that several leading figures in the evidence-based medicine movement co-signed the article in support of our proposal.

**Tom Lang**

*Tom Lang Communications and Training International  
Adjunct Instructor, Medical Writing and Editing Program,  
University of Chicago  
Senior Editor, West China Hospital/Sichuan University  
Medical School Publishing Group*

### Reference

- 1 Lang TA, Stroup D. Who knew? The misleading specificity of 'double-blind' and what to do about it. *Trials*. 2020;21:697. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-020-04607-5>

## EASE Digest reader survey

We are gathering information and feedback from the EASE Digest readership to help shape the development of the publication. This survey is available online [here](#) but if you prefer to complete this paper version or do it by telephone, please contact the EASE secretary.

*Do you read the printed version of the Digest that you receive in the post?*

- Always  
 Sometimes  
 Never

*Do you read the digital version on the website?*

- Always  
 Sometimes  
 Never

*The Digest is currently produced in quarterly issues. Would you prefer a different frequency?*

- Annually  
 Biannually  
 Quarterly

*What format would you prefer, bearing in mind the other channels we already use, eg monthly e-newsletter, social media, European Science Editing*

- Annual Report style  
 Similar to now (approx 24 pages)  
 Bulletin style (approx 8 pages)

*What types of content do you enjoy reading?*

- Letter from the Editor  
 Association news  
 Opinion pieces, viewpoints  
 Conference and meeting reports  
 Book and website reviews  
 Editorial resources/products/tools/reviews  
 Regional Chapter and Community Group reports  
 EASE Forum roundup  
 News notes  
 News from sponsors  
 New member listings  
 Editors/members in the spotlight  
 From the archives  
 Advertisements

*Would you be willing to contribute?*

- Commissioning content  
 Copy editing  
 Proof reading

*We welcome your feedback, please include any suggestions or comments*

*If you have offered to contribute or would like us to contact you regarding your feedback, please give an email address*

## EASE forum in brief: July – September 2020

*The forum is open to members only. To subscribe, configure your preferences, and read the archives, go to <https://mail.lib.irb.hr/mailman/listinfo/ease-l>*

July started with Duncan Nicholas calling for short videos from EASE members on quality in peer review, for use in the upcoming Peer Review Week. Whether it was the warm summer weather, or simply technical difficulties, is unknown, but Dennis Eckmeier replied asking how much swearing would be permissible. Probably it all sorted out OK, since Peer Review Week 2020 eventually turned out to be a success in late September. Then Pippa Smart started another tread, one that has engaged EASERS before, and certainly did so this time too: Should we allow authors to cite references from “predatory” journals? Daria Pasalic supported not to cite, but called for a list of predatory journals, preferably administered from WAME or EASE. Yateendra Joshi added that it is not always possible for the authors to know whether a given journal is predatory. Clarinda Cerejo pointed out that the definition of predatory journals is vague and opens for misclassifications, and that citations should be based on the quality of the paper being cited, not on the journal. Reme Melero reminded us about the think, check, submit-initiative, stating that prevention is better than cure. Andrew Davis rejected the idea that journals should police what authors cite, also reminding us of that other sources, like electronic records, gray literature etc. can be cited, and that these cannot be classified into “predatory” and “not predatory”. His take was that citations need only be to sources that are accessible. Christine Rawski stated that some predatory journals do have an impact factor, and called for a tool or software to detect predatory journals. Andrew Davis doubted that these were “real” impact factors, i.e. a JIF from Clarivate, but rather dubious or non-existent metrics. Hervé Maisonneuve told that in France, juries award “negative points” to candidates who list articles from predatory journals in a CV. Roderick Hunt reminded us that the message is more important than the medium, i.e. that a good article deserves to be cited, regardless of where it is published., and advocated for the think, check, submit-initiative. Taner Erdağ wrote that it is the authors responsibility to select legitimate journals to submit their manuscripts, and to select appropriate references, even though editors always should check the references. Flaminio Squazzoni felt that this also was about the independence of the scholar, and hence their right to cite whatever source: “To avoid controlling and reducing scientists’ freedom, we pay the cost of having some wrongdoers”. Duncan Nicholas argued that it is not the citation that is the main issue, but the paper in hand. A paper should build upon solid sources. If a paper is built on shaky, shady, foundations, then it may not be acceptable in its own right. Anne Cambon-Thomsen proposed that on the journal’s information to authors it could be indicated

