Popular digital knowledge dissemination platforms: Aspects of academic writing from *Wikipedia* to *Academia.edu*
1. Introduction

1.1. Definition “digital knowledge dissemination platform”

0 hits in Google!
def.: Web portal/on-line tool, (community) shared, (free) exchange for teaching and research related to: Online social networks (OSNs)
       Academic Social Networks
       Social Networking Websites

special perspective: academic writing qualitative perspective
   • larger research group on academic writing quantitative perspective
     ▪ Jessica Dheskali: academia.edu, 7 nationalities compared
     ▪ Dana Beyer: Wikipedia vs. Britannica compared
     ▪ Jacinta Edusei: Global Web-based English compared

■ why Wikipedia? teaching/learning prototype
  ▫ not WikiVersity (beta), etc.

■ why Academia.edu? research prototype
  ▫ not: ResearchGate: aggressive spamming, “marketing”
  ▫ not: Mandeley (=Elsevier vs. Open Access community)
1.2. Social Networking Websites

List of social networking websites

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This is a list of major active social networking websites and excludes dating websites (see Comparison of online dating websites). For defunct social networking websites, see List of defunct social networking websites.

This list is not exhaustive, and is limited to notable, well-known sites. The Alexa website rankings are from various time periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description/focus</th>
<th>Date launched</th>
<th>Registered users</th>
<th>Registration</th>
<th>Global Alexa page ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43 Things</td>
<td>Goal setting and achievement</td>
<td>1 January 2005</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>12,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academia.edu</td>
<td>Social networking site for academics/researchers</td>
<td>September 2008</td>
<td>18,000,000</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About.me</td>
<td>Social networking site</td>
<td>October 2009</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>1,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocato</td>
<td>Free and open source software developers</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>13,575</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>292,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aNobii</td>
<td>Books</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>28,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AsianAvenue</td>
<td>A social network for the Asian American community</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>170,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aSmallWorld</td>
<td>European jet set and social elite world-wide</td>
<td>March 2004</td>
<td>550,000</td>
<td>Invite-only</td>
<td>580,060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3. Why? Initial personal experience

- Wikipedia:
  - teachers: “don’t source Wikipedia”
  - students: “don’t demand hyper-text format”

- Academia.edu:
  - exchange articles with EE partners
  - used as research tool by Italian exchange student

Instead of (commercial) EBSCO:

**Academic Search** ([ISSN 1097-0886](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic_Search), [LCCN sn97001287](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic_Search)) is a monthly indexing service. It was first published in 1997 by EBSCO Publishing in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Its academic focus was international universities, covering social science, education, psychology, and other subjects. Publishing formats covered were academic journals, magazines, newspapers, and CD-ROM. Global in scope, 870 periodicals were indexed and abstracted. With back-files to 1990, it covered more than 3 million articles.[1][2]

1.4. Research questions
(sociolinguistic - academic writing - corpus-linguistic)

1) Ferguson in sociolinguistics:
"who speaks which language to whom and when"

RQ1b) Who uses Academia.edu? how? – why?
  • active: posting abstracts/articles – to promote publications
  • passive: reading/downloading articles – to gather information

2) how relevant (true/accurate), how accessible (reader-specific/-friendly) is the information?

RQ2a) Which platform clues indicate text reliability?
RQ2b) Which language clues indicate text reliability?
Wikipedia = relevance depends on the text
academia.edu = relevance depends on the author

RQ3) Can (texts extracted from) wikipedia/academic.edu be used as a research database for culture-specific academic writing?
1.5. Contribution to KDDE

special aspect: digital knowledge dissemination for (young) academic readers, esp. BA to PhD students

big issue: evaluation (cf. Anderson/Bamford eds. 2004):
- reliable?
- relevant?

(internal) academic writing clues (evidence features) can complement (external) platform clues to determine
- how reliable is a text / an author?
- how relevant is the text for my academic work?

