

Editorial

As from Volume 24/4 I shall be leaving, ahead of time, my role as Editor-in-Chief of *Acta Otorhinolaryngologica Italica*, in order to proudly take up the appointment conferred upon me of President of the Italian Association of Hospital Otorhinolaryngologists (A.O.O.I.) with no clash of interests.

These last three years have been very important in the life of the Journal and therefore I feel it is appropriate to briefly outline some of the events and to express some conclusive comment.

Indeed, during this period *Acta Otorhinolaryngologica Italica* underwent two radical changes, which led to a completely new way of approaching our Journal. The mission I received from the Italian Society of Otorhinolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery at the beginning of my appointment as Editor-in-Chief was to produce *Acta* entirely in English and to make the Journal available via Internet. The five year term by which to achieve these goals has been overwhelmed as the outcome has exceeded all our hopes and expectations and the two objectives have been achieved well in advance of that deadline.

The English edition of *Acta* officially came to light in January 2003 with Volume 23/1 and was heralded with an immediate success. Nonetheless, the switch from a secular tradition of the Italian language to the up-to-date and world-oriented English edition could not come into effect without a certain emotional storm: let us not forget that *Acta*, which in 2003 entered its 23rd year of life, is the ideal and formal continuation of the magnificent and may I emphasize ancient Journal *Annali di Laringologia Otologia e Faringologia*, founded in 1901 by Giulio Masini, and therefore *Acta* is the trustee of more than a century of scientific contribution from the Italian Otorhinolaryngology community. Nevertheless, as recalled in my opening editorial, “everything flows, everything becomes”: the need to open even larger scientific horizons and to extend Italian E.N.T. communications worldwide exceeded any resistance and now the English edition of *Acta* is not only running smoothly, but also favourably.

But the English edition of *Acta* would have remained a sterile and short-sighted operation without a second editorial step: the availability of *Acta* via Internet. *Acta* was already present on the Net at the previous site www.uniud.it/acta, but was limited to summaries and information for Authors.

Now, *Acta Otorhinolaryngologica Italica* is available via Internet at the site www.actaitalica.it, with the full PDF edition of all scientific contributions, free of charge, being easily and immediately accessible worldwide to all those interested. The Internet edition began in January 2004 with volume 24/1, but the In-

ternet site of *Acta* was later brought up-to-date to include all the issues appearing in 2003 in order to present all the papers printed in English. The direct link which has recently been activated between any Medline citation of *Acta* papers and the full PDF edition of these same articles will surely represent an important means of spreading our scientific messages all over the world, with no limits as far as concerns borders, languages, economic or bureaucratic problems.

A short summary of Journal's content over these last three years, from volume 21/4 (August 2001) to 24/3 (June 2004) seems appropriate.

During this period *Acta* has produced a total of 18 issues, with a regular frequency of 6 issues per year, as well as a total of 9 supplements. Overall, about 1700 pages of scientific contributions were published in that period. The editorial activity behind the submitted papers required more than 1400 letters and e-mail in three years, in order to answer all the messages exchanged between the Editorial Office, Reviewers, Authors, Readers, Editorial Assistant and Publisher. The scientific papers could be successfully managed only by means of an updated and fully computerized database, which has proved very useful in making the editorial tasks easier and faster but also in avoiding printing errors.

In the 2001-2004 period the Editorial Office received and handled 247 scientific papers, 75% of which dedicated to scientific studies and clinical reviews and 25% to clinical cases (Fig. 1), not to mention newsletters, calendar of events, etc.

Of these 247 papers, 63.16% have already been published in the Journal so far; 6.88% have already been accepted for publication; 11.74% are in Authors' hands for minor or major revision after the Reviewers' first evaluation; 6.48% are currently undergoing evaluation; 6.88% have been refused by the Reviewers and therefore not accepted for publication in the Journal; 4.86% have been “lost sight of” after a very critical first evaluation by the Reviewers (Fig. 2).

All the main fields of Otorhinolaryngology have been well represented in the papers published (Fig. 3), with a uniform distribution of the topics over the three year period. The only exception is perhaps a significant rise in the number of scientific articles dealing with Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome in 2003 and 2004, following an increased interest in this topic following the Official Report on O.S.A.S. at the National Congress of the Italian Society of Otorhinolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, in 2004

Finally, far as concerns the number of scientific papers presented per year by the Authors, we can proudly underline that we have observed a slight but steady upward trend, mainly since starting the English edi-

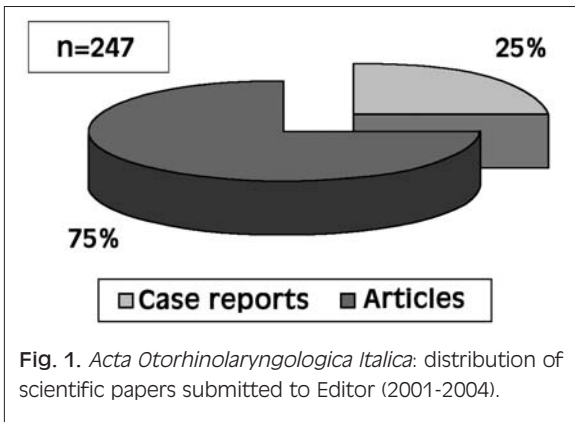


Fig. 1. *Acta Otorhinolaryngologica Italica*: distribution of scientific papers submitted to Editor (2001-2004).

