

WIOP

IN EARLY APRIL, The Oceanography Society (TOS) sponsored an imaginary meeting focused on the exciting topic of "Words in Our Publications." The polarization of this topic quickly became obvious when two organizations unfurled their banners: 1) ACPJA (Action Committee for Proliferation of Jargon and Acronyms) and 2) The Subset of Scholarly Scientists Who Choose to Exercise the English Language for Technical Writing in a Fashion that is Clear, Correct, and Understandable by the Largest Possible Segment of Our Community. As the Director of Publications, I had the responsibility to moderate the proceedings.

First, the CEO of ACPJA spoke to the meeting attendees. He thanked the DOP of TOS for organizing WIOP. However, I soon realized that I was SOL, when he turned attention to the upcoming 5(1) of *Oceanography*. He attacked the wall clock hours that his colleagues had wasted transitioning their text to meet my silly requests. He felt that they had assimilated my quasi-operational data stream, but nowcasting from his own paper to others in the issue indicated a skill no better than persistence. True progress required PCV (precise, concise vocabulary), he bellowed as one-half of the audience rose applauding and the other half sat dumbfounded.

Next, the second vice president-elect for the Subset of Scholarly Scientists Who Choose to Exercise the English Language for Technical Writing in a Fashion that it is Clear, Correct, and Understandable by the Largest Possible Segment of Our Community was introduced. She thanked the Director of Publications for The Oceanography Society for organizing this imaginary meeting to address "Words in Our Publications." Once again I squirmed in my seat as she addressed the special issue of *Oceanography* focused on Ocean Prediction and Modeling. Fortunately, her time expired before she could get started. Otherwise she would have expressed her message that the use of specialized and abbreviated vocabulary restricted the understanding of written documents to the privileged few possessing the magic code book.

With trepidation, I rose to give some concluding remarks. Despite noise on both sides of me, I tried to look straight ahead and explain my opinion. The vocabulary used in a written document should vary depending on the purpose and audience of that document. If the purpose is to expose a specialized field and the advances of that field to a larger scientific audience, then much of the unique nomenclature and vocabulary must be exposed as well. However, highly specialized words and jargon cannot be allowed to render the written document incomprehensible to the larger scientific audience (LSA).

So ended our imaginary meeting, as banners were brought down and folded. And so starts this special issue of *Oceanography*. I enthusiastically thank Bob Peloquin and the authors for responding to my suggestions. And I congratulate the LSA for learning the Glossary of Acronyms before turning the page.

—Chuck Nittrouer

Letters are welcome regarding articles, the Quarterdeck editorial, or other matters relevant to *Oceanography*. We have received several, and these will be published in the next issue.



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