Recommendations of the NISO/ALPSP Working Group on Versions of Journal Articles

In line with the Working Group's charge, the JAV Technical WG submits the following:

- recommended terms and definitions for journal article versions
- a narrative that explains the background to our project and the rationale for our recommended terms and definitions
- a set of use cases showing how our recommended terms could apply
- comments received from the JAV Review Group to an earlier Technical WG submission, and the Technical WG's responses

We propose that the terms as defined be promulgated by NISO/ALPSP to the full journal article stakeholder community (authors, readers, libraries, publishers, aggregators, archives, repositories, research institutions, funding agencies, and service providers such as search engines and link resolvers).

Terms and Definitions

We propose that metadata be associated with each document object designating its status as one of the following:

"Author's Original"

Definition: A version of a journal article that is considered by the author to be of sufficient quality to be submitted for review by a second party. This review may be prior to any formal review for publication. The author accepts full responsibility for the article. May have a version number or datestamp. Content and layout as set out by the author.

Notes:
1. In all definitions, the singular "Author" includes the plural "Authors". For multi-authored works, one author (the "corresponding author") takes responsibility for submitting the article for review and dealing with later stages such as proofs.
2. We propose "Original" rather than "Draft" because "Draft" implies incompleteness, whereas an Author's Original (in our terminology) defines the point at which an article is deemed good enough by the author to be released for review.
3. This stage is *sometimes* described as a "personal version", a "draft", or a "preprint", but these terms are not synonymous.

"Accepted Manuscript"

Definition: The version of a journal article that has been accepted for publication in a journal. A second party (the "publisher" – see "Version of Record" below for

definition) takes responsibility for the article. Content and layout as submitted by the author.

Notes:
1. Acceptance must follow some review process, even if limited to a single decision point about whether to publish or not. We recommend that there should be a link from the Accepted Manuscript to the journal's website that describes its review process.
2. If the Accepted manuscript is processed in such a way that the content and layout is unchanged (e.g. by scanning or converting directly into a PDF), this does not alter its status as an AM. This will also apply to "normalized" files where, for example, an author's Word file is automatically processed into some standardized form by the publisher. The content has not changed so this essentially constitutes a shift of format only, and our terms are format-neutral.
3. This stage is also known as "Author's Manuscript" by, for example, the NIH, but we think that the key point is the acceptance of the manuscript by a second party. Elsevier refers to it as "Author's Accepted Manuscript". SHERPA/RoMEO refer to it as "Postprint", but this term is counterintuitive since it implies that it refers to a version that comes after printing.

"Proof"

Definition: A version of a journal article that is created as part of the publication process. This includes the copy-edited manuscript, galley proofs (i.e. a typeset version that has not been made up into pages), page proofs, and revised proofs. Some of these versions may remain essentially internal process versions, but others are commonly released from the internal environment (e.g. proofs are sent to authors) and may thus become public, even though they are not authorised to be so. Content has been changed from Accepted Manuscript; layout is the publisher's.

Notes:
1. We recommend "Proof" since this is commonly taken to refer to process stages between accepted manuscript and publication.

"Version of Record"

Definition: A version of a journal article that has been made available by any organization that acts as a publisher by formally and exclusively declaring the article "fit for publication". This includes any "early release" articles that are formally identified as being published before the compilation of a volume issue.

Notes:
1. Also known as the definitive, authorised, formal or published version, although these terms may not be synonymous.
2. The VoR may exist in more than one location (e.g. a publisher's website, an aggregator site, and one or more repositories), i.e. there may be more than one *copy* of a VoR but there is only one *version* of a VoR.
3. The VoR may exist in more than one format.

"Corrected Version of Record"

Definition: A version of the Version of Record of a journal article in which errors in the VoR have been corrected. The errors may be author errors, publisher errors, or other processing errors.

Notes: See below under Enhanced Version of Record.