The more self-critical academic writing features (awareness of limitations, controversial issues ..) the more reliable and relevant the text for the young academic reader
2. Concepts

2.1. Discourses in science communication

discourse community approach (Hyland 2006, 2012; Schmied 2011) = a writer/speaker appeals to shared knowledge to create a community of discourse incl. linguistic clues: of course, as we know from ...

research discourse ➔ instructional discourse

popularisation
specialised ➔ popular discourse

popular academic novice discourse
2.2 Academic research cycle

Figure 1: The Academic Research Cycle

2.3. Prototype approach to genres in academic writing

Schmied 2015: 11
Metalanguage

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Not to be confused with Metalinguistics.
For the programming language, see ML (programming language).

This article has multiple issues. Please help improve it or discuss these issues on the talk page.

- This article includes a list of references, but its sources remain unclear because it has insufficient inline citations. (September 2010)
- This article only describes one highly specialized aspect of its associated subject. (January 2013)

Broadly, any metalanguage is language or symbols used when language itself is being discussed or examined.[1] In logic and linguistics, a metalanguage is a language used to make statements about statements in another language (the object language). Expressions in a metalanguage are often distinguished from those in an object language by the use of italics, quotation marks, or writing on a separate line.

Wikipedia comments on academic writing conventions
Wikipedia comments on content (scope)
nobody has bothered/been interested for 5/3 years
Metadiscourse

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This article needs more links to other articles to help integrate it into the encyclopedia. Please help improve this article by adding links that are relevant to the context within the existing text. (October 2015)

Metadiscourse is a term that is used in philosophy to denote a discussion about a discussion (and so on), as opposed to a simple discussion about a given topic.

The term metadiscourse is also used in writing to describe a word or phrase that comments on what is in the sentence, usually as an introductory adverbial clause. It is any phrase that is included within a clause or sentence that goes beyond the subject itself, often to examine the purpose of the sentence or a response from the author. Metadiscourse includes phrases such as "frankly," "after all," "on the other hand," "to our surprise," and so on.

Below are some examples of metadiscourse in writing, denoting:

- the writer's intentions: "to sum up," "candidly," "I believe"
- the writer's confidence: "may," "perhaps," "certainly," "must"
- directions to the reader: "note that," "finally," "therefore," "however"
- the structure of the text: "first," "second," "finally," "therefore," "however"

Most writing needs metadiscourse, but too much buries ideas. Technical, academic, and other non-fiction writers should use metadiscourse sparingly.[1]

Further reading [edit]

2.4. (Academic) Metadiscourse, metalanguage

= language about language, i.e.
information management/reader guidance beyond the plain proposition

fields:
• “global text management”,
  argumentation structure
  IMRaD -> paragraphing -> cohesion, like conclude
• “local” text management”,
  text cohesion --> cognitive coherence (first, thus, ...)
• writer - reader “interaction”, incl. address (you, we)
• writer commitment to the truth value/reliability ...
  esp. hedging, (epistemic) modal aux/adv.
  (... may contribute, may be correct ... arguably),
• occasionally boosting (certainly, fact)
# Research paradigm, global text structure:

**I**ntroduction  
**M**ethodology  
**R**esearch  
**A**nd  
**D**iscussion

1.2. The trend towards revised IMRAD, adapted for English research (with prototypical phrases):

**I** = *issue*, i.e.
- new, i.e. *not enough research yet*
- relevant, i.e. *important in discourse or for practical applications*
- focussed, i.e. small, but data-based; careful and reliable

**M** = *methodology*, i.e.
- previous research, i.e. literature review incl. evaluation
- hypotheses possible?
- data base
- tests/procedure

**A** = *analysis*, i.e.
- examples as evidence
- statistical tables as summaries
- significance to generalise

**C** = *conclusion*, i.e.
- summary, e.g. *in conclusion, we have shown*
- interpretation, e.g. *this proves that*
- contextualisation, e.g. *in a wider perspective*
- limitations, e.g. *more data*
- outlook, e.g. *further research is necessary*

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*academic dispute unresolved?*

(c.f. Schmied 2015: 17-20)  
available in academia.edu

https://twiki.tu-chemnitz.de/bin/view/English/IntroResearchPara

Self-descriptions
BIG issue: unknown author, no gate-keeper/publisher/editor? --> text quality??
How reliable and how reader-specific/-friendly?

