

Articulations of Language and Value(s) in Scholarly Publishing Circuits

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Résumé de l'article

Cet article analyse comment l'utilisation et la préférence pour la langue anglaise dans les communications scientifiques établit des oppressions épistémiques aux niveaux mondial, régional et local pour délégitimer les connaissances et les chercheuses.eurs actives. Plus précisément, cet article affirme que les langues internationalisées des valeurs à base économique et métrique interagissent et se croisent avec la surévaluation de l'anglais, ce qui a des conséquences néfastes. Quatre lectures des interactions entre la langue et la valeur dans l'écosystème savant sont présentées. Les questions de production de savoirs, d'oppression épistémique et de justice ne se limitant pas à une seule discipline ou à une seule communauté, chaque passage s'appuie sur la théorie et la pratique de chercheuses.eurs issu.e.s de communautés locales et autochtones, ainsi que de chercheuses.eurs et de praticien.ne.s issu.e.s d'un éventail d'autres domaines. Le premier passage, intitulée Language Has Value, étudie les savoirs et les valeurs inhérentes aux langues, ainsi que les implications du monolinguisme pour la production et l'utilisation des savoirs à l'échelle mondiale. En se concentrant sur l'industrie de l'édition, Language of Value interroge les valeurs économiques internationalisées qui façonnent les approches courantes du libre accès et négligent les situations régionales. Language of Evaluation s'intéresse au marché symbolique des mesures de recherche et des critères d'évaluation qui obligent les chercheuses.eurs à choisir entre les sujets qui sont pertinents au niveau local et ceux qui sont jugés importants par la communauté dominante. Ces passages sont suivis, dans Language and Value, de leçons tirées de modèles et d'outils développés pour la production et la diffusion de savoirs qui résistent activement aux oppressions croisées. L'article se termine par un appel à la communauté scientifique pour qu'elle imagine et travaille à des approches durables et équitables de la communication savante qui s'ouvrent et s'éloignent des enclos épistémiques qui dominent le système actuel.

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Julie Shi

Scholars Portal

ABSTRACT

This paper examines how the use of and preference for the English language in scholarly communication enacts epistemic oppressions on global, regional, and local stages to delegitimize knowledge and knowers active in other languages and epistemological frameworks. Specifically, this paper argues that internationalized languages of economic and metrics-based value interact and intersect with the over-valuation of English, which has detrimental consequences. Four readings of the interplays between language and value in the scholarly ecosystem are presented. As questions of knowledge production, epistemic oppression, and justice are not confined to one discipline or community, each reading engages with the theory and praxis of scholars from local and Indigenous communities, and scholars and practitioners in a range of other areas.

The first reading, Language Has Value, examines the knowledge and value embedded in languages, as well as the implications of monolingualism for global knowledge production and use. Focusing on the publishing industry, Language of Value interrogates the internationalized economic values that shape mainstream approaches to open access and overlook regional situations. Language of Evaluation attends to the symbolic market of research metrics and evaluation criteria that forces researchers to choose between topics that are locally relevant and those deemed important by the mainstream community. These readings are followed, in Language and Value, by lessons learned from established models and tools for knowledge production and dissemination that actively resist intersecting oppressions. The paper closes with a call to the research community to imagine and work for sustainable and equitable approaches to scholarly communication that break open and away from the epistemic enclosures dominating the present system.

Keywords: *biodiversity · knowledge equity · language · publishing · scholarly communications*

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article analyse comment l'utilisation et la préférence pour la langue anglaise dans les communications scientifiques établit des oppressions épistémiques aux niveaux mondial, régional et local pour délégitimer les connaissances et les connaissances actives dans d'autres

langues et d'autres cadres épistémologiques. Plus précisément, cet article affirme que les langues internationalisées des valeurs à base économique et métrique interagissent et se croisent avec la surévaluation de l'anglais, ce qui a des conséquences néfastes. Quatre lectures des interactions entre la langue et la valeur dans l'écosystème savant sont présentées. Les questions de production de savoirs, d'oppression épistémique et de justice ne se limitant pas à une seule discipline ou à une seule communauté, chaque passage s'appuie sur la théorie et la pratique de chercheuses.eurs issu.e.s de communautés locales et autochtones, ainsi que de chercheuses.eurs et de praticien.ne.s issu.e.s d'un éventail d'autres domaines.

Le premier passage, intitulée *Language Has Value*, étudie les savoirs et les valeurs inhérentes aux langues, ainsi que les implications du monolinguisme pour la production et l'utilisation des savoirs à l'échelle mondiale. En se concentrant sur l'industrie de l'édition, *Language of Value* interroge les valeurs économiques internationalisées qui façonnent les approches courantes du libre accès et négligent les situations régionales. *Language of Evaluation* s'intéresse au marché symbolique des mesures de recherche et des critères d'évaluation qui obligent les chercheuses.eurs à choisir entre les sujets qui sont pertinents au niveau local et ceux qui sont jugés importants par la communauté dominante. Ces passages sont suivis, dans *Language and Value*, de leçons tirées de modèles et d'outils développés pour la production et la diffusion de savoirs qui résistent activement aux oppressions croisées. L'article se termine par un appel à la communauté scientifique pour qu'elle imagine et travaille à des approches durables et équitables de la communication savante qui s'ouvrent et s'éloignent des enclos épistémiques qui dominent le système actuel.

Mots-clés : *bibliodiversité · communications savantes · édition · équité des savoirs · langue*

DISCUSSING Indigenous methodologies and epistemologies, Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux scholar Margaret Kovach (2009) explains that knowledge and culture are entwined with language “because [language] holds within it a people’s worldview” (59). While epistemology shapes language as it is “[held] within,” language too shapes epistemology in its responsibility and care for that which it holds. Language is both a sociocultural epistemic resource and a key epistemological structure.

To value—as in to respect and pay heed to—a language, then, is to value both the epistemology and the complex relations structuring and structured by it alongside the people that it represents and to whom it belongs. To displace a language from its society, or a society from its language, is to impose epistemic oppressions against knowers as individuals and communities. To insist on the production and circulation of scholarly knowledge in the English language, in order that knowledge might be recognized and legitimated as scholarly, is to impose epistemic oppressions against the non-Anglophone majority of the world in academic and public spheres.

As it stands, however, the global circulation of knowledge overwhelmingly caters to the Anglophone minority. The vast majority of languages, knowledge, and epistemologies that are known and practiced globally continue to be erased from

our research landscapes. Yet, epistemic oppressions do not appear in a vacuum. They build on past and parallel oppressions, coalescing in inequitable ideologies that shape the publishing structures, research culture, and symbolic and economic value systems that comprise our scholarly knowledge ecosystem. These oppressions determine who, what, where, and how knowledge is produced, circulated, and deemed legitimate.

This paper examines how the use of and preference for the English language in scholarly communication enacts epistemic oppressions on global, regional, and local stages to delegitimize knowledge and knowers active in other languages and epistemological frameworks. I argue that internationalized languages of economic and metrics-based value interact and intersect with the over-valuation of English, resulting in detrimental consequences for the production, circulation, and use of scholarly knowledge on local, regional, and global orders. These consequences are magnified by the adoption and adaptation of dominant languages and values in mainstream articulations of open access (OA) asserted by largely Anglophone regions in North America and Western Europe. There is an urgent need for the research community to imagine and work for sustainable and equitable approaches to scholarly communication that break away from the epistemic enclosures and binary logic of fully open or closed access that are preserved by the dominant system.

