EDITORIAL

The Mexican Gazette of Oncology (GAMO) Evolves in its Publication

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As the official scientific dissemination journal of the Mexican Society of Oncology (SMeO - *Sociedad Mexicana de Oncología*), the Mexican Gazette of Oncology (GAMO - *Gaceta Mexicana de Oncología*) has achieved 14 years of existence, hitherto being able to maintain both bimonthly periodicity and continuity in Spanish, meeting the international standards of professional scientific publications, with a selection of peer-reviewed articles, and enriched by contributions coming from Latin America, the USA, and Europe. In addition, our journal has maintained an impeccable editorial presentation with color images, high-definition printing, and high-quality paper, with significant indexing, open for free access on the internet, but especially being increasingly consulted in different parts of the world through different international bibliographic databases and with the support of a renowned publishing house such as Elsevier.

Development always brings about changes, which is nothing but the result of an evolutionary process that generates new phenomena, such as the transition from the printed to the electronic format, or as once occurred with the transition from handwritten to printed texts. This elicits a change in production, dissemination and information authentication processes, and all stakeholders involved with these processes (authors, editors, information professionals, etc., all in their roles as information providers) have therefore been compelled to open spaces to these new electronic versions, with this being the case of the GAMO.

On the other hand, one of the most notorious characteristics of medical writing in the last third of the 20th century, and so far in the 21st, is the predominance of English as the only international language of medicine.

Among the repercussions the boom of English language has had on medicine over the past few decades, which have driven to its current situation of absolute predominance in

scientific communication, physicians will mainly cite two: the influence of English on current medical language and the simplification of international communication. Nevertheless, the fact that the influence of the English language is more widespread and intense, and that it affects all levels of language in orthographic, lexical, and syntactic aspects, seems to be often forgotten.

The appearance of Medline, which brought literature search automation, has allowed for it to be amazingly simplified, but has also led scientists to restrict their searches to the last 35 years (Medline only covers the period from 1966 to the present day) and to automatically eliminate articles published in other languages, thanks to the possibility to conduct automatic searches with the “English only” restriction criterion¹.

Furthermore, since large bibliographic databases preferably incorporate journals in English, articles published in large Anglo-North American medical journals barely contain references to publications in other languages.

Another fact that drives this eagerness of researchers to publish in English and, if possible, in journals with international circulation, is that the editorial boards of these journals, as well as the scientific committees of the main international congresses, are mainly comprised by Anglo-North American scientists.

The famous English saying “publish or perish” has thus become, in Spanish-speaking countries, the bilingual disjunctive “*publica o muere*”; i.e., for Spanish language scientists, the fact comes down now to a situation of whether “to be or not to be” in the international medical community².

The SMeO, within its growth and evolution, aware of this reality, and in an effort to make the presence of researchers who collaborate with the GAMO more visible, in addition to continuing to publish the journal in Spanish, is now simulta-

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neously releasing, from this issue onwards, the full-English version. This unprecedented effort, after several years of fruitless attempts, is now a reality, and we inform that the printed paper version will disappear, with the journal being electronically available in both languages (Spanish and English).

Currently, new scientific and technological advances require rapid dissemination to the benefit of specific necessities. Electronic publishing has turned out to be an efficient vehicle for the dissemination of contents, since it is one of the scientific communities' main means of communication, which facilitates exchange between peers from different geographic locations.

Electronic publishing requires increasingly more efficient means of communication, and demands better skills for consultation as well. The Internet favored the evolution of electronic publishing as telecommunication networks were developing; sometimes, other technologies allowed for coverage to be broadened, as in the case of CD-ROMs, which came to be a means of electronic distribution par excellence prior to the advent of the internet.

As it was consolidating, electronic publishing saw the emergence of a variety of information resources (e-journals, e-books, e-bulletins, among others), and academic communities began to be assiduous users of such resources.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE E-JOURNAL³

The conformation of the e-journal is strongly associated with the publication's information architecture, and hence interaction with the document is more or less possible. Nevertheless, as such, the electronic publication has the following advantages:

- It preserves rare and fragile documents, without restricting access to those who wish to consult them.
- It facilitates transmission by means of telematic networks.
- It enables simultaneous access to many users.
- It offers a solution to the problem of physical space for storage.
- It reduces publishing and distribution costs by using electronic means for the transmission of information.
- It enables full-text searches.
- It facilitates instantaneous access without the need to go elsewhere.
- It provides links to other related resources, such as filmed and animation materials, which facilitates the expression of ideas that are difficult to capture in a printed format.
- It establishes a close relationship between authors and readers through e-mail, which favors scientific communication.
- It allows immediate publishing, based on a system of continuous production.
- It enables incorporating corrections or comments made by readers.
- It reduces paper consumption costs since printed copies are made only for articles that are really of interest, thus favoring ecology.

