reference list, the raw percentage of similarity should not be used to set an arbitrary limit. For one thing, it is important to check whether authors have re-used work written by other authors (ie committed plagiarism) or their own work. There may also be legitimate explanations for re-use of identical or similar text, for example to describe standard methods or data sources. False positives may also occur if preprints or conference abstracts have been posted on the web (however, it is possible to set CrossCheck to ignore individual sources in such cases).

The latest tool produced by CrossRef (which also created the system for linking references via digital object identifiers, called DOIs) is CrossMark. This allows publishers to indicate the most current, publisher-curated version of a publication and to alert readers to any changes to the original version such as corrections or retractions. Clicking on the CrossMark logo will allow readers to check whether they are using the most up-to-date version, even if they have downloaded it and stored it as a PDF on their own computer. This should reduce the problem of authors citing work that has been retracted.

Editors and researchers in Croatia have used CrossCheck, and a number of other text-matching systems, to assess the prevalence of plagiarism in manuscripts submitted to the *Croatian Medical Journal*. The former, and founding editor of this journal, Ana Marušić, presented their findings and described how the journal used such screening tools. Bazdaric and colleagues analysed all submissions during 2009 and 2010.[1] Of the 754 submitted manuscripts, 105 (14%) were flagged as containing matching text by the software and, of these, 63 (8%) were found, after manual checking, to be plagiarised and 22 (3%) were found to contain "self-plagiarism". The Croatian team concluded that manual verification is essential and that use of more than one text-matching software (such as CrossCheck, eTBLAST and WCopyfind) can be helpful.

One limitation of current text-matching algorithms is that they only work for text in Roman characters and cannot be used with other alphabets such as Arabic or Chinese. However, Professor Sun Huh from Hallym University in Korea (and Chairman of the Committee on Education and Training of the Korean Council of Science Editors) described an interesting study assessing duplicate publication in Korean Medical Journals.[2] Kim and colleagues checked a sample of 455 articles indexed in KoreaMed and identified 27 articles (6%) that had been duplicated – one published four times, and the rest twice. Based on this study (which was started in 2004), they concluded that a more precise classification of redundant publication would be helpful and a further analysis of 100 papers has been performed. Professor Huh and colleagues propose a classification distinguishing copying in different languages, the same language, and salami publication (when a single data set is published several times). Another variant is "imalas" publication (which participants discovered was not a Korean term but simply 'salami' backwards!) which occurs when researchers publish an initial paper followed by others with extended sample numbers or study periods. Professor Huh and colleagues have also produced a case book on duplicate publication (in Korean) which is being used by academic societies for training.

Classifying misconduct was the theme for the final presentation (from Liz Wager, former Chair of the Committee on Publication Ethics – COPE). As the other speakers had noted, information provided by electronic tools for detecting text similarity should be interpreted carefully. Editors might hope that they could use such tools automatically and immediately recognise plagiarism or redundancy, however there may be legitimate reasons for finding that text similarities exist between documents. COPE's flowcharts were created before such tools were widely used, but recommend different courses of action for major and minor plagiarism and for redundant publication. However, they do not provide precise definitions of these terms. Therefore COPE issued a discussion document (available at www.publicationethics.org) setting out the problems and proposing some possible new definitions that were discussed at the end of the session.

The presentations and lively discussion emphasized the usefulness of tools such as CrossCheck for detecting misconduct but also highlighted the need for journals to develop policies about when to use such tools and how to interpret their findings.

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A debate on open access

Ravi Murugesan
AuthorAID Training Coordinator, International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), Oxford, UK
ravi@uwalumni.com

On 25 May 2012, I attended a debate on open access (OA) organised by the Science Communication Forum at Imperial College in London. The large hall in which the event was held was nearly full, perhaps because of the provocative title: "Open Access: Is it open season on traditional scientific publishing?"

There were five people on the panel: Chris Bird, Senior Lawyer at the Wellcome Trust; Stephen Curry, Professor of Structural Biology at Imperial College London; David Hoole, Marketing Director at Nature Publishing Group (NPG); Michael Jubb, Director of the Research Information Network (RIN); and Graham Taylor, Director of Educational, Academic and Professional Publishing at the Publishers Association.