that predatory journals are generally not supported, that such rules also should have exceptions to be used with specific justification, and finally that authors and reviewers could have a tick box on submission/review form: “Does the paper contain reference to publications in predatory journals?” Peter Matthews brought up the many problems of making and maintaining a black list of predatory journals, and instead proposed an open-access rating system where anyone can upvote or downvote journals they know as contributors or readers, on multiple aspects. The idea was applauded by Duncan Nicholas, who argued that the system of user rating already is in use many places on the internet. Christine Rawski poured a bit of cold water on the idea, reminding that many authors would be very satisfied with predatory journals, given that they publish quickly and without much bothering authors. Duncan Nicholas agreed with her objections, but argued that despite limitations, some form of publicly available crowd-sourced feedback on journal experiences would be a good idea.

Back to the original topic, Pat Heslop-Harrison argued that, given high quality of the work itself, predatory journals, public conference posters, websites, newspaper articles, television or radio broadcasts, patent applications, public reports are all acceptable, and indeed required, references. Frank-Thorsten Krell added that, working on the fauna of Arabia and Africa, he cannot avoid getting factual information from predatory journals, and that authors from some parts of the world more often publish in predatory journals than westerners. Duncan Nicholas agreed, adding that predatory journals meet a demand for visibility for research from various under-served regions.

Next up, Aleksandra Gołębiowska mentioned the necessity of confirming authorship, giving examples from her journal, including the routine of making sure that co-authors’ email addresses are not blatant variations of the corresponding author’s. Pat Heslop-Harrison argued that journals have minimal place in policing authorships, citing the example of “Student”, who wrote “The probable error of a mean” without name or affiliation. This work presents perhaps the most used statistical test globally, Student’s t-test. Olga Kirillova joined the discussion, writing about the fraudulent intermediary companies in Russia who “help” authors to publish their work. She also reminded us about the usefulness of the now extinct Beall’s list. This made Peter Matthews propose criteria for identifying journals that offer best practice. Such criteria could be established by an independent body such as EASE, and could be referred to as “The EASE of Mind”. Pippa Smart pointed out that, in an ideal world, editors should check everything. But in the real world, that is not possible. Hence, we are obliged to trust that authors are honest. She also remarked that the rationale for excluding articles from fraudulent journals is to marginalise such journals. Unfortunately this can harm naive authors, and potentially exclude useful research – a problem with no perfect answer.



In the meantime, the discussion on Student's t test – and whether to use a capital S or not, really took fire on the list, even though (almost) everyone agreed that capital S was the correct form. As always, discussions about wording, grammar or spelling engages editors.

August started with Pippa Smart asking for the whereabouts of Rubriq. Duncan Nicholas was updated: Rubriq closed down in 2017. Christa Bedwin generously shared a link to an upcoming conversation on the occasion of the reissuing of an article she had written, entitled “The Joys of Teaching Engineers to Write”. Then Igor Vujović ignited a discussion on publishing articles from PhDs. This is a topic that obviously differs quite a lot both between countries and disciplines. Alan Hopkins remarked that he could see no problem with publishing articles from PhDs, since more and more theses are based on several connected articles. Publishing articles first, then connecting them with an overview chapter and submit the whole thing as a dissertation solves the double publication problem. Andrew Duncan asked rhetorically whether an internet-available PhD thesis should be considered “published”. Michael Newkirk added that it will be hard for many journals to shun (as a flat-out rule) the work of researchers who have published online, particularly on personal websites and online portfolios. Olga Kirillova echoed Alan's view on the topic, and mentioned that the main result from a PhD thesis should be published before the thesis defence. This while Arjan Polderman argued that unpublished parts of a dissertation could be accepted for publication and considered unpublished, even when other parts of the dissertation already is published. Gavin Duley (who just had a masters thesis accepted) wrote that in Australia, publishing thesis chapters as articles is common – and that the embargo that some universities put on making dissertations online may allay publishers' concerns. Carolyn Brimley Norris explained the Finnish guidelines for PhD theses – which resemble the Australian (and by the way, are almost identical to the Norwegian guidelines (editor's note)). Jadranka Stojanovski philosophized on the