Wikipedia development discussion:
split between a specialised expert and a popular (peer-to-peer) encyclopaedia?
3.1. What is Wikipedia?

Wikipedia is the biggest encyclopedia ever created.

It exists in hundreds of languages. Unlike a traditional encyclopedia, however, Wikipedia uses an open editing model. Anyone may contribute by writing or editing articles directly, which means articles can vary in quality. It is important for readers like you to recognize whether an article is good or poor.

(Wikimedia Foundation n.d.:2)
Can Wikipedia Survive?

By ANDREW LIH  JUNE 20, 2015

WASHINGTON — WIKIPEDIA has come a long way since it started in 2001. With around 70,000 volunteers editing in over 100 languages, it is by far the world’s most popular reference site. Its future is also uncertain.

One of the biggest threats it faces is the rise of smartphones as the dominant personal computing device. A recent Pew Research Center report found that 39 of the top 50 news sites received more traffic from mobile devices than from desktop and laptop computers, sales of which have declined for years.

This is a challenge for Wikipedia, which has always depended on contributors hunched over keyboards searching references, discussing changes and writing articles using a special markup code. Even before smartphones were widespread, studies consistently showed that these are daunting tasks for newcomers. “Not even our youngest and most computer-savvy participants accomplished these tasks with ease,” a 2009 user test concluded. The difficulty of bringing on new volunteers has resulted in seven straight years of declining editor participation.

In 2005, during Wikipedia’s peak years, there were months when more than 60 editors were made administrator — a position with special privileges in editing the English-language edition. For the past year, it has sometimes struggled to promote even one per month.
Wikipedia

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This article is about the Internet encyclopedia. For other uses, see Wikipedia (disambiguation).

For Wikipedia's non-encyclopedia visitor introduction, see Wikipedia:About.

For the Wikipedia home page, see Wikipedia Main Page.

Wikipedia ( /wɪˈkiː.piˈdiə/ or /wɪˈkiː.piˈdiə/ [wik-ee-pie-dee-a]) is a free-access, free-content Internet encyclopedia, supported and hosted by the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation. Those who can access the site can edit most of its articles.[9] Wikipedia is ranked among the ten most popular websites[2] and constitutes the Internet's largest and most popular general reference work.[6][7][8]

Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger launched Wikipedia on January 15, 2001. Sanger[9] coined its name,[14] a portmanteau of wiki[notes 3] and encyclopedia. Initially only in English, Wikipedia quickly became multilingual as it developed similar versions in other languages, which differ in content and in editing practices. The English Wikipedia is now one of 291 Wikipedia editions and is the largest with 5,008,653 articles (having reached 5,000,000 articles in November 2015). There is a grand total, including all Wikipedias, of over 37 million articles in over 250 different languages.[12] As of February 2014, it had 18 billion page views and nearly 500 million unique visitors each month.[13]

Supporters of Wikipedia cite a 2005 survey of Wikipedia published in Nature based on a comparison of 42 science articles with Encyclopædia Britannica, which found that Wikipedia's level of accuracy approached Encyclopædia Britannica's.[14] Criticisms of Wikipedia include claims that it exhibits systemic bias, presents a mixture of “truths, half truths, and some falsehoods”,[15] and is subject to manipulation and spin.[16]

Wikipedia has millions/thousands of editors?

Wikipedia comments on Academic Writing!

1 History
2 Openness
2.1 Restrictions
2.2 Review of changes
2.3 Vandalism
3 Policies and laws
3.1 Content policies and guidelines
4 Governance
4.1 Administrators
4.2 Dispute resolution
5 Community
5.1 Diversity
6 Language editions
7 Critical reception
7.1 Accuracy of content
7.2 Quality of writing
7.3 Coverage of topics and systemic bias
7.4 Explicit content
3.3. Wikipedia: for students?

