

More ideas from a number of Dutch stakeholders on the future of academic publishing

1. Introduction

In our ‘Vision from a number of Dutch Stakeholders on the future of academic publishing’¹, we described our approach towards how existing infrastructure, in particular university libraries, can be utilized to prevent an escalation of the costs of academic publishing during the transition towards the “golden” open access model, while simultaneously maintaining their quality control through peer review. The conclusion of our research calls for a powerful interruption of the hegemony of the traditional publishers through the creation of (in part, alternative) professional publication options for academics in order to ensure a competitive publication environment.

Of particular importance is the achievement of the following goals:

- Distribution of the “total” publishing chain (which is currently concentrated among the traditional publishers) over separate parties – for example, it should be possible for other parties than the publisher to arrange the technical aspects of publishing. In such a network of services and activities every party is compensated according to their contribution.
- Publishing functions such as the organization of peer review can be allocated to existing infrastructures like university libraries. In this way, a reduction in the costs of publishing can be accomplished.
- No exclusive transfer of copyright to publishers or journals.

Although eventually no single entity will be “owner of the whole” (akin to the situation in other networks or service chains), there will be a need for coordination (for example at the national level).

In order to deliver a convincing proof of concept, we work with the editorial boards of a number of high impact journals in the field of Linguistics in order to transfer their journals to ‘only’ open access publishers with low apc’s. As the case of the Linguistics journals shows,

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¹ See <http://www.sampan.eu/downloads/OPuS-VisionOnTheFutureOfAcademicPublishing.pdf>

editorial boards of prestigious journals are increasingly dissatisfied with their publishers, due to the fact that services are decreasing, transparency of costs and sales is blurred and the costs of open access publishing for their authors are perceived as too high. More and more editorial boards are expressing support for new forms of open access publishing environments in which publishing costs are as low as possible.

With the Linguistics project, a start will be made in the Netherlands to assist the editors in the transfer of their journal to ‘only’ open access publishers who charge (sometimes far) lower costs for open access than their current traditional publishers do. We are confident that it will be possible to ‘migrate’ a major part of the field of existing Linguistic journals: either to the reputable open access publisher Public Library of Science (PloS), who is willing to lower its article processing charges (apc’s) to € 800 per article - or to a fairly new kid on the block, Ubiquity Press, a start up from University College London that only charges € 400.

We have recently submitted a proposal for Horizon 2020 to support these journals in their migration. We also received notice from the EU that our approach was deemed so interesting that it has been included in a ‘complex of ideas’ also including SCOAP3. There will be calls set up for ‘New ways of implementing Gold OA’ and for ‘New OA business models’.

Moreover, we have been asked for more input regarding Open Access possibilities for the EU. Subsequently, this document describes four more important subjects that in our view should be addressed in the transition to Open Access, one of which (QOAM) is already an existing program:

- Open Access for Textbooks in Europe
- Open Access publishing *without* Article Processing Charges (apc’s)
- Authorship in Transition
- Quality Open Access Market (QOAM)

2. Open Access for ‘Textbooks’ in Europe

The changing of the landscape of education

In her recent speech at the Open Knowledge Foundation, *Embracing the open opportunity*, on the 17th of July 2014 in Berlin Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda, made the following statement:

‘The best investment we can make in our future is education. That too must be open. It's a crime when teachers are prevented from freely sharing open educational resources. There's so much we can achieve by making every classroom digital. Education that is not off the peg: but made to measure, for every child. That is what we want to achieve through open education.’

During periods of transformation, successful enterprises find themselves competing not just with their well-known traditional rivals in the same market, but often also with new kinds of

competitors – as, for example, happened to builders of sailing vessels in the 19th century when steamboats emerged, designed and built by entirely new companies.

This change in competition is starting to happen in the universities market, and already alters the way educational resources are being used. Globalisation was the first to change the field: global competition for the most talented students, especially as foreign students became a major source of revenue not just for individual universities but for countries as a whole. There is also the growing impact of technology, which has changed the way ‘textbooks’ - formerly all in print of course - are being developed and published.