Chris Bird, from the Wellcome Trust, said that although the trust encourages researchers who receive their funding to make work openly accessible, compliance is very low: about 5%. He claimed that OA and open science are good for the economy, and cited the Human Genome Project as an example, which has led to economic activity and job creation. "Researchers must believe that it is a good thing for research to be freely accessible," he exhorted us, and I fully agreed.

Next, Prof Curry of Imperial College said that he, like most academics, had stayed away from debates in scholarly publishing for a long time. But when Elsevier extended support to the Research Works Act, he joined the OA movement. He stated that the public shouldn't have to pay twice for research: the first time to make the research happen, and then to see the output. He also lamented that researchers focus too much on the impact factor, saying "Focusing on the impact factor is a lazy and easy thing to do."

David Hoole from NPG took a balanced view. He explained that *Nature* has always focused on communicating science to the general public. NPG's first OA journal – Molecular Systems Biology – was established in 2005, and he said that NPG was the first publisher to encourage green OA, or self-archiving. But he explained that *Nature* journals in general cannot easily operate with an OA model: because of low acceptance rates (around 5%), much of the processing time and ensuing costs is in rejecting articles and not publishing them! Therefore, article-processing charges, which most OA journals levy on successful authors, would be excessively high.

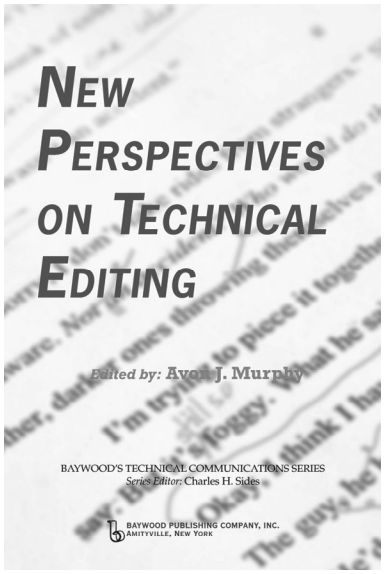
Michael Jubb from the RIN put things in context: there's no doubt that OA is good for researchers, the public, and the economy, but how can OA happen on a large scale? UK authors produce about 6% of the approximately 1.9 million articles published every year in journals, so there's not a lot the UK alone, or for that matter any one country, can do.

After the four speakers had their say, Graham Taylor from the Publishers Association began defending the traditional model. His stand was that publishers are the stewards of scientific information, and they do the things others don't do, many of which are onerous tasks. They are pragmatists, and, in his words, they are neither rogues nor philanthropists. As he spoke, the tweets from the audience made it clear that he was not the most popular speaker.

With many differing and yet well-founded views on OA, perhaps the only conclusion that can be reached at this point is that the debate on OA will continue.

Book review

New Perspectives on Technical Editing by Avon J. Murphy (*ed*.) ISBN : 978-0895033949 (2010) Baywood Publishing Company Inc, Hardcover, 210 pages, 35.5 GBP



This book presents a collection of 10 chapters dealing with diverse aspects of technical editing (ie, editorial planning, and analysis and structural changes made to other people's technological documents): research in technical editing, trends and teaching of technical editing, copyediting, and technical journal editing. The role and function of the modern journal and book editor is also dealt with in detail.

Each chapter is written by an expert in the field: senior editors, university professors in technical communication, technical writers and linguists. The ever-evolving role of the editor is clearly elucidated in several historical reviews, and in the descriptions of the expectations for the future.

A very striking aspect of this book is its extensive collection of bibliographic resources: every chapter lists dozens of very useful references, and the closing chapter, and annotated bibliography, contain many not so well known references, and are most useful. All in all, the book is a treasure trove listing more than 400 references, in addition to numerous webpage URLs embedded in the texts.

The book is designed to help readers to understand current practices and norms in technical editing, and to help them to take action in editing as well as in teaching and educating would-be editors. The audience for this book thus includes editors and teachers, but also writers, researchers and students. A deep reading of this book will result in a better understanding of the difference between full technical editing and its much narrower component so well known as copyediting, and will convince any prospective editor that editing should not be undertaken if the people involved do not master the art of precision and accuracy in technical (as well as in human) communication, do not possess the technical know how and computer skills, or do not have a very broad knowledge base.

The language fluency of every contributor makes this book a pleasure to read, and this particular volume of Baywood's Technical Communications Series is very well edited. The subject index covers almost 8 two-column pages.

Christiaan Sterken
University of Brussels, Belgium; EASE Council member
csterken@vub.ac.be