In addition to the above points, we can add further characteristics that new technologies contribute within electronic devices, such as smartphones or PDAs, where the complete collection of one or several titles can be stored.

The nature of e-publishing eliminates many of the steps related to print publishing in the relationship between publishers/providers and the libraries: printing, binding, packaging, distribution, transportation, postal fees and storage costs.

As well as the observed advantages, there are also some disadvantages:

- Considerable initial investment, although e-journals are more economical in the long-term.
- On-screen visualization inconvenience, although the PDF file format is an advance in this sense.
- High costs of publication subscriptions.
- A language barrier in our countries since the resources are mainly in English language.
- Internet connection is required, with additional costs with regard to telecommunication infrastructure.

In light of the attitude of commercial publishers in the market of information, other initiatives have started to emerge, including the "Open Access" initiative. Given its impact, considering a series of definitions on the subject is suggested: The Open Access (OA) initiative represents a new academic publishing model, developed for free investigators and libraries; it emerged as a reaction to limitations imposed by excessive increases in subscriptions to peer-reviewed journals, especially in the fields of science and medicine. By breaking the publishers' monopoly on scientific research distribution, Open Access enables more equitable access to information, with the additional advantage that it allows for authors to keep the copyright of their works.

Open Access Journal: This is a periodical scholarly publication that offers full-text articles that are freely and universally published on the Internet, by immediately and with no restriction whatsoever depositing them in a widely recognized, open access repository, as in the case of GAMO.

The impact factor of a journal is the mean number of times an article published in a particular journal is cited. It is an instrument to compare journals and to assess the relative importance of a journal within a specific scientific field. Thomson ISI is in charge of analyzing journals for this purpose, and this project is therefore intended to consolidate this aspect.

As of this issue, we have also made some changes in the editorial board, enriching it with prominent national and international opinion leaders that, with their editorial experience, will surely contribute to improving article selection since, fortunately, we receive high-quality manuscripts and in a considerable number, which provides the opportunity to select.

And so it was that, at this new stage, the SMeO has established an agreement with Permanyer, which is a medical publishing house founded in Barcelona in 1973.

Currently, it has offices in Spain, Switzerland, Mexico, Brazil, and Portugal and commercial presence in more than 25 countries.

Permanyer is specialized in periodical peer-reviewed medical publications, and has systems and channels of its

own for publishing in English and Spanish, among other languages, as well as for subsequent electronic dissemination and content indexing in the main global indexing systems, such as, for example, PubMed, Medline, and Thomson Reuters, among others.

Manuscript handling is carried out by means of an electronic process with personalized software offered by the publishing house, where authors submit their manuscripts for review and the system connects Editors and Reviewers for articles to be followed-up until publication approval, thus enabling several reviews and updates of the same manuscript until its acceptance. Once approved by the editors, the publishing house carries out a review of the text under high-quality standards following the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors recommendations and publishes the articles for indexing, both in the printed and electronic forms, in the journal's website, which is provided by the publishing house.

It possesses the electronic infrastructure required to provide and maintain website functioning of scientific journals and has wide experience in scientific journal indexing in different international information recovery and bibliometric systems such as, for example, Thomson-Reuters, Medline/PubMed, etc.

In 2000, Permanyer obtained the ISO 9001 quality accreditation for scientific publication, and has renewed it every year by means of detailed audits as a sign of commitment to the final quality of its publications. This company has had a presence in Mexico since 2005 and, currently, it publishes reference journals that meet international quality standards for medical/scientific publications.

Dear reader, the SMeO and GAMO are working to evolve and to offer an attractive option for researchers and potential users and to be consulted in Spanish and/or English, and in this way provide a better service to the oncologic community of Mexico and all over the world.

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