As content becomes easier accessible and, in each area, the world’s leading universities or authorities become its providers, the content of a course will cease to be a decisive factor. As Michael Barber, Saad Rizvi and Katelyn Donnelly describe in ‘An avalanche is coming. Higher Education and the Revolution ahead’²: ‘it will be a matter of what a university and its faculty build around the content – for example, the quality of teaching and mentorship, the nature of facilitated dialogue between students (which could be global), or indeed the type of assessment and the path from university into the labour market. There is tremendous room here for innovation which universities can embark on right away, with limited risk.

The awarding of degrees is perhaps the most fundamental role of a university, yet it too is increasingly open to challenge. In part, this is from private sector competition – new private universities which are influential not just in the US but also in countries such as Brazil. Michael and Katelyn met the founder and chairman of Anhanguera, the largest for-profit distance learning network in Brazil, valued at \$1.4 billion and serving hundreds of thousands of students. It was founded with cost and value for money at its core. The founder constantly has his eye on which content, skills and mind-set his customers and learners will need to be successful in today’s world. In addition, companies such as Pearson (for whom we, the authors, work) are seeking to be able to award degrees themselves. Pearson owns CTI, a university in South Africa focused on providing education for employment, and has recently launched Pearson College out of its headquarters in London. Pearson College is a partnership with other corporate players such as Cisco, and academic institutions such as Royal Holloway, which awards the formal degree.’

Developing Open Access educational materials

Considering this rapidly changing landscape, we see the following reasons for the EU to engage actively in new ways of developing Open Access educational materials:

First, Open Access to education will prove highly valuable to the education of especially the South and Eastern European Countries, where access to educational information for students now is much sparser than in Northern Europe. Where in the Northern European countries

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² Sir Michael Barber, Saad Rizvi, Katelyn Donnelly, ‘An avalanche is coming. Higher Education and the Revolution ahead.’ 2013 http://www.ippr.org/assets/media/images/media/files/publication/2013/04/avalanche-is-coming_Mar2013_10432.pdf

(GB, Benelux, Scandinavia, Germany) approximately 80% of students buy the textbooks that are prescribed for their courses, only around 20% of students (can afford to) do so in the less wealthy Southern and Eastern European countries. In some countries like Greece, the government pays for the teaching materials for all students.

Secondly, as the large commercial educational publishers are mostly US or GB oriented, the content is often biased. This especially occurs in academic fields where there are different approaches towards the theory and practices of the subject, such as in Economics, Psychology, History etc. Many of the prescribed textbooks in European countries are originally English language books from American or British authors, and even if translated hardly adapted for the continental European situation, or the specific European country where they are taught.

Thirdly, if universities in Europe would be able to offer Open Access educational materials for their courses, it would make them more interesting for (international) students, as that would lower their costs for an education in Europe. In the Netherlands, the average price a student (or her parents) has to pay for the course materials for a year, is at average € 600 to € 800. If universities in Europe would succeed in building high quality teaching and mentorship around this Open Access content, facilitate dialogue between students globally and improve the type of assessment and path from the university into the labour market, it would improve their competitiveness even further.

Finally, the market for textbooks in Europe is huge. There are currently no exact figures available, but one of the biggest players worldwide, Pearson, states in its annual report that 20 % of their total sales come from Europe: 1.062 billion pounds. We are conducting a quick survey in five different countries to see what the situation for textbooks in Europe is in three subjects: Economics, Philosophy and Medicine. The results of the complete survey for Economics, Philosophy and Medicine will be presented later this year. The data presenting an overview of the books required for the first year of Economics in Spain (5 universities), the Netherlands (5), Poland (5), Romania (2), and Greece (2) have been collected, and show the following first findings.