Since questions of knowledge production, epistemic oppression, and justice span disciplines, geographies, and time, this paper is in dialogue with prior and ongoing theory and praxis of scholars from local and Indigenous communities, critical feminist philosophers, and scholars and practitioners in various fields.

Frameworks

As identified by advocates and scholars of development studies, anthropology, political science, and Indigenous studies (Alatas 2003; Escobar 1995; Grande 2018; MITLibraries 2018), groups with knowledge and sociocultural systems that are in tension with the systems of those with power have been historically treated as knowers with “epistemically disadvantaged identities” (Tuana 2006, as quoted in Dotson 2014, 124). Education (and often religious and state) institutions have played an instrumental role in reifying this categorization, working to systematically reform knowers classified as having “epistemically disadvantaged identities” in the ideological reflection of the dominant while perpetuating the dangerous classification to justify ongoing re-formation.

Mainstream development discourse assumes a linear trajectory of progress according to Western conceptions and measures of success, and in 1995 Escobar

observed that “reality, in sum, had been colonized by [this] discourse” (5). This narrative, and its consequent forces of physical, spiritual, and symbolic violence continue to reverberate, even after occupying powers relinquished direct control over most of their territories in the postcolonial era. Critical development studies scholar Leslie Chan reminds us that these legacies positioned “former colonial masters as the centres of knowledge production, while relegating former colonies to peripheral roles, largely as suppliers of raw data” (Vega 2018). Formerly colonized or otherwise oppressed regions are peripheralized in the global world order relative to the predominantly North American and Western European core regions that exert outsized influence over global systems.

The direction of the global scholarly communication ecosystem is then unsurprisingly inextricable from the direction of core regions and their ideological foundations in “*Europatriarchal knowledge*, a hierarchy-fixated construct of knowledge that was initiated by elite European men as propaganda to solidify their worldviews on a massive scale” (Salami 2020, 17, emphasis original). The scholarly communication circuit, adapted from Robert Darnton’s (2007) communications circuit modelling the social history of “book people” in the modern period (504), focalizes a closed system of knowledge production and dissemination between the publication regime (Cohen, Cohen, and King 2018), the research community, and academic institutions. The increasingly monolingual scope of this circuit further precludes and occludes a plurality of voices, knowledge, and knowledge ways from modern systems of knowledge production along multiple axes.

Whether they are “constructed as untrustworthy” (Tuana 2006, 13) or their exclusion is not comprehended as a compromise of epistemic resources, knowers from epistemically disadvantaged identities are excluded at all stages of the circuit. Paradoxically, this exclusion subjects participants in the circuit to hermeneutical injustices. According to philosopher Miranda Fricker (2007), such injustices arise when the absence of language and conceptual frameworks creates “a gap in collective interpretive resources” (1) that renders knowers incapable of “making sense of an experience” (3).

Feminist philosopher Kristie Dotson (2014) argues that epistemic oppressions repeatedly “hinder one’s contributions to knowledge production” (116) due to unfounded value judgements. Moreover, refusal to acknowledge the epistemic value of non-dominant knowledge and knowledge sources forecloses possibilities for awareness, uptake, and development of those epistemic resources and impoverishes the landscape for all (Chatman 1999). Oppressions intensified by linguistic injustice cascade into epistemic alienations, which “distor[t]... one’s native way of thinking, and of seeing and speaking of one’s own reality” (Mboa Nkoudou 2020, 32).

Context

Epistemic Injustices in Scholarly Communication

Until recently, epistemic injustices and oppressions were absent from discussions in library and information science. Patin et al. (2020) argue that this longstanding absence has enabled “the annihilation of ways of knowing” (2). The authors (2020) introduce the concepts of epistemic injustice and epistemicide to the field, identifying some of the ways in which these epistemic injustices coalesce and constitute epistemicide—“the killing, silencing, annihilation, or devaluing of a knowledge system” (2).

This introduction of the language of epistemic injustices to LIS allows for a more holistic unpacking of the different forms of injustice and how they operate independent of and in conjunction with each other to oppress certain communities and empower others. A growing body of literature has developed in recent years to address the complex systemic and structural inequities endemic to the scholarly communication ecosystem and to elucidate and imagine more equitable and bibliodiverse paths forward (Albornoz 2017; Beigel 2021; Berger 2021; Giménez Toledo et al. 2019).

In one example, the multidisciplinary team at the Open and Collaborative Science in Development Network, led by Leslie Chan, Angela Okune, Rebecca Hillyer, Denisse Albornoz, and Alejandro Posada (2019), facilitated the development of 12 open science projects in peripheralized regions. Reflections from the project groups focalize the multiplicity of meanings and implications of openness that research teams arrived at with communities, and how local and regional circumstances, historical oppressions, and asymmetrical knowledge systems inflected these definitions.

In their edited volume, Eve and Gray (2020) bring together scholars from around the world to provide a constellation of critical perspectives on open access in relation to colonial legacies, the commercialization of infrastructures, and regional and global networks for sustainable knowledge production and dissemination, among other issues. Where numerous chapters also engage deeply with questions of epistemic injustice, less attention is devoted to the epistemic oppressions incurred by linguistic imbalances and languages of commercialization and metrification.

The Dominance of English in Research and Academia

Tensions and consequences of the dominance of the English language as *lingua franca* and specifically as academic *lingua franca* for communicating information globally have long been discussed in fields other than LIS (Canagarajah 2002; Jenkins 2011;

Crystal 2012; Turner 2018). The propagation of English and the “Europatriarchal” (Salami 2020, 17) episteme that it conveys in academic spaces around the world began with European imperialist projects of the 1600s (Alatas 2003, 600–8).

Establishing schools in the name of the so-called civilizing mission, colonizers systematically overwrote local languages and traditional epistemologies with Europatriarchal paradigms to ostensibly advance communities along a linear Western trajectory—but, crucially, to never fully recognize them as “modern social political subject[s]” (Anderson and Christen 2019, 122). These intentions continue to influence the ideology on which many of our modern, globalized knowledge systems are built (Svenonius 2000, 3; Alatas 2003, 601; Grande 2018; MITLibraries 2018).

Linguistic repercussions accelerated in the twentieth century, as an Anglophone elite in largely white-Western regions and institutions emerged with the rapid rise of the English language as global *lingua franca* and its solidification as global academic *lingua franca* (Crystal 2012; Alhasnawi 2021). The continued dominance of English-speaking core regions in the global intellectual sphere reduces the perceived existence and legitimacy of contributions by non-Anglophone ones, and it also obscures the appropriation of knowledge from these regions—even though they are not exclusively non-white or non-Western (Czerniewicz 2013; Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto 2014; Liu et al. 2018; Irawan et al. 2021).

To be sure, there are practical efficiencies and opportunities with a shared academic language (Alhasnawi 2021). Yet, scholars from across geographic regions and disciplines have also reported significant psychological, linguistic, and resource-based challenges, as well as losses in cultural and linguistic nuance when researching, writing, and publishing in English (Younas et al. 2021; Tomuschat 2017; MoChridhe 2019; Hanauer, Sheridan, and Englander 2019; Alamri 2021; Balula and Leão 2021; Pho and Tran 2016; Ge 2015; Santos and Da Silva 2016; Curry and Lillis 2010; Lillis and Curry 2006). Much of this research focuses on accessing resources for research and writing for English-language publication. There is less discussion on the compounding effects of these challenges across the research cycle or on the epistemic impacts of the supremacy of the English language and Europatriarchal paradigm in scholarly communications (Kovach 2009; Solovova, Santos, and Verissimo 2018). Overlooking these consequences ignores local and regional knowledge sharing practices and research and publishing conditions in non-Anglophone and/or non-Western regions (Collection Development and Equity in the Time of Covid-19 Task Force 2020; Middle East Librarians Association 2020; Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation 2020; Council on East Asian Libraries 2020).