meaning of the term “published”, adding that personally, she thought that a PhD thesis on any media is published – differing only in the number of people that can access it. Andrew Duncan only partly agreed, stating that a work with no widespread availability is very less clearly “published” compared to a work that is available on the internet. Peter Matthews warned that there could be copyright issues attached to a PhD thesis, especially when there is private funders involved, and that these could hinder publication of parts of the work elsewhere.

Early September, Małgorzata Wiesner-Spyrczyńska asked the discussion list about a name change at one of her client's journals. The editors are expanding the scope of the journal to cover not only rare cardiovascular diseases but also cardiovascular diseases in general and rare diseases in general, changing the name from “Journal of Rare Cardiovascular Diseases” to “Journal of Rare and Cardiovascular Diseases”. From her point of view, this change would make the name ungrammatical. Predictably enough, this set the discussion list on fire, giving us all much entertainment from the different names and grammatical varieties proposed. Then Yateendra Joshi asked for consideration on the problem of terms in titles of papers repeated as keywords, as journals seem to differ quite a lot in this aspect. Alan Hopkins argued for encouraging authors to use the keyword list to complement the terms used in the title, instead of repeating the terms in the title as keywords. Tom Lang accused journals of not knowing much about computers when not allowing repetition of the terms in the title as keywords, because this is supposed to make the articles easier to find. Jadranka Stojanovski, on the other hand, argued that such repetition is redundant, since the bibliographic databases anyhow is looking in three fields. Article title, abstract and keywords. And thus ended the month of September in the discussion list – a truly lively autumn this far!

**Are Brean**

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## News notes

News notes are compiled by  
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### Assessing research – myths and ways out of them

Declaration on Research Assessment, known more widely as the DORA organisation formed around the document, published a roadmap in May indicating practical ideas on how to improve research assessment, beyond the “don’t use Impact Factor for assessing individuals” mantra. The roadmap, available here: [https://sfdora.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/DORA\\_IdeasForAction.pdf](https://sfdora.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/DORA_IdeasForAction.pdf) deals with common myths around research assessment, provides some surprising and illuminating statistics, and cites examples of assessment practices in different institutions, along with links for further reading. The DORA itself, first published in December 2012, is now coming close to 2000 institutional signatories, and cites more than 16 000 individual supporters.

### Alternative conference format for pandemic times

In May, as the coronavirus-related lockdown reached its local maximum, and multiple events around the world were being cancelled, an interesting online event was held – Open Publishing Fest, <https://openpublishingfest.org/calendar.html>. The webpage served to coordinate and promote the events, which were held locally, in small groups, around the world. Within two weeks of the festival, more than a hundred events were thus hosted. The originators of the Fest idea, Adam Hyde of Coko and Dan Rudmann at punctum books, said that the amount and quality of events proposed made the Fest successful, and allowed thinking about a next edition, in a similar format.

### Into the difficult world of peer review assessment

Within one week in July two studies analysing the texts of review reports came out: one in *eLife*, Buljan *et al*, <https://doi.org/10.7554/eLife.53249>, the other in *Research Integrity and Peer Review*, Gerwing *et al*, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41073-020-00096-x>. While the first one points out that peer review, despite criticism, seems to be a fairly robust process, the second one warns about the high number of offensive and unprofessional comments in the reviewer reports. It could be argued that this difference in conclusions stems from the difference in methods – Gerwing *et al*. focused on scoring the texts by individual readers, while Buljan *et al*. used automatic language processing tools, which also allowed them to probe a 300x larger sample of reviewer comments. The two studies indicate the following global picture: although peer review as a system operates and increases the quality of scientific papers, individual experience with it is too often frustrating and denigrating.