As was to be expected, there are big differences between the different countries. In Poland all titles are in Polish, in Romania and Greece most of them are in Romanian or Greek. Spain knows a mix of Spanish and English titles, and in the Netherlands nearly all titles are in English. In the Netherlands, nearly all authors and publishers are international ones - there are no translations at all and only very few textbooks in Dutch from Dutch authors and publishers. In Poland, Romania and Greece, by far the majority of authors are local scholars published by national publishers. In Spain, authors are both international and Spanish, and many of the international publishers have their own subsidiary that publishes both a translation of their international textbooks (between 12.5 to 35% on the various lists), as well as original Spanish ones.

In Poland, Romania and Spain, many booklists contain at least one title that is no longer available, which might indicate that copies are used. This does not occur at all in the Netherlands nor in Greece. A particularity for Greece is that the state provides the basic books free of cost for students of state universities. Both Greece and the Netherlands have very concise booklists, whereas the other countries have much longer lists. In all countries, many titles are available through illegal copies – in the Netherlands however, the syllabuses specifically request special licences for the year of study. It is therefore likely that most Dutch students buy these books as new.

Although some authors can be found in booklists in different countries, there are only 7 textbooks which are used in at least two countries. In addition, only one large international publisher has several books in this list, Pearson. Lastly, the international publishers found most frequently operating in these countries are Pearson (by far the biggest, both international sales as well as translations with local publishers and subsidiaries for both translations and original textbooks), McGraw-Hill, Cengage, and some of the bigger international University Presses like Oxford UP and Princeton UP.

Benefits on various levels

If it would be made possible for universities in Europe to implement and use Open Access for educational materials, the EU would benefit on various levels:

- It would improve equal access to information for students in European countries in the South and the North, and thereby improve the chances of (young) people on the labour market.³
- If the *content* of the (Open Access) educational materials would become more European focussed, this would benefit the outreach of European science.
- If universities in Europe would be able to use Open Access materials for their students, and would succeed in building new, high quality surroundings for them, that would make them more interesting for students from all over the world.
- Considering the huge flow of money now involved with textbook purchases, also in Europe, it should be possible to find a way to migrate to an Open Access situation for educational materials, possibly together with one or more of the educational publishers in the field.

3. Open Access publishing without Article Processing Charges (apc's)

In a hyper-connected digital world, science and research funded with public money needs to be *open*: open practices, open peer review, open data, open evaluation, and Open Access to all

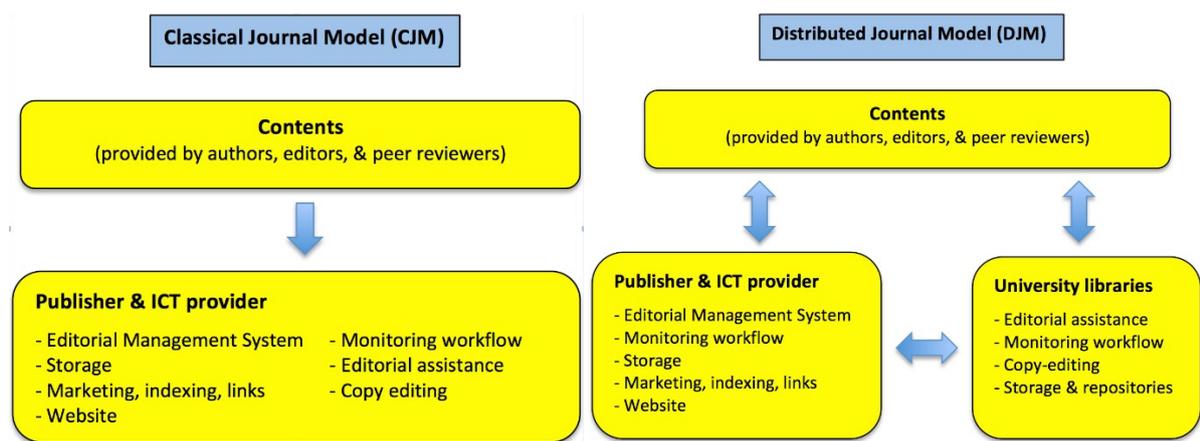
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³ The situation in France is different from other European countries: there is a big gap between what private schools like the Grandes Ecoles have to offer their students in terms of textbooks and what students of the public universities can chose from.

publications. Such openness is both ethical and fair: private companies should not be allowed to erect barriers to the dissemination of research funded with public money. Our main objective is to encourage the development of a competitive and transparent market for OA scholarly publishing.

