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Editorial Note: ICADLA 2

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EDITORIAL NOTE: ICADLA-2

The overriding policy in editing these papers, as for the proceedings of ICADLA-1 in 2009, has been to retain as much as possible the original "voices" of the contributors, all of whom have presented and written in English although one knows that in Africa this is seldom the first language of most contributors. In the evocative words of a Languages Department poster at my university some years ago, these papers and presentations richly "speak in many Englishes". In 2010 when I edited ICADLA-1 I quoted *The Economist style guide:* "If the prose of our Tokyo correspondent is indistinguishable from the prose of our Nairobi correspondent, readers will feel they are being robbed of variety ... so long as the prose is good, editors should exercise suitable self-restraint." [1] So in editing ICADLA-2 I found myself again engaging with the English of many African countries as well as that of Arabic and European presenters. It has been a fascinating reflection of the development of English, and a rich international professional journey.

Most of the ICADLA-2 presentations are quite formal accounts of projects and personal points of view are less in evidence. Twenty PowerPoint presentations were accompanied by lengthy papers, which represented substantial creative and professional work. Only 10 were presented through PowerPoint alone, although perhaps in the digital context one might have expected this to have been more the case. The art of writing and speaking only from an illustrated or heading points framework for a presentation is challenging, however, and in the "publish or perish" climate of the present day, academics and professionals are understandably reluctant to abandon the traditional printed paper format. There were a few PowerPoint presentations which presenters had prepared by downloading substantial and often dense portions of a formal text – not always the easiest for listening or editing!

As in 2009 for ICADLA-1, the texts were not specifically peer-reviewed for content and style, and some presentations were sent in their final form after ICADLA-2 had taken place on 17-18 November 2012. There were indeed some papers which I should have liked to refer back to their authors for clarification beyond the power of an editor but, overall, the papers, with very few exceptions, stood up far better to rigorous editing than was the case for ICADLA-1. Most presenters had also clearly taken note of the Guidelines for authors that were sent out with the acceptance of proposals.

All presenters submitted electronic texts. They reflect "spellcheck" suggestions, and occasionally confusing choices of words, which is the outcome of machine checking. UK English is the South African standard, and spelling was editorially modified to align it with current accepted practice and spelling conventions. Some of the variations in usage are words that end in "ise/ize" and compound words including hyphenated words, as well as punctuation conventions. The use of "ise/ize" has an interesting history but is not, as popularly believed in some circles, the difference between "superior" British usage and "inferior" American usage; it has to do with the original derivation and structure of the word. I have therefore preferred "digitization" throughout, and other similar "ize' forms where appropriate.

To standardize the style of papers as far as possible, the 2001 *New Oxford Dictionary of English*[2] *(NODE)* was used as spelling and usage authority, supplemented by *The Economist*

[1] Grimond, John (2010). "A note on editing", in *The Economist style guide,* 10th ed., London, Profile Books, p.5

[2] *The New Oxford Dictionary of English* (2001), edited by Judy Pearsall. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

style guide[3] and Robert Allen's *Common errors and problems in English*.[4] Internal consistency within a paper was maintained as far as possible.

I have edited as lightly as possible, consistent with incorporating accepted English spelling, punctuation, grammar, expression and stylistic practices. The record of *what* the contributors said has seemed to me more important than making detailed amendments to *how* they said it. I hope therefore that each presenter will find his/her "voice" recognisable, though the text may reflect editorial changes in the interests of accuracy, clarity and smooth reading.

Authors are responsible for their own content and for references to any sources they have used. Using Google, I checked references and in some cases actual terminology. I made corrections where I could, to make sources traceable, and names and other technical terms accurate. Where actual or potential copyright material is used, particularly illustrative material in slide show presentations, presenters should always ensure that permission to reproduce and acknowledge such material is granted, or is not required. The convenors, the sponsoring organizations and the editor can take no responsibility for the content or opinions expressed in this compilation of presentations: those are the sole responsibility of the individual authors and presenters. We apologise if, inadvertently, unattributed or copyright material without permission has been included.

I should like to express particular thanks to my colleague Michele Pickover for compiling the presentations in their various versions, the abstracts and the biographical notes on presenters. I hope that no omissions have arisen; if so, please contact Michele by email on Michele.pickover@wits.ac.za and she will arrange to have the missing material uploaded into the ICADLA-2 conference proceedings.

Editing ICADLA-2 has given me insight into the fascinating and challenging current state of digital library and archives practice in Africa. I thank you all for the pleasure of this journey!

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[3] *The Economist style guide,* 10th edition. London, Profile Books.
[4] Allen, Robert (2008). *Common errors and problems in English.* London, Penguin Books.