### Manuscript Exchange Common Approach - standard published

In July, NISO published the MECA standard, the fruit of an almost three year project run by multiple publishers: <https://doi.org/10.3789/niso-rp-30-2020>. The standard outlines how to send manuscripts between publishers, to save the time that authors need to spend on reformatting their manuscript in case of rejection. It allows an option for transfer of the reviewer comments, if the manuscript went out for review. Importantly, the standard places the requirement for metadata formatting on the publisher, to preserve the important information while releasing the authors from this responsibility. Project webpage: <https://www.manuscriptexchange.org/> For further context, see also the viewpoint by Jaime Teixeira da Silva, printed in the August 2020 issue of EASE Digest.

### Automated Screening Working Group for COVID-19 preprints

Several organisations and companies interested in the automatic assessment of biomedical research papers teamed up to screen preprints about the new coronavirus posted to BiorXiv and MedrXiv. Results from automatic verification on the completeness of methods and basic statistical checks are compiled into reports that are being posted through a Twitter account or visible through the Hypothes.is plugin for browsers. More information from the plugin authors: <https://scicrunch.org/ASWG/about/COVIDPreprint>

### A map of Open Access is a Switchboard

If you think that there are just too many open access flavours, funding models, and never-ending negotiations between stakeholders in the scholarly publishing, you are not alone. To help navigate this ever-changing landscape, Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) launched in November the pilot phase of OA Switchboard, with the plans to go into the operational phase on 1 January 2021. OA Switchboard will then operate as an independent organisation aiming to become an information hub for all things open access, providing support and exchange platform for publishers, funders and institutions, both commercial and not-for-profit. More information on the webpage of the association: <https://www.oaswitchboard.org/>

## The editor's bookshelf

Bookshelf was compiled by Silvia Maina. You can join the EASE journal blog at <http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.co.uk>

### EDITORIAL PROCESS

Byrne JA, Christopher J. **Digital magic, or the dark arts of the 21st century—how can journals and peer reviewers detect manuscripts and publications from paper mills?** *FEBS Lett* 2020; 594: 583-589. <https://doi.org/10.1002/1873-3468.13747>  
 “Paper mill” is the term used to describe online databases that produce research papers on thousands of topics, which can then be submitted to indexed journals. These systems are a significant threat to science because their contribution to manuscripts is not transparent. This paper describes the paper mill business model, the risks related to a template approach to manuscript production. On the basis of their own experience, the authors provide suggestions on how to recognize manuscripts that may have been generated by paper mills. Practical suggestions that can be useful for editors, journal staff and peer reviewers to handle these kinds of papers.

Macdonald H, Loder E, Abbasi K. **Living systematic reviews at *The BMJ*.** *BMJ* 2020;370:m2925  
 Systematic reviews aim to provide an accurate summary of available evidence for specific health questions. Only a minority of reviews are updated within 2 years and as new research is published in the intervening period, these delays lead to significant inaccuracy. Living systematic review (LSR) is an emerging approach that may overcome this problem, as it allows authors to update evidence and results of their reviews in response to the publication of new relevant trials. *BMJ* has recently adopted this approach: the two first LSR by *BMJ*, published in 2020, are both on covid-19, and several more are planned.

### PUBLISHING

Wang J, Halffman W, Zwart H. **The Chinese scientific publication system: Specific features, specific challenges.** *Learned Publishing* 2020; 12 September; <https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1326>

This article provides an overview on the state of the Chinese scientific publishing system, which is very much understudied. In particular, three of its crucial features are analyzed: the journal licensing system, the management model under state control, and the particular way its editorial procedures were adopted from international peer review practices. The peculiarities and the complexity of this system generate some specific challenges to improve journal quality. Authors then identify the key challenges for the administration of a reliable, high-quality Chinese publication system. This article identifies key challenges for quality improvement in Chinese scientific publishing, in order to promote quality in scientific publications.