In our introduction, we described the Linguistics project which addresses the high costs of article processing charges (apc's) and comes up with a solution by migrating existing high impact journals to a high quality publisher that charges low apc's. In this proposal, we aim to set up and run an infrastructure without having to charge apc's from authors of articles, again to help decrease the costs of academic publishing during the transition towards the gold Open Access model, while simultaneously maintaining their quality control through peer review.

This objective also constitutes an interruption of the hegemony of the traditional publishers through the creation of professional publication options for academics. The project's aim is to ensure a competitive publication environment and unrestricted access to science both for readers and authors. Our eventual goal is a completely new model for the distribution of responsibilities in 'golden' Open Access journal publishing:



The figures above respectively represent the Traditional Journal Model (TJM), in which all functions and roles are handled by the publisher, who owns the content - and the proposed new Distributed Journal Model (DJM), in which functions and roles are distributed between different parties and not exclusively owned by one of them.

We call a tender to various publishers and ICT providers for the use of their publishing platform and editorial management system, plus storage and marketing and indexing services. The first offer we received from HighWire Press (Stanford University) indicates that set-up costs for the platform would range between € 100.000 and € 200.000, that one-off costs per journal would amount to € 6.000, and use of the editorial management system would cost € 8.000 yearly. In addition, that there would be some maintenance fee yearly, dependent on how many journals and articles would pass through the platform. Apart from that, the only article processing fees would consist of an upload fee of € 20 per article. We are waiting for one more publisher and an ICT provider to make their offers.

4. Authorship in Transition

A key aspect of open access policies in research is the definition of authorship. Who can count as an author, what rights can an author exercise, and what responsibilities an author must carry are important questions. The emergence of open science frameworks will also affect the way scientific and scholarly authorship will further develop. For this reason, *Authorship in Transition* is an important new line of research at the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS, Leiden University).

The Centre has brought together a consortium of leading international researchers and stakeholders to understand, analyse, and develop empirical and theoretical models of the kinds of transitions that are currently happening with respect to the intellectual, economic, and legal aspects of authorship. These experts include library and information scientists from the University of Michigan (USA), Indiana University (Bloomington, USA), and the University of Montreal (Canada); experts in computational science and digital humanities at the Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS) and the Huygens Institute (the Netherlands); science and technology studies scholars from the University of Groningen (NL), Leiden University (NL), and CNRS (France); research policy and funding experts from Lund University (Sweden), EMBO (Germany), and the Rathenau Institute (NL); and open access specialists and journal editors from the Netherlands (Open Access Lab), Germany (EMBO), and the US (JASIST, Vectors Journal).

A proposal for a workshop that will be the first activity of this consortium has recently been submitted to a Dutch national program for cutting-edge interdisciplinary research and is currently under review. The workshop will focus on the *changing conditions and practices* of authorship and the need to understand these changes in a grounded way. Authorship is deeply interwoven with cognitive aspects of knowledge, such as creativity and invention; with ethical considerations, such as how authorship is affected by increasing competition; as well as with the institutional aspects of knowledge creation, such as reward-systems, ownership and recognition. Various aspects of “new forms of authorship” have been put forth by natural scientists, social scientists and humanities scholars. These include the role of professional ghost writers in medical journals; the emergence of databases as main channels for scientific output; novel types of scientific communication platforms such as the mega journal PlosOne, web-based reporting in social media and interactive websites; the increased role of software, instrumentation, and robots in the production of data and the related parts of scientific manuscripts; inflated publication lists through repetition and “cut and paste” publications or extreme partition of output; and authorships as reward for institutional support or as expression of institutional hierarchies.