Compounding Forces of Market and Metrics-Based Value

The linguistic divide deepened after World War II, as academic publishing became characterized by highly exploitative market values due to rapid expansion across geographic, disciplinary, and linguistic dimensions. Beginning with Pergamon Press, this logic of accumulation was locked in by Elsevier in 1991, when it acquired the Pergamon empire as part of its mass consolidation strategy (Buranyi 2017; Cohen, Cohen, and King 2018; Shearer et al. 2020, sec. “Limited funding models”). This trend continued and, when the increasingly oligopolistic industry evolved in the 2000s to respond to digital technologies, the resilience of its structure and the ideologies and epistemologies embedded in it ensured that the capitalist logics of the industry adapted in kind.

The resilience of the publishing industry has become increasingly visible in recent years. Major publishers are responding to concerted efforts in core regions to transition to OA by introducing article processing charges and transformative agreements that ensure research funds continue to shore up their revenues. These measures constitute permanent financial outflows from the academic sector in both core and peripheralized regions (Alperin 2019; Babini and Machin-Mastromatteo 2015; Bodó, Antal, and Puha 2020; Shearer and Becerril-García 2021; Berger 2021; Haustein and Butler 2022; Budapest Open Access Initiative 2022).

Financial and linguistic obstacles for researchers are compounded by false correlations between metrics and quality in research evaluations. Bibliometrics were catapulted from librarianship into the research evaluation landscape in the 1960s after the introduction of the Science Citation Index. Through its Journal Impact Factor and related products (Haustein and Larivière 2015), the Index demonstrated how metrics based on the statistical analysis of citation frequencies could be applied on large scales. These and similar metrics became synonymous with objectivity and efficiency, ushering in a form of evaluation in scholarly research that speaks overwhelmingly in the language of quantifiable value, metrics, and rankings.

The ramifications of this language on research innovation, diversity, and relevance, ethical citation practices, research culture, and numerous other areas are widely critiqued (Budapest Open Access Initiative 2022; DORA 2012; European Commission 2021; Haustein and Larivière 2015; Irawan et al. 2021; McKiernan et al. 2019; Moed 2005; Tian, Su, and Ru 2016; Zhang and Sivertsen 2020; Pourret et al. 2022). Critiques also contest the critical factors that are absent in the language of quantifiability, such as the contexts of citations, societal and community impacts, non-scholarly and/or non-indexed outputs, and the burdens of English-language requirements on non-Anglophone scholars.

Research has also explored the linguistic, cultural, and epistemic harms caused by the internationalization of these accounting measures in various disciplines (Irawan et al. 2021; Pourret et al. 2022; Tian, Su, and Ru 2016; Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto 2014; Zhang and Sivertsen 2020). Yet, bibliometrics and other quantitative metrics continue to play an overdetermined role in hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions as well as funding and publication opportunities that influence career and research trajectories. Further examination of how this language of quantifiable evaluation intersects and interacts with the valuing of English as *lingua franca* and the language of market value in the scholarly communications circuit is needed.

Overview of the Article

The role of language in epistemic oppressions cannot be overstated. Linguistic expressions, conditions, and decisions constantly invoke definitions of “value” along ideological, ethical, and epistemic dimensions that define our conceptions of legitimate knowledge. Such configurations are consequential, as “linguistic preferences reflect constellations of power” (Tomuschat 2017, 199). The dangers of retaining present vocabularies and grammars of value in our increasingly globalized research landscape are in urgent need of interrogation. This paper explores relationships between value and scholarly communication along four axes.

Beginning with language itself, *Language Has Value* examines how internationalized publishing and research cultures normalize a monolingual scholarly ecosystem. In an English-centered knowledge sphere, knowledge produced and shared in all other languages is marginalized because of its linguistic presentation rather than its intellectual and social merit. The devaluing of these languages results in a devaluing of the ways of knowing and being entwined in these languages and the people and communities who embody, care for, and practice this knowledge.

With open access expanding, prohibitive economic costs further influence the nature of knowledge in circulation. The section on the *Language of Value* interrogates the commercialized values underpinning mainstream OA movements. Not only have these values allowed terms like *article processing charges* and *transformative agreements* to gain traction and further exclude those outside the mainstream and English-speaking sphere, but they also ensure that well-meaning initiatives like Plan S inadvertently enable these values to persist.

Intertwined with the language of economics is a similarly internationalized language of evaluation, spelled out through metrics like citation counts, impact factors, and publication quotas. *Language of Evaluation* considers how these metrics

operate in tandem with language-based criteria for indexing and publication to force researchers to choose between recognition and relevance.

The view is not entirely bleak, and these articulations of commercial value and quantified evaluation tools are not present in every context. Yet the language and values pervading the mainstream OA movement belie the rich bibliodiversity fostered elsewhere. Exploring some of the tools and infrastructure that resist or opt out of the Europatriarchal paradigm, *Language and Value* considers how changing the language we use to frame value opens up possibilities that are relevant to and respectful of local contexts.

Language Has Value

Demands for linguistic conformity in the scholarly landscape constrain the ways that we receive, interpret, and impart knowledge. The pressure to reformulate thoughts and ideas through the constraints of another language, to meet minimum requirements for participation in the scholarly communication circuit, also dismisses the historical, spatial, and relational contexts that are embedded in language.

At the same time, research that reflects community needs and/or is not published in an English-language “international” journal is automatically assumed less than (Balula and Leão 2021, 92). Researchers engaged in “intense scientific cooperation in other linguistic areas or in multilingual regional areas” (Shearer et al. 2020, sec. “Barriers to bibliodiversity”) are often overlooked entirely. The devaluing of linguistic diversity in a monolingual scholarly landscape has resulted in many communities being unable to access research relevant to their situations (Federation of Finnish Learned Societies et al. 2019). Since “people who speak different languages will pay attention to different things depending on what their language requires them to do” (Boroditsky 2018, 9:44–9:48), monolingualism minimizes broad access to and appreciation of hermeneutical resources. It turns communicative tools into barriers that prevent communities from participating as knowers and invoking the epistemology/ies in which they are situated.

English, the Prerequisite to Participation

English is the dominant *lingua franca* in present global knowledge systems, and one’s perceived and actual fluency in the language and its conventions has powerful consequences at all stages of the research cycle—from a publication’s pre-life in research methods, to its preparation in so-called objective and neutral academic writing, to its afterlife in attributions (Liu et al. 2018; Turner 2018). Researchers who do not know English as their first language associate writing in academic English with stress and anxiety (Hanauer, Sheridan, and Englander 2019). For those unable

to or uncomfortable with writing in the language, literacy brokering services that capitalize on “linguistic aptitude in written communication” (MoChridhe 2019, 424) represent additional financial burdens for many scholars. More concerning is the extent to which literacy brokers can influence the shape and style of the content, as “interventions... often went beyond simple edits to more substantively reshape, reframe, and refocus the content of research” (MoChridhe 2019, 424). The very grammar and stylistic conventions of English, especially academic English, constitute oppression, distorting the ways in which knowledge can be constructed, recognized, produced, and received (Canagarajah 2002; Balula and Leão 2021, 92).