What is Wikipedia?

Wikipedia is not a primary source, like a direct interview, or a secondary source, like an academic paper or a news story. Wikipedia is an encyclopedia. It is a collection of information from primary and secondary sources, assembled into articles that provide a general overview. Like other encyclopedias, Wikipedia should be used as a starting point. It can provide a broad overview of a subject and help you find high-quality primary and secondary sources.

Wikipedia can help you to:
- Get an overview of a subject
- Get a list of recommended works about a subject
- Discover related topics

Wikipedia is “secondary”, a jump page, a stepping stone to “primary” information

(Wikimedia Foundation n.d.:2)
Elements of quality articles

In general, high-quality articles have five elements:
- a lead section that gives an easy-to-understand overview,
- a clear structure,
- balanced coverage,
- neutral content, and
- reliable sources.

The lead section is understandable and summarizes the article’s key points. The lead in a biography should, for instance, mention why the person is known and where she lived, but need not cover details about her childhood that may be more appropriate to a subsequent section.

The structure is clear. There are several headings and subheadings, images and diagrams at appropriate places, and appendices and footnotes at the end. For most articles, the content is chronological or arranged by theme.

The various aspects of the topic are balanced well. No aspect takes over the article, and all significant aspects are covered. More important viewpoints receive more space in the article. For example, an article about a cat breed that contains a long description of the breed’s temperament, but little or no information about its physical characteristics, is not well balanced.
3.4.

Signs of bad quality

- The article has a warning banner at the top. Most warning banners are only information or requests, such as asking you to help expand the article if it is very short. But warning banners can also represent an unresolved dispute about the article’s neutrality or the quality of its sources.

- Several language problems are in the lead section of the article. Problems in the lead usually indicate problems with the whole article. A very short lead section may indicate an article that has grown up piece-by-piece, without much attention to the overall work.

Wikipedia comments on “global” reediting

- The language contains unsourced opinions and value statements, which are not neutral and should be removed. For example, instead of saying: “She was the best singer,” the text should say: “She had 14 number one hits, more than any other singer.”

Wikipedia comments on “fuzzy”, “vague” language

- The article refers to “some,” “many,” or other unnamed groups of people. These statements are too general and should be replaced with facts.
3.5. Wikipedia “cooperative” “continuous” writing

Can we trace Wikipedia users? - only History of an article

Do articles get better and better?
OR only linguistically more complex?
Are the revisions systematic?
Are the articles becoming more detailed and “sophisticated”?
3.5. Wikipedia writing: revision

Applied linguistics: Difference between revisions

Revision as of 23:24, 27 October 2006 (edit)
64.180.92.22 (talk) 
(→Further reading)
← Previous edit

Latest revision as of 13:03, 9 September 2015 (edit) (undo)
Alain Schneider (talk | contribs)
(Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée)

(185 intermediate revisions by more than 100 users not shown)

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"Applied linguistics" is the branch of linguistics concerned with using theoretical linguistics to address real-world problems. It has been traditionally dominated by the fields of language education and second language acquisition (SLA). There is a recurrent tension between those who regard the field as limited to the study of language learning, and those who see it as encompassing all applications of linguistic theory. Both definitions are widely used. The current field is a cross-disciplinary mix of departments primarily from linguistics, anthropology, psychology, and education.

The field of applied linguistics first concerned itself with second language acquisition, in particular errors and contrastive analysis, in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1970s, with the failure of contrastive analysis as a theory to predict errors, applied linguists began to adopt Noam Chomsky's theory of universal grammar to explain second language (L2) learning phenomena. In the 1990s, more and more researchers began to employ research methods from cognitive psychology.

One focus today shifts the domain of inquiry from the system of language itself - the classic object of SLA research - to the learner and their environment. The applied linguist Vivian Cook applied linguist has, for example, introduced the term "L2 user" as distinct from "L2 learner".
3.5. Wikipedia writing


Although the field of applied linguistics started from Europe and the United States, the field rapidly flourished in the international context.

