

EDITORIAL

The importance of Scientific Authors' Identity in the digital era

Today it is impossible to deny the importance of the Internet to disseminate advances in science and engineering and hence the pressure on researchers to establish an online presence in order to disseminate their work and discover new resources for their research activities. Here, online scientific presence is understood as online systems and services where the researcher's information is collected manually or automatically, and such information is available for the scientific community; in addition, some of these systems are able to recommend new available scientific resources to the researcher according to each particular profile.

Several reasons promote the use of these online services: first, authors need to establish an online scientific presence in order to quickly disseminating their research and be cited by other authors. Recent on-line services as ResearchGate allow users to claim the authorship of manuscripts and to follow other users with the aim of receiving alerts about new published resources such as datasets, bibliographic references or manuscripts.

Second, academic committees (including journal editorial boards) need to select appropriate peers for evaluating project proposals, manuscripts, master thesis and PhD dissertations based on the public curriculum of potential reviewers; in this sense, online scientific profiles are an important resource for locating appropriate peers.

Third, editors and peers need to review previous publications of the authors of the manuscripts in review, in order to establish the work's originality and to avoid publishing unoriginal contributions.

Thus, although the way in which the personal identity of the authors is established in an article seems to be a cosmetic issue, it really is necessary to consider how online services match manuscripts and authors in order to increase the accuracy of the association. Our editorial board is aware of the necessity of contributing to build the online presence of our authors and we are implementing several improvements in DYNA in order to achieve this objective.

The first aspect is related to the author's full name in the article. Here it is important to recognize cultural differences about how the authors sign manuscripts. For example, while in North American culture the tradition is to use one or two names and the father's surname, in the Spanish tradition the use of two names and two surnames is very common. Moreover, major differences exist; in Portuguese, it is possible to use more than two names and the first surname is inherited from the mother and the second from the father. The problem arises

when we consider that most of the systems developed follow the North American convention for the names; thus, when I use my complete name "Juan David Velásquez Henao", most systems recognize the string "Juan David Velásquez" as the name, and the string "Henao" as the surname, and as a result, the author's name would be reported as "J. D. V. Henao" in many online services, with the consequent errors in the identification of the author. As a consequence, our editorial board encourages authors signing with two surnames to use a hyphen in order for automatic systems to correctly recognize the author's name. Thus, if I desire to use my full name I must write "Juan David Velásquez-Henao".

The second aspect is related with the consistency of the authors' name in manuscripts. In this case, systems such as SCOPUS, treat the names "Juan Velásquez", "Juan D. Velásquez" and "Juan David Velásquez" as different authors, such that, the users of SCOPUS need to discover on their own that the three authors are the same person. As a conclusion, I recommend the use of the same signature across manuscripts. In the case of SCOPUS, authors must apply for registration of alternative names to claim authorship.

The fourth aspect concerns the e-mail reported in the manuscript. Some systems, such as Scholar Google, assign authorship based on the authors' e-mail in the article instead of the full name in the manuscript; as in previous cases, it is very important to use the same e-mail to prevent future authorship problems.

The final aspect is that names in manuscripts are not unique and it is common for several authors to have the same name in the world; in addition, names can change over time as a result of cultural customs. Our editorial board encourages authors to use the Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) that is a unique alphanumeric code assigned to the author when he is registered in the ORCID web site (www.orcid.org). ORCID provides a public webpage identified by the ORCID alphanumeric code where information about the authors education, employment and scientific works are freely available to the community. Members of ORCID community include important publishers such as: Elsevier, IEEE, Springer, Taylor & Francis Group, Thompson Reuters, Wiley, IOP Publishing, Nature Publishing Group, Oxford University Press, and Public Library of Science (PLOS).

Juan D. Velásquez, MSc, PhD
Full Professor
Universidad Nacional de Colombia
<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3043-3037>