

A new revolution

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

The conference proceedings will be published in the

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

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Closing the gap between editing practice and theory: METM 06

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

The 105 attendees from 20 different countries in the Mediterranean region judged the Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' second international professional development event, on the theme "International communication—promising practices", as successful as its first international meeting in 2005.¹ Practitioners of communication- and language-related professions (translators, author's editors, copyeditors, journal editors, publishers, medical writers and bibliometricians) used the two packed days to learn about new solutions, brush up on practical skills, and exchange views with colleagues from both professional and academic settings.

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

Programme overview

In plenary sessions participants learned about plagiarism, got advice on how to meet the needs of demanding clients, and were introduced to an illustrious group of international organizations for communications professionals (including EASE, of course). Intensive training workshops covered appropriate citation, statistics, the genre approach to translating and editing, effective annotation of texts by authors' editors, and punctuation as a tool to enhance text flow. Panel sessions dealt with coaching oral communication, the new European translation standard EN15038, academic English, time management, the history of translation in the Mediterranean region, "accidental" interpreting, and successful freelancing. Short workshops concentrated on alternatives to the impact factor, point-by-point replies to editors and peer reviewers, non-directive listening for translators and communications

coaches, and journals' instructions to authors. The programme also included a range of presentations on topics such as visual aids to support lectures, authors' editing at a distance, the overlapping roles of authors and editors, ghostwriting in medical journals, translating a minoritized language, translation in undergraduate instruction in medical English, and teaching publishing skills to researchers whose first language is not English. The full programme along with abstracts, some PowerPoint presentations, and other resources developed by some of the speakers can be consulted at www.metmeetings.org/METM06.

Highlights from plenary sessions

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

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

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

Communicators at the wordface and in academia

Interdisciplinary events such as the MET meetings and the recent PPRISEAL conference³ are closing the gap between theory and practice in STM communication. Academics from departments of translation, philology, and languages for specific purposes are discovering that some practices predicted to work on the basis of theory have already been shown to be effective, or at least promising, by wordface professionals. Likewise, seasoned wordfacers are finding that not all theory is disconnected from practice. Both academics and practitioners are beginning to understand how the roles of translators, gatekeeper editors and authors’ editors overlap. Expertise in areas currently

identified with a variety of acronyms such as EAP (English for Academic Purposes), ESP (English for Specific Purposes), EIL (English as an International Language),⁴ (EAL) English as an Additional Language,³ or ISE (International Scientific English) can inform promising practices developed by colleagues who solve real-world communication challenges for both non-native and native users of English. In turn, academics can learn how to refine their theories and develop testable hypotheses by observing first-hand how wordface professionals meet their clients’ real-life needs.

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References

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

Post-conference workshops

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

Two roads to open access

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

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

In the second presentation, Bill Hubbard asked some practical questions about repositories: what are they? what

do they do? Repositories help institutions to manage their intellectual production and encourage wider use of open access information assets (eprints, theses, e-learning objects, etc). Visibility and dissemination of publications benefit institutions, researchers, and society in general. Bill also provided information about SHERPA partners and their future projects.

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

John Willinsky is the director of the Public Knowledge Project (PKP) known internationally by the development of three very useful open source tools, which are OAI-PMH compliant: Open Journal System (OJS), Open Journal Conference (used to create this workshop’s website), and the PKP Metadata Harvester. His main concern about open access is how information can achieve a broader