The question of who is allowed to enter “scholarly”¹ discussions in the first place extends beyond the research lifecycle. Epistemic foreclosures start accumulating in early life stages, when the very possibility of accessing, consuming, and contributing knowledge that is treated as legitimate is contingent on fluency in a language that continues to harm and/or represents harm to communities and regions across the world. Participation in research is also contingent on opportunities to access English-language education that equips students to engage in predominantly Europatriarchal research methods and often highly technical and complex ideas. In the absence of equitable access to educational opportunities to learn English (or another hegemonic language), increasing access to English-language education—much like access to research outputs is increasing—may seem an obvious solution. Such a mission, however, is akin to colonial-era practices. It also risks accelerating the obfuscation of non-English languages to the further detriment of local communities and domestic and independent publishers who must compete with the prestige and resources of publishing and research conglomerates.

Bibliodiversity vs. the Europatriarchy

Cognizant of the narrowing linguistic boundaries, a group of independent publishers in Chile formed a collective in the late 1990s to push against the increasingly monolingual publishing system. As the collective took shape, the publishers established the concept of *bibliodiversidad*, or bibliodiversity (Berger 2021, 385). *Bibliodiversidad* imagines a “complex self-sustaining system of storytelling, writing, publishing and other kinds of production” that supports community needs through local and regional networks to “preserve and strengthen plurality and the diffusion of ideas” (International Assembly of Independent Publishers 2014, 4). The multidimensional construct cherishes heterogeneity across languages, media, and formats, as well as research interests, workflows, and contributors (Balula and

1. The questions of what is recognized as and what we are willing to recognize as “scholarly” or “academic” work, and how we value knowledge that falls within and outside of these bounds, are out of scope for this paper but are in equal need of attention. See for example, Kovach (2019).

Leão 2021, 89; Giménez Toledo et al. 2019). In a bibliodiverse ecosystem, networks of knowledge production are relevant to communities and contextually contingent. Networks respond directly to local circumstances to “empower the South in taking ownership of open access for knowledge creation and support through mutual assistance” (Berger 2021, 385). It is likely that such embodied and embedded networks take ownership most effectively when working in their own languages. As Shearer et al. (2020) affirm, “Bibliodiversity, by its nature, cannot be pursued through a single, unified approach” (sec. “Introduction”).

Yet, as the current state of the scholarly publishing landscape reflects, it is precisely a “single, unified approach” to value that governs the breadth and depth (or lack thereof) of contemporary research practices (Larivière, Haustein, and Mongeon 2015). While not comprehensive, statistics from the global serials directory Ulrich’s Web provide critical snapshots of the drastic linguistic imbalance in the formal research ecosystem and therefore the epistemic injustices faced by scholars in the linguistic periphery. On December 7, 2021, the directory logged 47,635 unique active, peer-reviewed electronic and print scholarly journal titles in all languages. Of those, 34,792, or 73 percent, were published in English. From 2015 to 2021, the International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers (2021) further reported that the number of English-language journals indexed in Ulrich’s Web grew at an average annual rate of 2.5 percent, a rate slightly higher than the average of 2.3 percent for journals in all languages in the same period (15).

To control the language is to control how one thinks of and frames knowledge and personal experiences (Bell 2021). The widespread valuing of English is then inextricable from the persistence of Europatriarchy. The Europatriarchal paradigm, as posited by feminist and journalist Minna Salami (2020), interprets knowledge as “a quantifiable thing to be controlled and possessed in vast quantities, at all costs” and that “the purpose of amassing knowledge is ultimately to rank, compete, and dominate” (18). In this formulation, to view knowledge as *sensuous*—as “poetic... a living and breathing entity... kaleidoscopic” (Salami 2020, 15, 21)—is to be at once profoundly ignorant and naïve of the superiority of rationalism and profoundly powerful as a potential threat to the maintenance of the narrative that assigns objectivity its authority.

Europatriarchal knowledge, by contrast, is characterized by “rigid and boxed terms” (Salami 2020, 40) that facilitate uniformity. Europatriarchal knowledge aspires to render knowledge knowable according to its own terms—as an ahistorical “packaged product to passively consume” (Salami 2020, 15)—such that knowability enables dispossession, appropriation, and capture.

The authority of the written word, for instance, is vested in its observable fixity and tangibility that allows claims to be laid.² Modern copyright and intellectual property regimes codify the commodification of knowledge in law by protecting exclusive claims for extended periods to the use and dissemination of knowledge as commercial goods. Laissez-faire regulations on pricing mechanisms further propel this commodification (Scott 2001).

The Slow Violence of a lingua unica

The standardization of English as the dominant and default mode of communication reinforces the epistemological weight of Europatriarchal knowledge and “sustains the political and economic power, hegemony and standards of ‘inequality’” (Alhasnawi 2021, 32). Despite the benefits of a shared language, “the use of English should not be seen as a sole linguistic option, since the need for communicating in a *lingua franca* does not necessarily imply the adoption of a *lingua unica*” (Balula and Leão 2021, 96).

To desire English as a *lingua unica* is to deny that language is socially and culturally contingent. By extension, this denies that “the inherent looseness of translation lends imprecision” (Mboa Nkoudou 2020, 34) to the rendering and communication of knowledges outside of the Europatriarchal view (Balula and Leão 2021, 92). Moreover, it denies the reality that “there are things—concepts, ideas, epistemologies—which cannot be translated. There are some teachings—concepts, ideas, ontologies, thoughts—which should not be translated” (Bell 2021, 11).

Where universalization and standardization constitute conquest through the disavowal of difference and nuance, conquest is “a means of erasing the history of one dynasty or culture by the subsequent regime” (Noble 2018, 140). The propagation of Europatriarchal knowledge as the Procrustean bed obscures and erases the presence and knowledge of other places, peoples, and cultures to the detriment of all.

This proliferation of the English language—both as a construct and of the individual concepts structured and conveyed through it—has proceeded with the same sort of slow violence that environmental humanities scholar Robert Nixon (2011) asserts has fuelled environmental injustices. Both cases are inseparable from ongoing projects of colonial expansion and imperial conquest. Both cases are compounded by the continuation of the other.

Scholar-activist Kanishka Sikri refers to atrocities like “rape or genocide or war” as “fast articulations of violence”; they stand in contrast to, but also occur in concurrence with, the epistemic erasures and oppressions of slow violence

2. Consider also how notions of fixity are associated with legitimacy to justify the dismissal and/or rejection of knowledge in non-written formats and non-European languages. See MacLeod (2021) and Mignolo (1995).

(Knowledge Equity Lab and SPARC 2021). Structural oppression operates through “the everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society... [where] causes are embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols” (Young 1990, as quoted in Kumar and Karusala 2020).

Far from “fast articulations of violence,” these norms and habits are manifestations of slow violence, “difficult to identify and harder still to dislodge... as they become intimate in their articulation... and become traditions” (Anderson and Christen 2019, 119–20). Affirming Young (1990) in their work on citational politics, Kumar and Karasula (2020) assert that “what makes violence a face of oppression is less the particular acts themselves... than the social context surrounding them, which makes them possible and even acceptable.” The prevalence of English linguistic conventions serves to both erase the fluidity and richness of epistemologies outside of the Anglo-Europatriarchal paradigm and obscure the historic and ongoing violence enacted against non-Western communities by Western powers.

