

Editorial: Volume 30 Issue 2

In this editorial we would like to discuss and comment on some of the some of the recent international developments in open access publishing as well as welcome the new members of our editorial board.

As a journal with a long history of free open access with no charges for authors or readers, we have been able to avoid some of the complex decisions and trade-offs that authors, readers and institutions now have to make in choosing where to publish their work. Nevertheless, we feel that it would be valuable to explore some of the terminology around open access publishing to help readers and authors navigate the territory.

In writing this editorial we have drawn upon some recent work undertaken by Laura Czerniewicz of the University of Cape Town, one of the new members of AJET's Editorial Board (see below). Czerniewicz and Goodier (in press) undertook a case study of the practices of authors at one institution, along with the practices of the leading journals that these authors published in, with a focus on the consequences of the emergence of various open access publishing models.

Czerniewicz and Goodier cite the following definition of open access publication from Suber (2012): "open access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions". The term *gold open access* is used to refer to the situation where readers, without subscribing to the journal, can access an article published in a journal free of charge. The term *green open access* is used to refer to articles which, as well as being published in a journal (whether open or closed access) are also deposited in a freely accessible repository (such as an institution's repository of publications by its employees). Most journals (whether open or closed access) now allow authors to publish a version, typically a pre-print or pre-layout version, in an institutional repository following publication, sometimes after a certain period of time has elapsed (see further discussion of copyright and licensing agreements below).

Where a journal provides gold open access, it is often assumed that the author will be required to pay an *article processing charge* (APC), but this is not always the case. Peterson, Emmett and Greenberg (2013) highlight that "semantic slippage in use of the term 'gold OA' is taking place – gold OA refers only to the openness of a journal's contents – free to the reader; the economic and cost-recovery model of the journal can take any form" (p. 2). Solomon and Björk (2012) point out that only about 26% of gold open access journals use an author pays model to sustain the journal financially.

Essentially there are three distinct models used by journals providing open access:

- Free open access with no charges for authors or readers (e.g. AJET);
- Subscription access immediately following publication with all articles available open access after an embargoed period (e.g. this was the case with AJET up until December 2007, when the journal ceased publication of a printed version); and
- Subscription access for all articles but with open access as an option on a per article basis (normally following payment by the author of an APC).

There have been a number of drivers for the introduction of open access publishing:

- First, grant providers wanting to see the results of funded research made freely available have begun to require that outputs from grants are available open access (see, for example, the Australian Research Council's policy at http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/open_access.htm). Czerniewicz and Goodier (in press) point out that there has been substantial misrepresentation of the expectations of grant providers with regard to open access publication, with many researchers assuming that this requires publication in journals providing gold open access (many of which charge author fees), when in fact most grant providers are comfortable with green open access (repository based).
- Second, authors wanting to increase the reach of their publications have begun to explore open access as a way to allow more readers to obtain affordable and convenient access to their work. Consistent with this, Czerniewicz and Goodier cite studies demonstrating that citation rates are measurably higher for open access articles and this difference is particularly significant in relation to citations from authors from developing countries.

- Third, faced with steady increases in the cost of journal subscriptions (see, for example, Young, 2009) some institutions have begun to promote open access as a long-term strategy to reduce costs.

Czerniewicz and Goodier (in press) analyse the publishing practices of the 20 leading journals in which authors from a particular South African university published, finding that half of them now provide a hybrid of subscription access and open access models (the latter with APCs), just under a quarter are free open access (i.e. no APCs), and a quarter are subscription only. This provides a clear indication of how widespread the move to open access publication has been. Interestingly, in Czerniewicz and Goodier's analysis all journals allowed some form of archiving of articles in an openly accessible institutional repository (i.e. green open access) with various restrictions as to the version that could be deposited or the embargo period following publication.

The shift towards open access publication, while providing more equitable access to scholarly material, can be problematic from a number of perspectives. As noted by Peterson, Emmett & Greenberg (2013) "the 'author-pays' model poses a significant problem by creating a system in which access becomes more open to readers but simultaneously more closed to authors" (p. 1). Establishing an expectation that grant providers or employers cover these costs does not address the equity issues. A move to open access for readers may provide read access to scholars from institutions with limited funds or developing countries, however it may also deny such scholars publishing opportunities, thus shifting rather than addressing the issue of scholarly equity.