Up to now, these aspects have not often been brought together, nor were they mobilized to better understand the recurring crises of trust in scientists that are now part of daily news about science. We therefore combine them to ask: What does “authorship” mean in the 21st

century? The workshop will result in a novel interdisciplinary research agenda that will be implemented in a series of coordinated research projects. We will also use this synthesis of varying practices as a first step towards the formulation of benchmarks for policy-makers and evaluators, and for recommendations for those responsible for evaluating authorship.

The implications for open access policies will have a priority in further developing this topical research agenda.

5. **Quality Open Access Market (QOAM)**

quality of service matched against price – www.qoam.eu

When scientific and scholarly publishing is no longer seen as copyright exploitation but as a service, as is the case in the OA paradigm, there is a need for a market where quality of the service can be matched against price. Quality Open Access Market – QOAM – aims to be that place. The information in QOAM is based on academic crowd sourcing, coming from authors, editors and peer reviewers who bring in their real life experience with a journal and from libraries who analyse the web site of a journal. Additional price information comes from institutions which have settled open access licenses with publishers for their own authors. In this way, QOAM becomes the meeting point where shopping authors select a journal to publish their article in, publishers may find out how to improve their journal and funders, policy makers, journalists and the general public enter a transparent academic publishing environment.

Obviously, QOAM is an open website. But academics have to log in with their institutional account for publishing a Journal Score Card (to avoid anonymous scoring) or if they want to check whether their own institution has bargained a good publication price for them.

Journal Score Cards

In QOAM quality of a journal is determined by the academic community itself via so-called Journal Score Cards. A Journal Score Card is a questionnaire on critical aspects of a journal. Four aspects – Editorial information, Peer review, Governance and Process - are usually analysed by library staff, based on the journal's website. The fifth – Valuation – is a reality check based on experience of authors, editors or peer reviewers with the journal. The lowest sub score of the four web site related aspects is called the Base Score of the journal. The score of the fifth aspect is called the Valuation score of the journal. The Base Score defines the default ranking of the journals in QOAM but sorting according to the Valuation Score is also possible.

Price information

Price information in QOAM comes primarily from the website of a journal via its Journal Score Card. However, a growing number of institutions, and more specifically their libraries, succeed in negotiating better prices for their community via memberships, licences or other

agreements. Unfortunately, publishers often include non-disclosure clauses in their contracts. Therefore, these prices may not always be directly visible on QOAM's website. Per journal QOAM will list the licensed institutes. Searching authors can see if their institute is on the list. In that case they can click on it, log in to their own institutional intranet and compare the institutional price to the standard price.

Currently, prices vary widely. According to Peter Suber the vast majority of peer-reviewed OA journals are no-fee. OA journals that do charge have an average price of € 700 per article⁴, hybrid journals are the most expensive of all with an average of € 1970⁵. Individual price quotations may amount to €3000 and up. In such a bewildering situation sharing price experiences might give some guidance. For that reason a question is included in the Valuation section asking for the actual publication price of a published article. The replies are shown in reverse chronological order under the heading 'Recently paid', next to 'Institutional price' and 'Price on web site'. All three are found by clicking on 'Price information' on QOAM's Search page.

Privacy policy

QOAM is a free service, based on academic crowd sourcing. QOAM uses no cookies and can be visited anonymously. Conversely, contributions to QOAM's content via Journal Score Cards are named and only members of the academic community are eligible to publish such cards.

In order to publish a Journal Score Card in QOAM – via “Score journal” on QOAM's main page – one has to log in via one's institutional account. In practice this means that QOAM collects the names and institutional email addresses of the authors of Journal Score Cards. The names are used to sign the Journal Score Cards and are publicly visible. The institutional email addresses are not publicly available. They are only shown to other authors of Journal Score Cards. No other information is collected. No other uses of these data are permitted. Underlying this policy are the views that (1) anonymous Journal Score Cards are prone to misuse and should be avoided in QOAM and (2) authors of Journal Score Cards should be able to contact each other for dialogue.

Open Access Publishing Services - OPuS

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⁴ <http://www.openaccesspublishing.org/apc2/>

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⁵ http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/stellent/groups/corporatesite/@policy_communications/documents/web_document/wtp055910.pdf