Language of Value

With open access movements expanding, prohibitive economic costs further influence the nature of knowledge in circulation. Inspired by the open-source software movement at the turn of the twenty-first century, calls for OA in core regions emerged in direct response to the financial enclosures created by a system intended to circulate non-rivalrous and non-excludable goods but bound by capitalist values (Holmwood 2020). OA was defined in economic terms in the 2002 Budapest Open Access Initiative: “we call on all interested institutions and individuals to help open up access to the rest of this literature and remove the barriers, especially the price barriers, that stand in the way” (para. 2). While a significant declaration, its economic slant limited the possibilities and potential that it could imagine and inspire for OA. Prioritizing the language of market value necessarily deprioritizes other definitions of value and dismisses the contexts in which information is accessed and the knowers who are accessing (or not).

Given the resilience of this epistemically confined system, an uncritical rollout of universalist OA standards risks retaining, even worsening, existing economic and social inequities in knowledge production. Swinging the pendulum along the same ideological axis invariably reifies the Europatriarchal logics of power, possession, and quantification already operationalized in the knowledge commons and the public domain (Christen 2012, 2876–881). Opportunities to develop more holistic and pluralistic knowledge ecosystems would be lost. We gain, instead, new problems that come with the messy work of defining, implementing, and sustaining new models for old structures.

Kimberly Christen (2012) argues that there was a lack of structural critiques around knowledge creation, sharing, and access in early pushes for openness in the English-speaking world. This lack of engagement precluded recognition of the complex colonial and imperial ideologies entrenched in the global knowledge ecosystem. These ideologies were carried forward, in part, through the language of capitalism and market value—“of taking things that live outside the market sphere and declaring their new life as market commodities” (Zuboff 2019, 14).

The persistence of economically oriented terms like *article processing charges* and *transformative agreements* is thus unsurprising. Where the former requires authors to pay publishers a fee to publish OA, effectively “trad[ing] a restriction on who is able to read with a restriction on who is able to author” (Alperin 2019), the latter involves library systems and consortia negotiating to funnel subscription payments towards financing the OA publishing needs of their user communities (ESAC Initiative n.d.). These models introduce a pay-to-publish system without effectively dissuading or dismantling the existing pay-to-access one.

Under the pay-to-access umbrella, libraries continue to grapple with the ever-increasing subscription costs of maintaining access to paywalled literature and backfiles. Pay-to-publish controls participation in a different way. The onus shifts to researchers, whose publication options may depend disproportionately on their ability to pay often exorbitant processing fees that are rarely covered by funding (Berger 2021, 386). For those whose funders require publication in OA journals, payment may be a non-choice. The pay-to-publish model merely distributes a similar or larger financial burden across more stakeholder groups. The transformation that these agreements invoke is a transformation of fee structures that “subordinat[es] the sustainability of research to the sustainability [of] publisher revenues” (Budapest Open Access Initiative 2022). Removing funds from the research cycle undermines the viability of existing non-commercial options (Babini and Machin-Mastromatteo 2015, 480) and the possibility of pivoting and moving permanently toward them.

The sheer unsustainability of this model was uncovered in a recent study on the inequities of article processing charges (Haustein and Butler 2022). The study focuses on funding provided by the Canadian Tri-Agencies and sought to calculate how much public funding went toward article processing charges from 2015–2018. For the roughly 11 000 articles indexed in the Web of Science that acknowledge such funding, information studies researchers Stefanie Haustein and Leigh-Ann Butler estimate that article processing charges amounted to at least \$27.6 million. Globally, for some 560 000 OA articles, they estimate an outflow of \$1.34 billion from research funds to publishers.

This environment also offers fertile grounds for so-called “predatory publishers,” who charge authors to publish their work without adhering to longstanding editorial

principles and practices such as peer review (Berger 2021, 391). A distinction must be made between those publishers who actively engage in the deceptive practices described above and those who were unfairly and falsely labelled “predatory” by librarian Jeffery Beall in his widely circulated and criticized lists. Assessing publishers and journals inconsistently and according to criteria based solely on mainstream publishing practices, Beall’s lists included a disproportionate number of publishers and journals from peripheralized regions.³

Although Beall’s lists have been discontinued, publishers from peripheralized regions continue to feel the egregious epistemic impacts of this label. “Beall tainted the publishers with a conceit of ill-intent, foreclosing the possibility of developmental or capacity issues” (Roh, Inefuku, and Drabinski 2020, 44). Critiquing the fact that publishers from peripheralized regions have been labelled as predatory, Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto (2014) highlight the overlapping and unique predatory characteristics of dominant publishing houses that continue to increase fees for publication and access, and that voraciously acquire independent and small publishers (658).

In either reading, “predatory publishing is a manifestation of failures in scholarly communications” (Berger 2021, 391). The proliferation of exploitative venues is detrimental to scholars from the periphery, who may lack guidance on how to identify and avoid such venues. With few tenable higher-profile options, some may also turn to such venues to meet publication quotas, English-language requirements, and other evaluation criteria (Berger 2021, 391-2). All but a few scholars are “free to read research published in international journals but unable to publish in them” (Shearer and Becerril-García 2021, 5).

Transformative Potential and Limitations

The centrality of commercial language to the mainstream movement threatens to mark the transition as superficial. For instance, the 2018 European-led initiative, Plan S, mandates that all member-funded research be “published in OA Journals, on OA Platforms, or made immediately available through OA Repositories without embargo” (cOAlition S n.d.) from 2021 on. At first glance, this mission appears game-changing. And in some ways, it is. Plan S outlines commitments to reduce the “double payments” (cOAlition S 2019, 6) that authors, funders, and institutions make to fund research, access fees, and OA publishing.

That, however, is where the game stops changing. Plan S pivots on article processing charges and transformative agreements (cOAlition S 2019, 2), both of which are monetary outflows from immediate and potential research funds and

3. The preposition “from” rather than “in” was deliberately chosen to reflect ongoing practices of extractive and objectifying parachute research (Adame 2021; Zin-Maung-Maung-Thein and Zaw 2021).

retain the commercial and transactional paradigm that views knowledge and research as, first and foremost, marketable commodities. Although funder signatories agree to stop covering processing fees for articles published in transformative journals after December 31, 2024 (to incentivize publishers to fully transition from subscription-based publications to OA), Plan S assures publishers that lost subscription revenues will be recouped as funders “reinvest those funds to support Open Access publishing” (5).

The cOAlition (2019) further urges “publishers [and institutions and consortia to] enter into transformative agreements globally in all countries” (5), solidifying transformative agreements as the central pillar of the Plan. The desire of the cOAlition to internationalize the language of transformative agreements also falsely assumes uniformity in research cultures and funding and publishing landscapes around the world.

In Japan, for example—an economically core region that is peripheralized linguistically and is also culturally distinct from Western core regions—the potential for transformative agreements to play a central role in the local research ecosystem appears to be lower. In April 2022, the Japanese Science and Technology Agency released a revised Policy on Open Access to Research Publications and Research Data Management mandating that all agency-funded research should be openly available within 12 months of publication. The Agency provides a substantial proportion of research funding in Japan (in 2021, the agency funded over 10 percent of academic research; (Salter 2022)), as well as publishing, journal hosting, repository, and preprint services. In its policy, the Agency (2022) gives precedence to depositions in institutional repositories under the green OA model, although it also allows for publication “in journals committed to Open Access” (1-2). For Japan, this is a logical move. As of May 2022, Japan has almost 700 repositories registered in OpenDOAR, second only to the United States. Transformative agreements are, in fact, relatively rare in Japan. As Salter (2022) further notes, softer rules of engagement and different relationships between funders, publishers, and researchers mean that the aggressive approach of Plan S is not compatible with the Japanese OA movement.

