



Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2006

# The Krakow Trumpeter

Issue 3

**All for the Glory of God,  
the Honour and Advantage of  
these Kingdoms, and the  
Universal Good of Mankind**

*Henry Oldenburg  
Royal Society 1665*

## Cultural consequences of impact factors

James Testa told us how to calculate impact factors, and emphasised that it was to assess journals rather than individual articles or authors. Four parts of the process of selecting journals for inclusion in Web of Science are timeliness, editorial conventions, English language bibliographical information, and peer review. Thomson tries to cover the best regional journals, those with balanced coverage in each category. Weighting differs according to discipline (e.g. science is different from arts and humanities).

Some numbers: 3000 of the over 7000 science journals publish 80% of published articles and 95 of cited articles – and 300 publish a third of published articles and half of cited articles – those are the chosen few. (Which publishers publish these journals, we wondered over lunch.) 2000 journals are evaluated for inclusion each year – do others drop out? If so, self-citation might be a reason; more than 20% self-citation is considered excessive. An essay on selection is available on the Thomson site (find it in <http://scientific.thomson.com/free/essays/>).

Index Copernicus tries to be inclusive, transparent, decentralised and allow journals self-administration, said Marek Graczynski. We need such an open index for European journals to promote European scientific achievements, preserve local heritage, to highlight regional priorities and pinpoint promising investigators, among other reasons.

The system can be used to track the careers of individual scientists. Both an article prestige factor and a scientist prestige factor may be calculated. These depend on the number of times articles are downloaded – the readers decide. How is Index Copernicus funded? It is already used by institutes in Korea and Egypt and will be licensed by one of the largest universities in the USA: in addition Marek is talking to the EU next week about funding.

Many questions were raised (and continued in the afternoon discussion forum). For example, John Glen pointed out that in earth sciences, local journals are more important, and wondered whether Index Copernicus goes out looking for journals or waited for them to come to it.

*Margaret Cooter*



## For Grace

The Krakow ermine connection refers to Leonardo da Vinci's painting, Lady with an Ermine, which may be found in the Czartoryski Museum.

## Call for editors

Hervé Maisonneuve is looking for new recruits for the Publications Committee. The Committee met this week to prepare the forthcoming issues of European Science Editing (does anyone still refer to this as the Bulletin or has that source of fines dried up?). Contributions from participants at this meeting are welcome.

Five of the current team are retiring. Interviews for new members are being held during this conference. If anyone is interested in joining the Publications committee, please contact the new Chief Editor, Moira Vekony, or any member of the previous committee.



## Natural history challenge 3

Where in Krakow can one find a reference to ants and a tortoise?

Unfortunately, last year's Rubber Duck race does not seem to be mentioned in this year's tour guide: we were promised 10 000 rubber ducks being released on the river but perhaps it wasn't a success.

## Beggars beware

EASE members have long known to be wary of crossing a certain former publisher of an orthopaedic journal but Krakow's beggars are only just learning this. A poor lady sitting quietly with her dogs, suddenly found her day's earnings emptied onto the ground and the receptacle filled with water to refresh said hounds.



## Word play

Prompted by the first day's presentation on Eastern v Western archives:  
Should the former be known as Eastern Author-docs?



## Participant list correction

The email address for Tiiu Ojasoo (note spelling) should be [t.ojasoo@has.sante.fr](mailto:t.ojasoo@has.sante.fr)

## **The language and culture of science publication: be not surprised**

Mastering English may be a prerequisite for a successful career in science, but is not necessary for becoming a correspondent for the Krakow Trumpeter. Most appropriately, a non-native speaker (NNS) was asked to report on Friday's session entitled "The language and culture of science publication", so be not surprised by the language imperfections of this article. Magne Nylenna, the chairman, did a great job of introducing the topic and the speakers, as well as leading the discussion (which is encouraging for all of us NNSs who are frightened by the prospect of being asked to chair such a function!).

Elise Langdon-Neuner began with the provocative statement "it is not important what you do, but how you communicate (marketing) what you do". She asserted that it is not about how you will communicate your work – but how you will do it in English. Langdon-Neuner pointed out that among publication output determinants, nation's investment in research is important, but English proficiency even more so. (Especially for Italians, whose manuscripts, as we heard, have the lowest acceptance rate and highest language error rate). The consolation for NNSs is that they need not aspire to achieve the native speaker level of competence. An interesting piece of information was that BMJ (British) is more readable than JAMA (American). For a possible explanation, we refer the readers to Elise.

Keith Dawes suggested what NNSs can do to help themselves, apart from buying CDs with crash-course in English or hoping that journal editors would feel morally obliged to polish up their manuscripts. For one thing, they could ask for help of professional translators (logical, isn't it?) or medical writers. They might want to use the services of American Journal Experts, who invite their possible clients with the following words on their web page: "It took you precious time and money to make your discovery... You deserve to have it published in the best journal possible... No

matter where you are from". Sounds attractive, doesn't it? Dawes assured us that these services are not terribly expensive, so why not give them a try?

Another possibility is to use peer editing, e.g. in the form of publication clubs at academic institutions. Or use some software applicable to editing-teaching (StyleWriter, StyleEase). Finally, NNS should try to find whether their institute provides any services and lobby for professional help.

Roman Tertil, a professional translator, summed up the dilemma of NNSs in three words: ENGLISH or €NG£I\$H? The point was that it can be expensive not to be a fluent English speaker. Tertil suggested three ways of dealing with the problem, and your reporter invested a great effort to write them all down, exactly as they were presented:

- 1) In your department, lessen the burden of these who are competent in English; encourage them to help others; keep them motivated.
- 2) Turn to professionals; judge them not by their websites; ask other people; talk, correspond, interact, cooperate, give feedback; share your joy of success.
- 3) Lure professionals, set up a business, help them to develop translating (skills), team them up with native speakers. With this aid, some NNS may become the best translators into English.

