Suggested reading in recent issues of *European Science Editing*

Among the highlights of the November 2015 issue of *European Science Editing* (ESE) is an essay on whether interpretation of research ethics is universal. Writing from an Iranian perspective, Behrooz Astaneh describes how cultural norms and inadequate financial means are used by some to justify practices that we in the West would consider unethical, such as guest authorship and the fiddling of results.[1] He also speculates that the burden of international sanctions might encourage Iranian researchers to rationalise unethical behaviour as ethical.

Elsewhere, Duncan Nicholas highlights how scientists have been slow to embrace social media, before going on to explore how social media can be harnessed to facilitate research, communicate research findings to the public, and scrutinise published research.[2] He also looks at the potential use of alternative new metrics to assess both the spread of research findings on the internet and the active contributions of researchers to this dissemination.

ESE kicked off 2016 with an important piece on how to deal with major mistakes in scientific papers.[3] Hannah Cagney of the *Lancet* and her colleagues argue that simple retraction is too punitive, and an erratum inadequate, for papers that contain serious errors but are otherwise valuable. Instead, they propose a system of "retraction and republication", whereby the original version is retracted and a corrected version published in its stead. Annotated copies of both versions with the errors highlighted are maintained in an online appendix.

In the same issue of *ESE*, Michèle Nuijten tries to solve the problem of statistical errors in the literature.[4] Her solutions include encouraging journal editors to use software such as "statcheck" (the author's own creation) to scan papers for errors. She also advocates increased data sharing. This is a hot topic: the ICMJE (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors) recently proposed mandatory sharing of de-identified patient data within 6 months of publication.[5] Nuijten's third suggestion – preregistration of clinical trials in an online registry – is already an ICMJE requirement.[6]

Finally, editor-proofreader Paul Beverley advises on creating stylesheets to maintain stylistic consistency in Word documents and ensure adherence to house style.[7] He presents his own macros for checking hyphenation, spelling, punctuation, and capitalisation (among other things).

References

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