In order to understand the reasons behind APCs and subscription charges it is important to understand the costs involved in journal publication. Direct or indirect costs in journal publication include the work of editors (for many journals, including AJET, this is done on a voluntary basis), peer reviewing (voluntary for almost all journals including AJET), copy and layout editing (normally paid), and online or print based publishing costs. Possible income streams for journal publishers to offset these costs include subscription charges, charges for purchase of individual articles, advertising, society contributions and journal membership. In the case of AJET, the cost of copy editing and online publishing is covered by Ascilite, the parent society for the journal. Clearly journals published by commercial publishers need to recover their costs and charging authors, readers or institutional subscribers is certainly a legitimate way of doing this. Nevertheless, some such as Czerniewicz and Goodier have questioned the apparent high profit margins, and consequently the business models of commercial publishers given that "scholars provide unpaid services through the undertaking of the research itself, the peer review process and often the editing of the research outputs too".

The final issue relating to open access publication that needs to be discussed is the question of copyright. Some assume that authors who publish an article in a (gold) open access outlet give up their personal copyright over the work. In fact in most cases open access publications are published under a creative commons license where the copyright remains with the author, and readers and the publisher are given certain rights depending on the type of creative commons license chosen. Commercial publishers publishing closed access articles typically require authors to assign the copyright to the publisher and provide only a restricted set of usage options to the author. AJET authors retain the copyright of their articles, but grant AJET the right to publish the article and make copies for non-profit educational purposes. Importantly, as mentioned above, the copyright agreements of commercial publishers typically now allow for publication of a version (normally the penultimate version prior to layout editing) in an institutional repository (although in some cases there is an embargo period following publication). AJET authors are able to publish the final version of their article in their institutional repository immediately after publication and there is no need to seek our permission to do so.

Peterson, Emmett and Greenberg (2013) in discussing the prominence given to the stance of commercial publishers in the debate over open access publishing note that "an important piece in this puzzle has been viable, respected, high-impact OA journals, creating acceptable options for researchers" (p. 1). As editors we are proud of AJET's status as a high quality, high impact open access journal, a status that we are able to maintain through the generous support of Ascilite and its members.

Readers and members of the Ascilite community would be aware that we have recently undertaken a process leading to a refreshing of the AJET editorial board, based on a key recommendation of the AJET review. Members of the existing editorial board were invited to continue on, and we undertook an open call for expressions of interest for membership of the board. We also proactively approached international leaders in educational technology research and practice to invite them to join the board. We are pleased to welcome our new editorial board members and look forward to working with them:

Chen Chwen Jen, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia
Grainne Conole, University of Leicester, United Kingdom
Laura Czerniewicz, University of Cape Town, South Africa
Robert Fitzgerald, University of Canberra, Australia
Cathy Gunn, University of Auckland, New Zealand
John Hedberg, Macquarie University, Australia
Jan Herrington, Murdoch University, Australia
Paul Kirschner, Open University of the Netherlands
Allison Littlejohn, Glasgow Caledonian University, United Kingdom
Lori Lockyer, Macquarie University, Australia
Stephen Marshall, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand
Martin Oliver, Institute of Education, University of London, United Kingdom
Meg O'Reilly, Southern Cross University, Australia
Thomas Reeves, University of Georgia, USA
Neil Selwyn, Monash University, Australia
Gail Wilson, Southern Cross University, Australia
Allan H.K. Yuen, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

We would like to take this opportunity to thank outgoing members of the board for their contributions, which will be recorded with the AJET archives which list past editors and members of the management committee and editorial board.

This second issue of AJET for 2014 begins with a paper from Redmond, Devine and Basson, which outlines a study that employs an ethnographic approach and considers students' participation in online discussion forums, particularly taking a disciplinary perspective. The next paper by Escobar-Rodriguez and his colleagues report on a Spanish study that investigates students' perceptions of the advantages and relevance of Facebook as a learning tool. The next two papers in this issue report on investigations of how tablet computers can be used in University teaching, learning and assessment. Snodgrass, Ashby, Rivett and Russell present an evaluation of how objective structure clinical exams – OSCEs – can be supported using tablets, while Choate, Kotsanas and Dawson present a neat evaluation of the impact of tablet computers, and the act of digital inking among other things, on staff and students' perceptions of lecturing and lectures. The fifth paper in this issue (Chew & Ding) considers the use of wikis in higher education and presents interesting findings about the zones of proximal and distal development, particularly as they relate to the students' functional use of wikis, their degree of openness and social presence. Shaikh and Khoja report on a study that employed a Dephi method to determine 28 roles of University teachers in an era of learner-centred pedagogy and personal learning environments. The final two papers in this issue are studies which focus on the schools sector. Veira, Leacock and Warrican report on an investigation of teachers and students' perceptions of how Google and Facebook can provide a space for learning support outside the classroom, while Yeh, Hsu, Chuang and Hwang present a study which has as a central focus, middle school students' information skills – seeking, retrieval, management, problem solving – in an ever-rich information landscape.

Barney Dalgarno, Sue Bennett and Gregor Kennedy,
Lead Editors Australasian Journal of Education Technology

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