**The State of Journal Production and Access 2020.** Report on survey of society and university publishers. Available at: <https://lp.scholasticahq.com/journal-production-access-survey/>  
 This report details the results of a global survey of 63 individuals working with scholarly society and university publishers that manage and produce academic journals independently about their current journal production and access approaches and future priorities. The questions included article formatting/layout processes and priorities, open access policy and funding models and metadata tagging standards and priorities. Results show that publishers are prioritizing digital article production best practices (ie PDF and HTML production of articles) and OA model, aiming at expanding their use of fully-OA publishing models in the future.

### ETHICAL ISSUES

Dworkin JD, Linn KA, Teich EG, *et al.* **The extent and drivers of gender imbalance in neuroscience reference lists.** *Nat Neurosci* 2020; 23: 918–926; <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41593-020-0658-y>

The authors examined articles published in five top neuroscience journals since 1995 and calculated probabilistic estimates of author gender, finding connections between citing and cited papers and studied the links between the gender of authors and their role as objects and agents of under-citation. they found that neuroscience reference lists tend to include more papers with men as first and last author than would be expected if gender were not a factor. Greater awareness of imbalances in citation practices is an important step in heightening the willingness of researchers to address these issues.

Schroter S, Montagni I, Loder E, *et al.* **Awareness, usage and perceptions of authorship guidelines: an international survey of biomedical authors.** *BMJ Open*. 2020 Sep 21;10(9):e036899. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2020-036899  
 Responsible authorship, following authorship guidelines and criteria, is a key component of publication ethics and transparent reporting. the authors of this survey developed a 12-item online questionnaire to address familiarity with and use of authorship criteria, experience of authorship misappropriation, frequency and timing of authorship discussions, perceived fairness of authorship decisions and institutional encouragement to use authorship criteria. Nearly 4000 researchers from 93 countries were surveyed: almost three-quarters were very familiar with the ICMJE authorship criteria and a higher proportion viewed these and other authorship guidelines as beneficial. nonetheless, only just over half used explicit authorship criteria when deciding on authorship

for their last coauthored paper and respondents reported multiple barriers to using authorship criteria in practice.

Herbert R, Falk-Krzesinski HJ, Plume A. **Sustainability Through a Gender Lens: The Extent to Which Research on UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Includes Sex and Gender Consideration.** 16 Pages

Posted: 8 Sep 2020

In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the benefits of incorporating sex and/or gender analysis into research. By doing so, research questions will be answered more comprehensively and the research itself will be more robust and reproducible. Nonetheless, analysis of recently published papers suggests that the situation is unlikely to change. The authors of this study analyzed the extent to which sex and/or gender topics are explicitly covered in research related to the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) by calculation the proportion of the publications that explicitly include sex and/or gender terms. Their results show that that attention to sex and gender topics is uneven across the SDGs, thus suggesting the future need of a roadmap toward greater integration of sex and/or gender across all SDGs as well as monitoring integration progress over time.

Zurn P, Bassett DS, Rust NC. **The Citation Diversity Statement: A Practice of Transparency, A Way of Life.** *Trends Cogn Sci.* 2020 Sep; 24(9):669-672.

The Citation Diversity Statement is a short paragraph, included before the References section, in which the authors consider their own bias and quantify the equitability of their reference lists. It can represent one way to reduce citation bias and to improve transparency. It states the importance of citation diversity, the percentage breakdown (or other

diversity indicators) of citations in the paper, the method by which percentages were assessed and its limitations, and a commitment to improving equitable practices in science. In this article, the authors describe how to include a Citation Diversity Statement in manuscripts.

## SCIENCE

Gemmell NJ, Rutherford K, Probst S *et al.* **The tuatara genome reveals ancient features of amniote evolution.** *Nature* 2020; 584, 403–409. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2561-9>

Tuatara, a New Zealand animal resembling a lizard, is the only living member of the reptilian order Rhynchocephalia. According to the authors of the study, the animal's genome - 50 percent larger than the human one - is unlike anything previously reported. In their paper, the researchers write that "This species represents an important link to the now-extinct stem reptiles from which dinosaurs, modern reptiles, birds and mammals evolved, and is thus important for our understanding of amniote evolution". Its genetic sequence reveals its crucial link to the now-extinct stem reptiles from which dinosaurs, modern reptiles, birds and mammals evolved. The tuatara genome provides a valuable resource for deep comparative analyses of tetrapods. Besides, this study also offers important insights into both the technical challenges and the cultural obligations that are associated with genome sequencing.