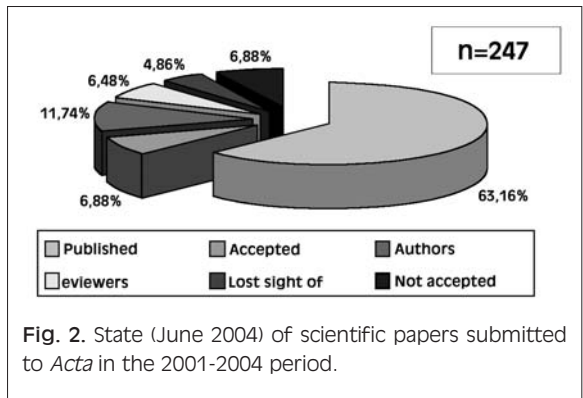


Fig. 2. State (June 2004) of scientific papers submitted to *Acta* in the 2001-2004 period.

tion of the Journal. This fact certainly allows to be optimistic not only regarding the continuing success of the Journal, but also and above all the currently growing interest in scientific publishing by young and less young E.N.T. colleagues, after an apparent lack of enthusiasm in the late '80s and early '90s.

With volume 24/3 my official engagement as Editor-in-Chief of *Acta Otorhinolaryngologica Italica* comes to an end, but I cannot leave my job without expressing my heartfelt thanks to all those colleagues and friends who have supported me during these wonderful three years.

First of all, let me mention and thank my incomparable Editorial Coordinator Maria Gabriella Rugu, M.D., who has taken a very hard task upon herself in the Journal but has always performed a superb job, coming up to my most highest expectations (and let me add, with no consequences or minimal default in her class clinical E.N.T. activity in my Department). I willingly share the current success of *Acta* with Maria Gabriella.

Cesare Miani, M.D., deserves my thanks as an extremely efficient Treasurer: no surprise in this as Dr. Miani had already served as a greatly appreciated Editorial Coordinator with the former Editor-in-Chief Alberto Staffieri.

Our Editorial Assistant Mrs. Marian Shields has gained my full gratitude for her patient and careful work in reviewing the Journal in its English edition: the good results of her efforts are under the Readers' eyes in every volume of *Acta* and I can testify the high consideration she has so rapidly gained among the otorhinolaryngologists.

Thanks also go to the Publishing Company – Pacini Editore of Pisa – for their valuable professional collaboration, in the best interest of Authors and Readers. I shall reserve a grateful thought for the entire Editorial Board and all the Reviewers, whose contribution and support of the Journal have always been firm and outstanding.

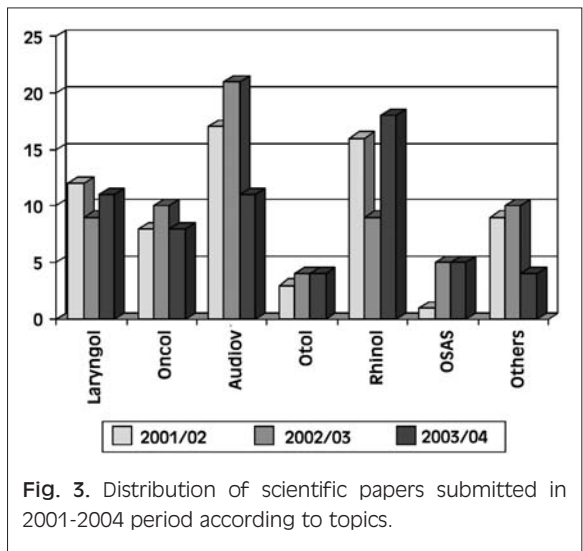


Fig. 3. Distribution of scientific papers submitted in 2001-2004 period according to topics.

A last, heartfelt “Thank You” to all the Readers of *Acta* for their support, patience and appreciation, even during the far from easy transfer of the Journal from Italian to English.

Before closing, I would like to introduce my Successor in the change of Editor-in Chief of *Acta Otorhinolaryngologica Italica*: Fausto Chiesa, M.D., Chief of Head and Neck Oncology Dept. at the Istituto Europeo di Oncologia, Milan, (I), is not only a very well-known and highly qualified E.N.T. surgeon and scientist, but he is also a true “Gentleman”. I am sure that he will continue to give more and more impulse to improve and develop the Journal in the best possible way. May I wish him all the success that he and *Acta* deserve, while sincerely hoping that he will find in the role of Editor-in-Chief as much satisfaction as I have enjoyed during my turn of office. Good luck, Fausto, and “ad maiora”!

Marco Piemonte, M.D.
Editor-in-Chief