Editorial

In the research community it is considered to be highly unethical to publish as original work the same scientific results more than once. All scientific journals, including the *European Journal of Oral Sciences* and *Caries Research*, have a statement to the effect that authors submitting an original paper do so on the understanding that, other than for quoted excerpts or acknowledged limited adaptations, no part of the manuscript has been published before, and that it is not being considered for publication elsewhere. In addition, such a policy has legal implications, as re-publication without written consent of a prior article, in whole or in part, constitutes copyright infringement.

It has been brought to our attention that two articles recently published in *Caries Research* [Tanagawa et al., 1999] and the *European Journal of Oral Sciences* [Yoshida et al., 1999] are in essence identical. A side-by-side examination of the two papers revealed this to be the case. The two papers are organized in an identical manner, and the text is virtually identical except for minor differences resulting in part from editing. The largely identical material, published in the two journals, leads to the conclusion that the results reported in the second paper are essentially duplicated and are from the same experiment reported in the first paper. The manuscript was submitted to the *European Journal of Oral Science* several months after the authors had been informed that their article had been accepted for publication in *Caries Research*.

All authors of the two articles have been contacted about this matter and have been given the opportunity to respond and to provide a written explanation. In his response, the corresponding author for the articles maintains that 'there is minute difference' between the materials studied, and that

the materials in the *European Journal of Oral Sciences* article represented 'a further improved version'. Yet these claims were not mentioned in the second article, nor was a citation made to the first article. Extensive quotation in the second paper from the text of the first also is not acknowledged through appropriate punctuation.

In essence, it is our judgement that both papers published the same data. If there was an *implied* scientific rationale for the second manuscript, it is not apparent. As readers can confirm, the second paper included 3-month data from the same 6-month experiment after the first paper had already published the 6-month data. In our judgement, the belatedly published 3-month data, with the verbatim accompanying text previously used to explain the 6-month data, add nothing substantive, and are either superfluous or superseded by the 6-month data that the authors had already reported. In their correspondence to us the authors also claimed differences in specimen composition and differences in methodologies, but these assertions could not be determined or verified from the two published papers. Lastly, in their letter the authors provide no comment or explanation pertaining to the copyright infringement by the second journal on the first resulting from the actions of these authors.

We deem the explanations given to us as unsatisfactory and conclude that the two papers in question represent a deliberate re-publication. As editors of two respected international scientific journals, we consider this a very serious matter.

Anders Linde, Editor-in-Chief
European Journal of Oral Sciences
Jorma Tenovou, Past Editor-in-Chief
Caries Research

References

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Yoshida K, Tanagawa M, Matsumoto S, Yamada T, Atsuta M: Antibacterial activity of resin composites with silver-containing materials. *Eur J Oral Sci* 1999;107:290–296.