

Norms and forms

Zbigniew Rykiel

Editor-in-Chief

“Social Space Journal”

socialspacejournal@gmail.com

The Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education has published evaluation criteria of scientific journals (*Zasady główne*, 2011). The introductory criteria are to apply to the second parametric evaluation and include nine items, i.e.:

- (1) a published list of referees,
- (2) a double blind evaluation procedure,
- (3) an active internet site,
- (4) external referees,
- (5) a scientific character of the journal,
- (6) English titles and abstracts,
- (7) editorial stability,
- (8) an anti-plagiarist firewall, misidentified with ghostwriting,
- (9) a declaration of the original version, i.e. unequivocal information conveyor.

Our journal meets all these criteria already now, and this is to say we could already apply for granting us scores if the journal would only be published long

enough.

The Ministry indicates, in turn, 12 detailed criteria that are to be taken into account in the evaluation procedure. These are:

- (1) the citation index or impact factor,
- (2) a foreign affiliation of authors (over 25% for, the respective in this context, social sciences),
- (3) availability via at least one data base,
- (4) more than 24 published scientific works per year,
- (5) internationalisation of referees (over 50%),
- (6) no less than once for three months frequency of publication,
- (7) all English-language publications,
- (8) the internationalisation of the Editorial Board (over 50%),
- (9) the availability of the internet version,
- (10) other than Polish native speaking foreign-language style editors,
- (11) a statistical editor in the Editorial Office,
- (12) thematic editors in the Editorial Office.

Our journal meets seven out of 11 latter criteria now, which can be directly influenced. Before the second issue of the journal is closed, the criterion (4) could hardly be commented upon. The criterion (6) is not our aim now, (7) is not our strategic aim, and (10) is not met yet.

As it was already indicated (Rykiel 2011), the Ministry's requirements concentrate on formal criteria, if do not limit to them, while they abstract from - much more important - norms of the world science. Hardly any references to the scientific level could be found in the Ministry's 'main principles', since all qualitative criteria are replaced by quantitative criteria (Kulczycki 2011).

The requirement of the employment of an English native speaking style editor is the clearest example of this way of thinking. If the mother tongue were the main indicator of the lingual proficiency, the authors of Polish-language publications would be fluent at least in the lingual layer of their texts, the assumption that is rather far from reality. Following this way of thinking, an employment of a London Dockland's beggar would result in obtaining a higher Ministry's score than in the case of a full professor of English philology of a famous continental European university. The *Przestrzeń Społeczna (Social Space)* journal is not, however, interested in such an editorial policy.

In their attempts to explain detailed questions, the newer Ministry's regulations (Odpowiedzi..., 2012) plunge into inconsistencies and nonsense. In the proposed definition of the style editor one can find that 'the editor strictly cooperates with the editorial office of the scientific journal' (ibid., point 8). Further on, the Ministry's interpretation misidentifies national languages with 'local languages' and states that 'the style editor has to possess [sic!] a respective education in philology of the given local language' (ibid.). In the case, however, of 'a journal publishing articles in a language different than local [...] merely a native speaker of that language is recognised as a style editor' (ibid.). Since, however, the National and Ethnic Minorities Act recognises Kashubian as the regional language, it is obviously 'different than local', the fact that must result in the recognition of, not necessarily educated, Kashubian native speakers as proper style editors of Kashubian-language scientific journals, if any. Implicitly, if not explicitly, this applies to native speakers of English, who not only are not obliged to be educated but even to have a command of standard English. Polish, on the contrary, is assumed as a 'local' language, and this fact implies that only educated philologists are expected to have a good command of it, even though, as recently as in the 1960s, every candidate for GCE was obliged to indicate (s)he has so. As can thus be seen, attempts to regulate scientific matters by administrative measures result in absurd, essential for 'points hunters' but not so for born scientists who have no time or energy to spend for rubbish.

Importantly, the Ministry's regulations also ignore the question of gender egalitarianism, explicitly stressed by the European Union's institutions, which expect

the member states will promote interdisciplinary investigations and studies, as well as liquidate obstacles in gaining the highest levels of academic and administrative careers by women (Rada..., 2011). In this very point our journal has yet gained the world level by promoting interdisciplinary studies and debate, and gaining 36% of women in the Editorial Board, importantly however, not at the cost of the journal's quality.

In this context, an important question of the structure of meta-competences of the Polish appears as well as of the functionality or disfunctionality of their – ours – cultural and mental legacy, for it is an important base of our international competitiveness in the contemporary world. The following competences, based on inspirations by Jan Szomburg (2011), seem essential:

- (1) the feeling of own dignity, value, and subjectivity rather than 'locality';
- (2) empathy, i.e. an ability to understand others and sympathise with others;
- (3) the culture of mutual acceptance and esteem;
- (4) the culture of trust;
- (5) ethical behaviours;
- (6) developing own talents and their promoting at others;
- (7) an ability to accept own and others' errors and faults, as well as to take lessons from them;
- (8) an ability to accept criticism and the essential critique of others;
- (9) an ability of a dialogue without a symbolic violence;
- (10) an ability of cooperation, including collective actions;
- (11) an ability of a model-creating, empathetic and integrative leadership;
- (12) a courage and ability of independent, non-schematic thinking;
- (13) an ability of permanent learning;
- (14) an ability to interdisciplinary, holistic thinking;
- (15) an ability of identifying ambitious aims and strategic planning;
- (16) entrepreneurship and mobility;
- (17) civic activity and courage;
- (18) the understanding of own culture rather than mere imitation of others ;
- (19) the understanding of the world around.

The point (13) of the above list is in conflict with the Ministry's expectation, expressed in its other documents, that universities should offer to students possibilities to gain practical abilities useful on the labour market. What this implies is that universities would gradually transform in vocational schools, producing narrow specialists for the today's rather than contemporary labour market, who would be unable to adjust to changes in the market (Jałowiecki 2011). Universities, however, have always had a culture-creating role to play, including the creation of abilities of life-long learning, based on a solid theoretical knowledge (Jałowiecki 2011). It is exactly this kind of knowledge, connected with a scientific critique, that we intend to promote in our journal.

A question therefore arises to what extent the Ministry's evaluation criteria of scientific journals facilitate the achievement of the indicated above key competences and to what extent they stimulate the avoidance of the underlying norms. This is a question of what the Polish can: observe norms or evade them? The choice between anomy and deviation does not seem very attractive, even if the deviation is a taught behaviour.

It is the norms of the core of the world system of science rather than its forms that are the strategic aim of our journal. This does not, however, preclude the fact that we are going to achieve as high the Ministry's evaluation as possible unless it is inconsistent with our strategic aim.

This aim is to make science on acceptably high level by the adjustment to the norms of the core of the world science and not submitting to norms adapted from other axio-normative systems. Our strategic aim is therefore not a maximisation of the Ministry's scores, i.e. the score hunting, under the current, still evolving, criteria but rather the consistency with the normative rather than purely formal layer of the world science (Rykiel 2011). Readers are welcome to the discussion about these norms as a base of academic activities – not only in publication but also scientific in general.

Zbigniew Rykiel

Editor-in-Chief

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