In the discussion, several people expressed the opinion that publication of the same article in both English and the author's national language should be encouraged. Such articles should be clearly marked to avoid confusion in preparing systematic reviews.

*Dario Sambunjak*

**The language of science is English: the language of medicine is the language of the patients you treat.**

*Cited by Ana Marusic*

## Workshop venues

Monday's workshops will start at 8.45 (registration at 8.30). The one on statistics will be held in the seminar room which has functioned as the newsletter office this week. The one on open access will be held upstairs in Room 300.

## Restaurant recommendation

Moirá Vekony reports favourably on the food at Hawelka, one of the establishments in the Rynek which serves a traditional Polish menu.

## Picture captions

We have received a request to name the people in our photographs. This might reveal our ignorance of the identities of a few of our participants so we will continue with our policy of anonymity. Copies of the Trumpeter will be put up in the poster room for annotation – let us know who you are!

## Support staff

I keep six honest serving men  
(They taught me all I know).  
Their names are What and Why and When  
And How and Where and Who.

*David Sharpe*

## Careless whisper

Who left her bag, containing her work laptop (uninsured), in a restaurant in the Rynek? In the presence of a senior VP of her company.

## Authorship and evaluation

Ana Ivanis described a study she has conducted at the Croatian Medical Journal investigating authors' perceptions of their contributions to papers. Two groups were asked to indicate the role they had played in the preparation of the paper: one group simply marked Yes or No; the other group ranked their contribution on a scale of 0-4. The latter group were found to show better compliance with the criteria established by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, with a lower proportion of honorary (undeserving) authors. Does this suggest authors are too modest to say Yes when they have made only a small contribution? A lively discussion of authorship ensued.

### *Numbness from numbers*

Changing tack, Andrew Herxheimer then put the case for publishing more qualitative research. He showed several examples of information derived from patients surveys or interviews that have raised issues not considered to be relevant. He is part of a study exploring which journals publish qualitative research and how this varies among disciplines. The data are being collated in Adelaide and will be presented at a later date. Andrew described the preliminary results from his survey of journal editors, in which all so far have claimed that they are prepared to publish qualitative research.



## Cultural consequences of electronic publication

Sir Iain Chalmers introduced the session taking the opportunity to reprimand the BMJ for back stepping from its commendable policy of open access. Later, Margaret Cooter explained that the BMJ still allows immediate open access to original papers, just not to other material.

Lars Björnshauge, who is responsible for the libraries at Lund University in Sweden, told us that his institution embraces open access. With the philosophy of openness as the primary purpose of publishing, the library imports information for the institutions' researchers and exports their researchers' work through self archiving.

Lars traced the evolution of open access. Copyright has always been extremely important for publishers who have demanded a transfer of authors' rights. This was not an issue for authors as long as journals were printed but copyright is becoming increasingly important for authors with issues of paying for their own work and producing course packs\*. Institutions also want to take advantage of their copyright. Libraries have faced issues with publishers imposing restrictions and increasing prices, often with no relation to quality.

### ***There is no relation between price, quantity and quality in journal publishing.***

Society has wanted open access for some time which technology has now made possible. The US Congress are currently debating a motion to mandate open access for US government-funded research. As for science editors, their role was gatekeeping quality and also gatekeeping publishers.

Roads to open access can be either golden or green. Golden allows free and immediate access. On the green road, publishers allow authors to self archive pre- and post-prints and the public have varying degrees of access.

Open access has many advantages. It attracts more readers, generates more

citations and results in higher impact factors for open access journals. Within two years PloS Biology has achieved an IF of 13.9, making it top in its ISI index category.

Erik Sandewall then described a system of open peer reviewing in which the review and referee process is split. A submitted manuscript is put on the internet, reviewers are invited and an interactive debate between reviewers and authors ensues online. This continues for three months, during which authors can make revisions but may not add new results. The final revised manuscript is then sent to two other referees, who may only say "yes" or "no" to publication. The manuscript's initial posting on the internet is considered publication and its appearance in a journal is republication. Even if rejected, the manuscript remains on the web and the discussion is also preserved. The experiment created a new culture of collegial review rather than the traditional authoritative review. The possibility of negative results being communicated was also increased through the exchange between reviewers and authors.

Erik said that the scheme had been used by authors of sufficient seniority not worried about career development and young researchers eager to try something new. The system requires a lot of work from reviewers familiar with the internet and can only be done on a moderate scale. It is good for small journals and communities such as computer science but not so suitable for disciplines such as medicine. One problem with medicine, for example, would be that the general media might pick up and publish unfinished work. The idea is finding interest with other journals. Indeed, today's (15 June) issue of *Nature* announced an experiment the journal is trying in open reviewing.

***Elise Langdon-Neuner***

\*Note from Joan wearing her Wiley hat: most copyright transfer agreements from commercial publishers expressly leave the author the right to use the material in scholarly publications and for their own teaching. Read your CTA!

## Conference Dinner

We donned our finery and got on the bus.



surroundings – if rather dark until power was restored.



At the 19<sup>th</sup> century manor of Tomaszewice,



There was only one minor mystery: why did the red wine run out so fast?



Arjan Polderman, our new President, welcomed one and all and proposed a toast to EASE.



## Thought for the day

Well written papers are read, remembered, cited.  
Poorly written papers are not.

*Mike Ashby*

Regardless of geography

*Igor Vlahović*

See [www.dwor.pl](http://www.dwor.pl) for information on the manor.

## Final question

Who wants a pair of Krakow horses to draw her funeral cortège?

We were entertained by two guitarists and enjoyed a pleasant dinner in beautiful