## GUIDELINES

Liu X, Cruz Rivera S, Moher D, *et al.* **Reporting guidelines for clinical trial reports for interventions involving artificial intelligence: the CONSORT-AI extension.** *Nat Med* 2020; 26: 1364–1374. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-020-1034-x>

The CONSORT statement are evidence-based recommendations to improve the completeness of the reporting of randomized clinical trials. First introduced in 1996, this statement has since been updated twice. Artificial intelligence (AI) systems have gained considerable interest for their potential in health applications, from triage, to decision support to treatment recommendation. CONSORT-AI (Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials-Artificial Intelligence) extension includes 14 new items that should be routinely reported in addition to the core CONSORT 2010 items and that are important for AI interventions.

Cruz Rivera S, Liu X, Chan A, *et al.* **Guidelines for clinical trial protocols for interventions involving artificial intelligence: the SPIRIT-AI extension.** *Nat Med* 26, 1351–1363 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-020-1037-7> The SPIRIT statement was published in 2013 to provide guidance for the minimum reporting content of a clinical trial protocol and has been widely endorsed as an international standard. The SPIRIT-AI Extension provides international consensus-based guidance on AI-specific information that should be reported in clinical trial protocols alongside SPIRIT 2013 and other relevant SPIRIT extensions. It includes 15 new items (12 extensions and 3 elaborations) that should be addressed for trial protocols of AI-interventions.

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## EASE activities

### News from the EASE Secretary

As the year draws to a close we might all reflect on what a strange year it has been. For most of our EASE members, lockdown meant spending many more hours in front of our screens, as work, meetings, conferences, training and seminars all morphed into one online marathon.

Thank you to everyone who supported our first virtual conference in June. Being online meant we could welcome a number of people who would not have made it to an in-person conference. The positive feedback from the event gave us the confidence to explore what other opportunities going virtual presents. We are working on a number of new initiatives, so expect 2021 to be a busy year with lots of new activities as well as old favourites.

#### Membership renewals

Your renewal notices will be sent out in early December. We are pleased to be able to hold the 2020 prices for 2021. The membership types also remain the same.

Standard members	£92
Members of our sister organisations, CIEP, MET, NEaT and SENSE	£72
Reduced rate membership for students, early year careers, over 65s and those from low income countries	£47

For those who may be interested in group membership, we accept groups of 3 or more, and the more members you join the greater the discount you receive. There are no restrictions for groups, they can be made up in different ways, for example:

- staff at your company or organisation
- freelancers who come together, perhaps working in a similar discipline
- those from the same country, group of countries or smaller geographic regions
- those from a group of universities or other academic institutions.

Rates start at £69 per member for groups of 3-4, and go down on a sliding scale to £24 per member for groups of 100 or more. Please contact me if you wish to enquire about group membership.

#### Member profiles

I continue with my quest for completed member profiles on our website. I urge you to login and update your profile. Remember this information is what populates our member directory so it would be great to have more comprehensive information.

We are gradually adding more information to the database to enable us to provide more targeted services

to members and to help us with research and funding applications. Following our own guidelines on diversity and inclusion, we are now collecting gender and age data from our members as well as information on journals, professional disciplines and peer reviewers.

There is a lot of focus on diversity at the moment, and EASE is hoping to establish a group focused on diversity and inclusion, which would run on similar lines to the Gender Policy Group. If you are interested in this topic, please get in touch.

#### 2021-2023 Council nominations

The Nominations Committee for the 2021-2023 rotation has just been appointed. Sitting this year is a trio of former presidents, Joan Marsh, Ana Marusic and Pippa Smart. This all-women committee has already met to identify a number of EASE members, and others from the wider editing community, who they consider suitable candidates for EASE Council.