Applied linguistics first concerned itself with principles and practices on the basis of linguistics. In the early days, applied linguistics was thought as "linguistics-applied" at least from the outside of the field. In the 1960s, however, applied linguistics was expanded to include language assessment, [[language policy]], and second language acquisition. As early as the 1970s, applied linguistics became a problem-driven field rather than [[theoretical linguistics]], including the solution of language-related problems in the real world. By the 1990s, applied linguistics had broadened including critical studies and multilingualism. Research in applied linguistics was shifted to "the theoretical and empirical investigation of real world problems in which language is a central issue."<ref>Christopher Brumfit. How applied linguistics is the same as any other science. "International Journal of Applied Linguistics", 7(1), 88-94.</ref>

In the United States, applied linguistics also began narrowly as the application of insights from structural linguistics—first to the teaching of English in schools and subsequently to second and foreign language teaching. The "linguistics applied" approach to language teaching was promulgated most strenuously by [[Leonard Bloomfield]], who developed the foundation for the [[Army Specialized Training Program]], and by Charles C. Fries, who established the English Language Institute (ELI) at the [[University of Michigan]] in 1941. In 1948, the Research Club at Michigan established "Language Learning: A Journal of Applied Linguistics", the first journal to bear the term "applied linguistics." In the late 1960s, applied linguistics began to establish its own identity as an interdisciplinary field of linguistics concerned with real-world language issues. The new identity was solidified by the creation of the American Association for Applied Linguistics in 1977. <ref>Margie Berns and Paul Kei Matsuda. 2006. Applied linguistics: Overview and history. In K Brown (Ed.), "The Encyclopedia of language and linguistics" (2nd ed.), 398-401.</ref>
3.5. Wikipedia writing: advice (+style guide)

Wikipedia: Writing better articles

This essay is not a Wikipedia policy or guideline; it is intended to be an explanatory supplement to the Wikipedia: Manual of Style page.

This page sets out advice on how to write an effective article, including information on layout, style, and how to make an article clear, precise and relevant to the reader.

- You can post questions about English grammar and usage at Wikipedia's language desk.
- If you want to peruse some of Wikipedia's finest articles, have a look at Wikipedia: Featured articles.
- For information on how to cite sources, see Wikipedia: Citing sources.
- For our guidelines on style, see the Wikipedia: Manual of Style and its subsidiary pages, listed in the template to the right.
- To learn about markup in Wikipedia articles, see Wikipedia: How to edit a page.

Contents [hide]

1 Layout
  1.1 Structure of the article
    1.1.1 Introductory material
    1.1.2 Paragraphs
    1.1.3 Headings
    1.1.4 Images
    1.1.5 Standard appendices
  1.2 Size
    1.2.1 Articles covering subtopics
2 Information style and tone
  2.1 News style
  2.2 Summary style
  2.3 Tone
3 Provide context for the reader
Finally, it is an open question as to whether the particular features of Wikipedia revision found in this study—emphasizing addition over deletion and moving text, the relative lack of stylistic revision—are unique to Wikipedia or are characteristic of other forms of online writing. In the case of the privileging of additions to articles, it is possible that this feature of writing in Wikipedia is related to the “network effects” that result from “harnessing the power” of users (O’Reilly, 2005). Commentators such as James Surowiecki (2004) have argued that the collective production of many individuals, even loosely connected ones without shared, or with conflicting, goals, can be beneficial to most projects, despite the seemingly chaotic nature that such conflict implies. In discussions of this collective intelligence, Wikipedia is often given as a prime example of the success of this theory. If it is representative of this trend, is Wikipedia’s seeming preference for accretion over polish characteristic of all projects that depend on network effects? Although the encyclopedia has policies to correct for these behaviors, leading to quality articles in the form of FAC, what happens in environments that do not have such policies? (Jones 2008: 284f)
3.7. Wikipedia writing clues for “reliable”?

not: bad grammar + non-specific lexicon/technical terms
= unreliable (academic writing is not student writing!)