A passing remark in Plan S recognizes “the importance of a diversity of business models, including Open Access publication venues that do not charge Article Processing Charges” (cOAlition S 2019, 5). Yet, principles or guidance about green and diamond or platinum models, which involve no processing or subscription fees to read or publish, are absent. By offering only general encouragement for deposition (3), the cOAlition (2019) suggests that these models are less viable paths forward.

This dismissal is backed by the semantic constraint of “business models” that confine scholarly publishing models to transactional ones. Even as one route to

compliance involves authors depositing the version of record or accepted manuscript into a repository, researchers are limited to repositories that meet criteria defined in the Plan (8). Plan S thus falls short of meaningfully disrupting the current publishing workflow, instead catering to the existing commercial, English-language landscape.

While Plan S also introduces transparency reporting requirements for cost models and other journal information, it is unclear whether publishers with fewer human and financial resources have the capacity to undertake this work and how non-reporting might impact their presence. For researchers, the risks of non-compliance are far more explicit. Potential sanctions include “withholding grant funds, discounting non-compliant publications as part of a researcher’s track record in grant applications, and/or excluding non-compliant grant holders from future funding calls” (cOAlition S 2019, 6). OA may be closer associated with administrative burdens than a movement intended to enrich research; it deepens barriers to participation and recognition for peripheralized scholars (Irawan et al. 2021, 655; Berger 2021, 388).

Moreover, where Plan S presents its version of OA as “Foundational to the Scientific Enterprise” (cOAlition S, n.d.) but suggests no paradigm shift away from corporatized publishing infrastructures, Plan S remains rhetorically and epistemically caught in the Europatriarchal myth that the same limited selection of journals represents the “whole of world science” (Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto 2014, 661). This (wilful) ignorance echoes that of the preamble of the original Budapest Initiative, which suggested OA to be a profoundly novel method for worldwide knowledge sharing at the time it was written. The initiative has since acknowledged in its 20th Anniversary Recommendations (2022) that “viable alternatives have long existed, but they are systematically under-noticed, under-discussed, under-appreciated, under-funded, and under-used” (sec. 3).

Whether an inability or unwillingness to seek alternate hermeneutical resources or an incapacity to recognize the possibility, existence, or accomplishments of such alternates, the cOAlition pre-empted the radical and revolutionary capacities of Plan S to imagine OA beyond instant and free access to research outputs for public consumption within mainstream publishing models. This is not to say that Plan S cannot or will not lead to positive outcomes or change, but we cannot treat the Plan, transformative agreements, or any other initiative or concept as a comprehensive solution with universal application.

Should peripheralized regions continue to feel that they are academically dependent on core regions or that their position on the world stage is contingent on mirroring these practices, subsequent moves to adopt OA in the same vein as Plan S will propagate the purportedly universal Europatriarchal standards and definitions established by the core.

Language of Evaluation

Intertwined with the language of economics is a similarly internationalized language of evaluation, spelled out through metrics like citation counts, impact factors, and publication quotas. Pressures at individual, institutional, and national levels to participate on the global stage according to Western standards coalesce in the overdetermined sway of the English language, “Western research agendas” (Li and Yang 2019, 26), and a language of value that props up labels of “world-class” and “excellence” rather than local relevance and applicability (Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto 2014; Beigel 2021).

The framing of value as “visibility and prestige” (Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto 2014, 650) increasingly bleeds into research assessment frameworks and policies for academic promotion and tenure issued by institutions and governments across peripheralized regions (e.g., in Indonesia, Irawan et al. 2021; in Latin America, Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto 2014; in China, Tian, Su, and Ru 2016). Research occurs in a framework that prioritizes quantity over quality and competition over collaboration, with each project tending toward an individualist pursuit for acknowledgement at the expense of social value, local and collective relevance, and innovative intellectual pursuits (Grande 2018; Albornoz 2017).

The Epistemic Marketplace

Since this internationalized language has been presented as the standard for admission to and participation on the world stage, peripheralized regions may feel pressure to adopt (strategically or not) such measures in national and institutional policies for research, tenure, and promotion evaluation. The false association of journal impact with article quality transforms scholarly publishing into an epistemic marketplace, with journals framed through index rankings, citation-based metrics,⁴ and article processing charges (Mboa 2020, 29) or subscription fees. From the Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication and San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment to the Hong Kong Principles and Paris Call on Research Assessment, the global research community continues to call for more specific and relevant metrics and equal recognition of diverse research outputs and activities. Yet, journal brands and reputation continue to weigh heavily on individuals, institutions, and academic evaluative structures.

At the same time, this language of evaluation operates in tandem with the language of economic value. It guarantees the continued diversion of research funds

4. The concept of citation-based metrics detracts from the political acts of acknowledging the lineage of one's scholarship and positionality and recognizing the work of other scholars through attributions, as well as the epistemic significance of engaging deeply and critically with the literature (Ahmed 2013; Kwon 2022; Kumar and Karusala 2021; Anderson and Christen 2019).

to commercial publishers that own journals of international renown. As research is tailored to essentially “subsidise the research of the global north” (Czerniewicz 2013), knowledge ways and linguistic channels that may otherwise have been pursued are deprioritized and exposed to the slow violence of neglect and deterioration.

As social anthropologist Francis Nyamnjoh (2010) writes about knowledge production in Africa, “African scholars face a critical choice between sacrificing relevance for recognition, or recognition for relevance” (69), a tension felt by scholars in many peripheralized regions. The pursuit of recognition may allow these scholars to enter the mainstream ecosystem and move toward perceived legitimacy (Grande 2018). Yet, this choice also entails a loss of potential linguistic and intellectual hermeneutic resources for local and regional communities—resources that are quite literally lost in translation (Mboa Nkoudou 2020, 34).

In China, this tension manifested in policy. From the departmental to national level, internationalized practices have been deployed to strategically advance research productivity, which was considered “central to economic competitiveness” (Tian, Su, and Ru 2016, 1). Before national regulations were introduced in 2018 to reform research assessment and retain research outputs domestically, metrics were so severely regarded that the practice was dubbed “SCI worship” (Zhang and Sivertsen 2020, 2; the Science Citation Index is now the Web of Science).

Interviews by Tian, Su, and Ru (2016) with tenure-track lecturers at one institution have affirmed the bind that such “bean-counting” policies put early career scholars in. For these lecturers, tenure was contingent on a minimum six publications in qualifying journals within three years; a failure to fulfill the quota would result in contract termination (4).

Linguistic Costs to Entering the Marketplace

Legitimacy—by virtue of impact and discoverability—is largely governed by the presence of publications in databases such as the Web of Science. Gaining entry to these platforms, however, requires more than just producing and publishing research. While natural and applied sciences researchers in China now contribute the most scholarship to journals like those included in Ulrich’s Web, less than 2 percent of journals indexed in Clarivate’s Web of Science citation database are published in China (Zhang and Sivertsen 2020, 2).⁵ Where research in China is largely published

5. As pointed out by Leslie Chan during a discussion on “Citation Justice and Reflections on Knowledge Equity,” learning management systems and research technologies such as those provided by Clarivate are increasingly owned or backed by private equity firms. This not only ties the knot between languages of market value and quantified evaluation metrics, but also opens the door to more pervasive marketization of research. This discussion was part of the Knowledge Equity and Justice Spring Seminar, convened in May 2022 by Dr. Stacy Allison-Cassin and co-sponsored by the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto and SPARC.

in Chinese-language journals, this seemingly tokenistic inclusion delegitimizes the majority of non-English journals through non-recognition in the international arena—an attitude that percolates at the domestic level. At the same time, the broader pool of research is obfuscated writ large by “consolidat[ing] the erroneous impression that these scholars are undertaking little of value, have little to contribute to global knowledge and are reliant on the intellectual capacity of the global north” (Czerniewicz 2013).