The Council is the principal governing body of the Association. Members bring to the Council's deliberations a wide range of knowledge and expertise to complement the executive management responsibilities of the Directors and Officers. Council members should also represent the Association externally, drawing on their personal influence and networking skills to promote EASE and seek opportunities to progress its mission.

The list of nominees will be sent to all members in mid-January. Members are then invited to add their own nominations to the list. Nominees must be EASE members. Each nomination must be supported by letters from two EASE members and include a signed letter stating that the nominee is willing to stand for Council.

The final list will be made available to members in April 2021, with an electronic vote in late May and the announcement of the results at the General Assembly in June. Full instructions will be given nearer the time, but if you think you would like to be considered or you would like to nominate a colleague, get in touch.

#### History of EASE Quiz

Many of our members have been subscribers for many years, but I wonder if we can test your knowledge of the history of EASE. See how you get on with these teasers.

- In what year did *European Science Editing* become a journal?
- Who was announced as the new editor of ESE in February 2001?
- In what year was the EASE conference "Integrity in Science Communication" held in Pisa, Italy?

Answers on page 20

## Croatian Regional Chapter report

Members of the EASE Croatian Regional Chapter, led by Jadranka Stojanovski (Programme Committee Chair), have participated in the organization of this year's PUBMET2020 Conference (16-19 September), which was held virtually due to COVID-19 pandemia. The conference organizers were Croatian Association for Scholarly Communication, University of Zadar, Department of Information Sciences, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology, and Ruđer Bošković Institute. EASE was one of the conference supporters, along with OPERAS, SPARC Europe and Croatian Ministry of Science and Education. During three days, around 400 participants actively followed the conference programme, which consisted of a NI4OS webinar, three workshops, four keynote lectures, two panel sessions, one short talk session, theme sessions from eight different cities in five countries (Zagreb, Zadar, Split, Osijek, Novi Sad, Ljubljana, Sarajevo and Skopje), together with EASE, OPERAS and SPARC Europe sessions.

Besides the workshop on good practices in academic writing (held by Dado Čakalo and Vladimir Mrša), two important panels were organized and moderated by EASE Croatian Regional Chapter members, one on the role of small/national publishers/journals and another on OS policies, evaluation and assessment, supporting OS publishing. Also, it is important to mention the session from Split on research integrity, organized by Professor Ana Marušić, who published recently in *Nature* with the group of authors an article on institutional strategies for supporting research integrity.

We maintain continuous communication with the editors of Croatian journals, most of whom are in open access. During July 2020, we organized a survey for journal

editors in order to record the current problems of journals related to changes in funding as well as those related to the indexing of Croatian journals in the WoS Core Collection, Scopus, DOAJ and Sherpa/Romeo. We collected answers from 142 journal editors, which show that most of the journals are dissatisfied with the recent changes in funding. Editors see the main problems related to indexing journals in the non-transparency of inclusion criteria and the inability to contact publishers/aggregators. The feedback is usually delayed several months, and sometimes several years, after application.

Furthermore, a PEER Review Week 2020 webinar on open peer review as a way of promoting trust in science was organized by EASE Croatian Regional Chapter, with Jadranka Stojanovski and Mario Malički as speakers and Iva Grabarić Andonovski as a moderator.

Also, members of the Croatian Regional Chapter have initiated together with CROASC a cooperation with Sherpa/Romeo and HRČAK (Portal of Croatian Scientific and Professional Journals) for the inclusion of archiving policies of Croatian journals into Sherpa/Romeo *via* HRČAK. Also, we suggested some improvements of the HRČAK infrastructure to the HRČAK team at Srce.

Future plans include organization of several webinars (on text and effective PDF preparation, XML, OJS, etc), collaboration with Sherpa/Romeo and DOAJ regarding inclusion of Croatian journals, preparation of the instructions and guidelines for journal editors, communication with the infrastructure provider for OA journals (Srce), and preparations for hosting one of the EASE conferences.