"Enhanced Version of Record"

Definition: A version of the Version of Record of a journal article that has been updated or enhanced by the provision of supplementary material.

Notes:
1. An update is different from a correction. With the latter, the content in the VoR is incorrect at the time of publication and is corrected. This is the equivalent of an erratum or corrigendum. With the former, the VoR is correct at the time of publication but may be amended in the future due to new information or insight.
2. If supplementary material is *linked* to the VoR rather than being part of the VoR content, changes to the supplementary material would not constitute an Enhanced VoR if the link itself is unchanged. If the link itself changes, this would constitute an Enhanced VoR because it is an update to the content of the VoR, not an update to material that sits outside the VoR. Similarly, if the destination of an embedded link changes, this would not constitute a Corrected or Enhanced VoR since the VoR itself has not changed.
3. If a party other than the publisher amends a Version of Record, this would not constitute a formal Corrected or Enhanced VoR.. We recommend that the metadata that accompanies a Corrected or Enhanced Version of Record specifies who has made the update (with the default being the publisher), what was changed, and a link to the original Version of Record.

Background and Rationale

Our work plan was as follows:

1. Creation of use cases to identify the most common journal article life cycles.
2. Analysis of use cases to determine common life cycle stages.
3. Selection of preferred vocabulary for the most common life cycle stages.
4. Development of appropriate metadata to identify each variant version and its relationship to other versions, in particular the definitive, fully functional published version.
5. Establishment of practical systems for ensuring that the metadata is applied by authors or repository managers and publishers.

We spent some time considering abstract data models and the attributes that could apply to various versions of a journal article. (The website at http://www.niso.org/committees/Journal_versioning/JournalVer_comm.html contains a full set of minutes and documents.)

We decided to focus on the following key points:

1. Our brief was limited in scope to *journal articles* – even so, we have recognized the possible and important, if not frequent, relationships between journal articles and other scholarly document types (such as working papers, conference papers, book chapters, wikis, blogs, etc.). Rather than creating a full set of semantics and proposed metadata disambiguating these document types, we focused on the minimum necessary to show *relationship* between an instance of these document types and one or more journal articles. Of course, some of these other document types will be similar enough to journal articles to be able to use the same (or similar) semantics; others will not.

2. In most cases we believe relationship needs to be codified through the retrospective act of including an unambiguous reference or link within the metadata of a "previous" version to the version of record. Although this act creates a high and potentially onerous standard of performance for some, enabling it through standard metadata and semantics and its promulgation as a best practice is crucial for establishing the relationships that the use cases suggest are necessary.

3. We decided to concentrate on a reasonably high-level set of semantics – let's say the phylum rather than the species. We believe that these high-level terms give sufficient distinction for 80% of article versions – and distinction where it most matters to the reader and secondarily to the author or the publisher.

4. Each term identifies a significant value-added "state change" in the progress of a journal article from origination to publication. Four of the versions (Author's Original; Proof; Corrected Version of Record; Enhanced Version of Record) may have a number of iterative stages. We have not attempted to identify these stages, although datestamps, version numbers and metadata records may be use to differentiate them. Two of the versions (Accepted Manuscript; Version of Record) represent fixed stages. An Author's Original that is accepted for publication becomes an Accepted Manuscript at the point of acceptance. A Proof that is corrected and published becomes a Version of Record.

5. In our first set of recommendations, which were reviewed by the JAV Review group, we had proposed only one stage after the VoR – the "Updated Version of Record". However, we received strong representation that this was an over-simplification, and that it was important for users of versions to know whether an update was a correction or an enhancement.

6. See the attached figure for a graphical representation.

7. We have attached a set of use cases that show the application of our terminology (Appendix 1).

John Ober, California Digital Library
Evan Owens, Portico
T. Scott Plutchak, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Bernie Rous, ACM
Claire Bird (*née* Saxby), Oxford University Press
Andrew Wray, The Institute of Physics