An examination of Web of Science policies, however, reveals that the representation (or lack thereof) of journals published in China and elsewhere is not due to tokenism but systemic deterrents against non-English materials. Regardless of the language of the publication, serials must meet the following criteria—among others—to be considered for inclusion in the index: “the journal must provide an accurate, comprehensible English language translation of all article titles. Scholarly articles [and conference proceedings] must have abstracts, and those abstracts must be translated to English” (Clarivate n.d.-b, n.d.-c). For books, preference is given to those published in English, but exceptions are made for non-English books “if they are of interest to a sufficiently broad research community” (Clarivate n.d.-a); how “sufficient interest” is defined, determined, and measured is not immediately clear. For all formats, the platform requires that reference lists and author information be “published in Roman script to allow rapid, accurate indexing, and easy comprehension by our global users” (Clarivate n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c).

The linguistic and epistemic consequences of providing English-language abstracts are illuminated by linguists Joana Vieira Santos and Paulo Nunes Da Silva. Studying over 130 English-language abstracts from the Portuguese linguistics community published between 2001 and 2010, Santos and Da Silva (2016) found a decrease in distinctively Portuguese linguistic devices of “personal forms, long sentences, subordinate constituents, and heavy subjects” in earlier abstracts. This correlated with a turn toward “an international text model for the genre abstract” in later abstracts, marked by an increase in “impersonal features, evidentiality markers, less-complex sentences, and a slightly different selection of contents, notably by highlighting the claims” (12).

To fulfill institutional policies and requirements for funding, job security, and promotions, researchers are “factually compelled to express themselves in English” (Tomuschat 2017, 227) to meet minimum requirements for consideration in international journals and databases. Researchers are then “factually compelled” to alienate themselves from their epistemic labour and contributions through the processes of translation.

Moreover, the claim by Clarivate that presenting references and author names in Roman script enables more efficient and effective search and discovery obscures more than it reveals. Where many digital technologies are oriented for Roman scripts, and the English language even more so, this stance prioritizes technical efficiency and disregards the linguistic and political implications of Romanization. The harm is especially acute for those who are not familiar with Romanizations of their language. In the absence of Romanization standards, individuals and organizations are also deprived of the chance to determine how their names are translated, transcribed, or transliterated in reference lists and interpreted downstream as citations. These practices divest researchers of the agency to determine their professional identity, and inconsistencies result in diluted metrics for research impact and evaluation (Arastoopoor & Ahmadasab 2018).

It's a Small "International" World

The reality obscured by the "international" qualifier is the opposite of its suggestion. As Piron et al. (2017, as quoted and translated in Nobes 2017, as quoted in Bali et al. 2018) observe, for those who support "the proclaimed universalism of Western science... the invisibility of a publication in their numerical reference space (located in the centre of the world-system) is equivalent to its non-existence" (sec. ii, para. 3). In striving to control the flow of scholarly knowledge via the English language and, by extension, its ideological and epistemic investments, the ecosystem maintained by the core constitutes a relatively small world (Chatman 1999).

This small world will be sustained so long as English trends toward *lingua unica* and research infrastructures in peripheralized regions remain underdeveloped and/or trivialized. The myth that research published in so-called international, English-language journals constitutes "the whole of world science, and, as such, [is] indispensable" (Vessuri, Guédon, and Cetto 2014, 661) proliferates. This myth is fortified by the reality that half of all scholarly output is published in these journals and the publishers of these journals are based in the Netherlands, United Kingdom, and United States (Zhang and Sivertsen 2020, 2). Four of the five biggest academic publishers are headquartered in these countries, with the fifth based in Germany (Larivière, Haustein, and Mongeon 2015).

Value is vested overwhelmingly in voices that produce at the intersections of academic English, Western research interests, and quantifiable impact (Shearer and Becerril-García 2021). The implications of this valuation, amplified by the inadequacy of journal impact factors, reverberate across the scholarly communication circuit. Publisher and editor perceptions of citable topics and articles that will support their impact factors influence funding priorities, research topics, and library acquisitions,

and “unfashionable disciplines and approaches... are structurally disadvantaged by these dynamics” (SPARC 2021, 40).

International then refers to *Europatriarchal*, and research quality and impact are scoped only through quantity and without consideration for the knowledge inequities that such ambitions exacerbate. The core formulation of OA thus “continues to operate under the same values and structures of the pre-crisis era, albeit with new tools and norms to revitalise its credibility” (Okune 2019, as quoted in Shearer and Becerril-García 2021, 5).

Epistemic authority is limited to those researchers, fields of study, and publications deemed “international,” comprehensible, and therefore relevant enough to gain access to and visibility on these mainstream platforms. Individual scholars who must conform and perform so as not to perish are deeply afflicted by constellations of epistemic, linguistic, financial, and sociocultural injustice.

Language and Value

The view is not entirely bleak, and these articulations of commercial value and quantified evaluation tools are not present in every context. Yet the language and values pervading the mainstream OA movement belie the rich bibliodiversity fostered elsewhere. Changing the language we use to frame value opens up possibilities that are relevant to and respectful of local contexts.

Digital technologies have facilitated the internationalization of the scholarly communication ecosystem, and the detrimental impacts of this commercial crisis are felt almost everywhere. At the same time, it is crucial to remember that commercialization is not fundamentally shaping the research landscape in all regions; “global standards were not adopted as massively and passively as imagined, but rather had an unequal incidence according to the history and state of each national field” (Beigel 2021, 4). This iteration of the open movement emerged in response to the particularities of the scholarly publishing system nurtured in a specific area.

The Anglophone enclosure engendered by linguistic tricks and historical legacies facilitates this imagined trend, which upholds a complex array of epistemic oppressions against regional OA publishing approaches. These models are committed to a contextually contingent praxis grounded in community relevance and the positioning of knowledge and knowledge infrastructures as a public good (Shearer and Becerril-García 2021, 6). These are precisely the practices that foster bibliodiversity by “providing space to support, expand and value local knowledge” (Berger 2021, 398), including local dialects, Indigenous languages, and situated

and embodied knowledge. Such a philosophy affords an epistemic plurality that is untenable within monolingual, profit-driven, and all-consuming infrastructures.

In Latin America, this plural and multi-scalar approach traces back to the 1940s, with various regional systems enriched by national nodes to increase knowledge sharing and visibility (Beigel 2021; Babini and Machin-Mastromatteo 2015). This culminated in the 1990s in a preliminary OA publishing environment developed by public universities and strengthened considerably in subsequent years by such initiatives as Latindex, SciELO, and Redalyc.

These non-commercial and regional infrastructures provide critical journal production and knowledge discovery services like indexing, hosting, and full-text archiving to support green and platinum OA publishing for Latin American research outputs in Portuguese and Spanish, as well as English (Babini and Machin-Mastromatteo 2015). A similar non-profit system emerged in Indonesia in the 1970s, with journals maintained by the scholarly community through institutional funding and published predominantly in Indonesian and Arabic (Irawan et al. 2021).