### 2021 Conference

#### Save the date: 23–25 June 2021

With COVID-19 still causing havoc across the globe we have made an early decision to hold the 2021 conference virtually. We are hoping that if the COVID situation has eased in some parts of the world, we will be able to organise simultaneous local in-person events to encourage the much needed live networking that our members are craving. We will retain the theme of environment and sustainability and have planned sessions to run over three half days, including the popular EASE Forum Live! We will also hold our EASE General Assembly and Council elections at the same event.





Answers to History of EASE quiz: ESE became a journal in February 2002; Editor in February 2001, Herve Maisonneuve; Pisa conference, 2009.

## Light relief

### Bar Grammar

*Alison Clayson suggested the following “displacement activities”.*

*Bar Grammar was found on Diaspora by Alexandre Oliva, original author unknown*

- An Oxford comma walks into a bar where it spends the evening watching the television, getting drunk, and smoking cigars.
- A dangling participle walks into a bar. Enjoying a cocktail and chatting with the bartender, the evening passes pleasantly.
- A bar was walked into by the passive voice.
- An oxymoron walked into a bar, and the silence was deafening.
- Two quotation marks walk into a “bar.”
- A malapropism walks into a bar, looking for all intensive purposes like a wolf in cheap clothing, muttering epitaphs and casting dispersions on his magnificent other, who takes him for granite.
- Hyperbole totally rips into this insane bar and absolutely destroys everything.
- A question mark walks into a bar?
- A non sequitur walks into a bar. In a strong wind, even turkeys can fly.
- Papyrus and Comic Sans walk into a bar. The bartender says, “Get out – we don’t serve your type.”
- A mixed metaphor walks into a bar, seeing the handwriting on the wall but hoping to nip it in the bud.
- A comma splice walks into a bar, it has a drink and then leaves.
- Three intransitive verbs walk into a bar. They sit. They converse. They depart.
- A synonym strolls into a tavern.
- At the end of the day, a cliché walks into a bar – fresh as a daisy, cute as a button, and sharp as a tack.
- A run-on sentence walks into a bar it starts flirting. With a cute little sentence fragment.
- Falling slowly, softly falling, the chiasmus collapses to the bar floor.
- A figure of speech literally walks into a bar and ends up getting figuratively hammered.
- An allusion walks into a bar, despite the fact that alcohol is its Achilles heel.
- The subjunctive would have walked into a bar, had it only known.
- A misplaced modifier walks into a bar owned a man with a glass eye named Ralph.
- The past, present, and future walked into a bar. It was tense.
- A dyslexic walks into a bra.
- A verb walks into a bar, sees a beautiful noun, and suggests they conjugate. The noun declines.
- A simile walks into a bar, as parched as a desert.
- A gerund and an infinitive walk into a bar, drinking to forget.
- A hyphenated word and a non-hyphenated word walk into a bar and the bartender nearly chokes on the irony.

### Roget and his Thesaurus

*How much do you know about the fascinating man behind the iconic publication?*

“There was much more to Peter Mark Roget (1779–1869) than his indispensable *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*. But little is remembered of his illustrious career in medicine and scientific discovery, which is surprising since in these endeavors he was highly regarded in his time. This may stem from the fact that the *Thesaurus*, written in the last few years of his life, eclipsed his other works, which have thereby faded into obscurity.”

JMS Pearce’s informative summary of Roget’s work can be found on *Hektoen International: A Journal of Medical Humanities* at <https://hekint.org/2020/09/29/roget-and-his-thesaurus/>



Peter Mark Roget (1779-1869). William. Drummond, after Eden Upton Eddis. c.1830s. Credit: National Portrait Gallery



# The FAIR Open Access

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A diagram showing a stack of four document types on a light gray background. Each type is represented by a teal-colored rectangular label with white text, positioned over a stylized document icon. The document icon has a folded top-right corner and a faint circular watermark in the center. The labels are stacked vertically from top to bottom: JOURNALS, BOOKS, CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS, and PROCEEDINGS.

JOURNALS

BOOKS

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

PROCEEDINGS