In both cases, financial and linguistic barriers are non-issues in the publishing process, allowing researchers to engage local epistemic resources fully and focus on topics relevant to and beneficial for their communities. In both cases, the future of these systems is threatened by institutional and national policies that increasingly codify internationalized measures for research evaluation and assessment and attempts from the publishing oligopoly to intervene and co-opt the market (Babini and Machin-Mastromatteo 2015; Beigel 2021; Irawan et al. 2020).

Putting it into Practice

Maintaining and sustaining a bibliodiverse and equitable research landscape entails, in part, integrating, representing, and embodying community interests as they evolve. The following are just a few examples of such community-oriented technologies and practices, created by and with Indigenous communities. These efforts strive to empower communities to assert their own terms of engagement and to directly critique and/or refute the perpetuation of extractive, colonial logics that have historically violated community protocols through intellectual and cultural appropriations, which were made invisible by the intellectual property rights regime.

The Mukurtu CMS is a digital platform designed in 2007 by the Warumungu people in Tennant Creek, Australia and Kimberly Christen (2012). The platform supports community archiving that honours cultural protocols and local social relations. In the Mukurtu model, epistemic resistance to Western definitions of open access as unfettered access manifests through customized user privileges. Allowing

communities to define granular user profiles and permissions engages a politics of refusal that demands honouring relational and Indigenous knowledge. Destabilizing normalized notions of openness allows for the development of community-informed and adaptable infrastructure and architecture that privilege the knowledge, needs, and concerns of those most impacted by the research and collections.

Developed by the Local Contexts organization, Traditional Knowledge Labels and Biocultural Labels for Indigenous knowledge and genetic, biological, and genomic resources and data are similarly customizable through community consultation. The former are presented in digital cultural heritage and knowledge contexts within and external to Indigenous communities and the latter for research collaborations (Montenegro 2019; Local Contexts n.d.). Also focusing on Traditional Knowledge (TK), Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCE), and Genetic Resources, the World Intellectual Property Organization (2020) is consulting with Indigenous and local communities to adapt existing intellectual property components, with the goal of ensuring “the intellectual innovation and creativity embodied in TK and TCEs are not wrongly used” (20).

The CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance (Research Data Alliance International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group 2019) advocate for equitable design in open data and open science initiatives that accounts for “power differentials and historical contexts” (1). These principles advocate for recognizing and abiding by Indigenous rights, interests, and voices throughout the research process. Disrupting Europatriarchal narratives of how knowledge should be used, accessed, and valued is crucial. As Salami (2020) writes, “when you change the dominant narrative, everything changes along with it” (20). To change the narrative, we must change the language.

Looking beyond Indigenous contexts, the Open Journal Systems (OJS) open-source software developed in 2002 by the Public Knowledge Project “has enabled researchers around the world to participate, engage, and enrich the bibliodiversity” of the scholarly communication ecosystem (Huskisson 2023). With multilingual support and integration with global indexing services, the journal management system lowers financial and technical barriers for publishers and institutions globally to publish and disseminate research in a manner most appropriate to their contexts and locations. The open-source nature also invites community engagement with software development, ensuring that the system continues to meet the needs of a community that now spans 60 languages and more than 145 countries (Huskisson 2023).

As we imagine new and revised futures for openness, it is critical that we resist moves to internationalize systems that emerged in direct response to particular economic and sociocultural orientations and particular historical contexts. Local

and Indigenous scholars and communities around the world continue to assert that openness can and does re/constitute violence, material and otherwise (Hudson 2021; Albornoz 2019; Research Data Alliance International Indigenous Data Sovereignty Interest Group 2019). Respecting local decisions to refuse and withhold information does not preclude holding space to acknowledge the existence and value of knowledge that is privately held by individuals or communities.

For historically peripheralized communities generally, “exposure—online and otherwise—is often a dangerous thing” (Canadian Writing Research Collaboratory, n.d.). The risk of persecution resulting from broadcasting sensitive information and vulnerable moments that were never intended for public audiences is always already there. As intersectional feminist Tara Robertson (2016) wrote on ethics in digitization, “just because you can, doesn’t mean you should”; just because we could make all information open and accessible online, does not mean that we should.

At the conceptual level, this requires critiquing and challenging the language we currently use to think about and value knowledge. The role of language in shaping how we conceive of and value knowledge, knowledge ways, and knowers cannot be overstated. As a discursive exercise, co-opting, inverting, and repurposing terms and definitions at once denies Europatriarchal veils of fixity in language and written forms and creates spaces to imagine languages that could construct other paths forward.

Considering another concept, how might knowledge be understood if we were to separate conceptualizations of information, access, and value from rhetorics of economics and commercialism? Where Dave Ellenwood (2020) defines “information privilege” as differential access to information driven predominantly by “profit motives,” information privilege in the core OA movement is firmly rooted in the Europatriarchal legacies of property and ownership that assume the openness of knowledge as a default. The impulse to open everything to everyone all the time allows logics of accumulation and *terra nullius* to further encroach on intangible and non-fixed spaces (Anderson and Christen 2019, 121).

But what if we decoupled “privilege” from its economic associations and reframed “information privilege” as differential access that is tied to moral and ethical responsibilities to treat the knowledge shared with respect and integrity? Such a definition allows us to consider when it is appropriate for access to be open by default and when it should be a privilege to access and hold. Just as there is knowledge that should not be translated, there is knowledge for which unlimited access should not be granted.

Conclusion

To break away from infrastructures and standards instituted by the core is to break open and hold space for excluded and peripheralized communities, epistemologies, and languages to revitalize and flourish on their own terms. To do otherwise would be to recapitulate the harms of present and past mainstream systems (Mboa Nkoudou 2020, 33), for to value a singular language is to give space to only one epistemology and the knowledge and knowledge ways that its linguistic and epistemic lenses affirm.

A shared language of principles that can frame open practices and guide the development of locally adaptable governance policies for publishing, access, academic evaluation, and other interconnecting structures is urgently needed to nurture scholarly communication systems that centre bibliodiversity. The Open and Collaborative Science in Development Network has already begun such work to create a sustainable and equitable framework of openness (Chan 2018, slide 28; OCSDNet, n.d.). Examining infrastructural issues, the 20th Anniversary Recommendations of the Budapest Open Access Initiative (2022) identifies additional areas in urgent need of care and further points of consideration.

While only one definition of openness in relation to one definition of OA is explored here, there is an equally urgent need to break “open” from its mainstream binary confines (Shearer and Becerril-García 2021, 6). A plurality of possibilities is needed to divest research practices of their exploitative and extractive roots (Albornoz 2017) and resituate knowledge production and knowledge about, by, and for communities within their linguistic, epistemic, and sociocultural contexts. At the same time, these issues should be considered alongside the uptake and absorption of knowledge shared through OA. More equitable representations of and access to knowledge must be matched with relevant and equitable infrastructures for meaningful knowledge dissemination and use (Bodó, Antal, and Puha 2020).

Yet, even as we know that “the world is suffering from biases in knowledge,” we must reckon with “the even deeper reason for inequality... that our conceptualization of knowledge only permits bias as a way of relating to it” (Salami 2020, 32). Resistance to and reflection on biases can be built into process. Space can be made for the slow and messy work of care, critical reflexivity, and joy, “an inner quality that is itself political in nature... because to thrive under a system of oppression requires such intentionality” (Salami 2020, 78).

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