highest level of EFL (cf. Mauranen 2012),
academic identity formation in discourse community conventions
(cf. Hyland 2012)

fuzziness
• vague (spoken, not academic)
• hedging (written, academic): modal auxiliaries or adverbs (probably)

example *may*
• *you may do it* = permission, unlikely in academic texts
• *this may be correct* = epistemic content-related hedging
• *you may think* = epistemic reader-related hedging (=politeness)

The more self-critical academic writing features
(awareness of limitations, controversial issues ..)
the more reliable and relevant the text for the young academic reader
4. Academia.edu

4.1. self-presentation and problems

Academia.edu

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Academia.edu is a social networking website for academics. It was launched in September 2008[3] and had over 21 million registered users as of April 2015. [4] The platform can be used to share papers, monitor their impact, and follow the research in a particular field. Academia.edu was founded by Richard Price, who raised $600,000 from Spark Ventures, Brent Hoberman, and others.[5]

• commercial enterprise
• only 19 employees!!
• related to Open Source movement

Financial history [edit]

In November 2011, Academia.edu raised $4.5 million from Spark Capital and True Ventures[6] Prior to that, it had raised $2.2 million from Spark Ventures and a range of angel investors including Mark Shuttleworth, Thomas Lehrman, and Rupert Pennant-Rea.[5] As of March 2014, Academia.edu claimed to have raised $17.7 million from Khosla Ventures, True Ventures, Spark Ventures, Spark Capital and Rupert Pennant-Rea.[6]
Open science [edit]

Academia.edu is a participant in the open science or open access movements, responding to a perceived need in science for instant distribution of research and the need for a peer-review system that occurs alongside distribution, instead of occurring before it.[7] Accordingly, the company has stated its opposition to the Research Works Act.[8]

Reception [edit]

TechCrunch remarked that Academia.edu gives academics a "powerful, efficient way to distribute their research"[9][10] and that it "will let researchers keep tabs on how many people are reading their articles with specialized analytics tools", and "also does very well in Google search results".[9] Academia.edu seems to reflect a combination of social networking norms and academic norms.[11] In the summer of 2015, the blogging platform was removed.

Months after its acquisition of Academia.edu rival Mendeley, Elsevier sent thousands of takedown notices to Academia.edu, a practice that has since ceased following widespread complaint by academics, according to Academia.edu founder and chief executive Richard Price.[12][13]

Domain name [edit]

Academia.edu is not a university or institution for higher learning and so under current standards would not qualify for the EDU top level domain. The domain name "Academia.edu" was registered in 1999, prior to the regulations which required .edu domain names to be held by accredited post-secondary institutions. All .edu domain names registered prior to 2001 were grandfathered in and not made subject to the regulation of being an accredited post-secondary institution.[14]

See also [edit]

- figshare
- Mendeley
- ResearchGate
- Sciencescape
platform clues:
- photo
- following
- followers/following
- research interests
- upload book, paper, abstract
Internet English in Nigeria: New Discourse in a Global Internet Community

Graduate Academic Writing in Europe: A Research-Based Approach to Meta-language and Genre

Academic Writing in Europe: A Survey of Approaches and Problems
profile/upload considerations:

- “broadcasting”, i.e. knowledge dissemination where we have no copyright problems, “working papers”, “appetisers” (abstracts, intros)
- “academic discourse, dialogue” i.e. discussion forum in areas where we expect academia.edu to be relevant
- with users that do not buy books, do not have access to e-journals, etc.
platform clues:
- photo (persona)
- metrics, esp. “Impact Points”, RG score
- marketing (career’s best, invites)
- followers/following
4.2. pro and con

V. Social Networking for Academics: Why Use Academia.edu and LinkedIn?

Jul 29, 2014 by Lee Skallerup Bessette

In this blog you’ll learn more about two professional social networking sites, Academia.edu and LinkedIn.

Academia.edu is a social networking site for academics. It allows you to post your articles, your abstracts, your syllabi, your CV, calls for papers, and other materials. It promotes your work to other academics in your field. Like Facebook, the whole idea is to connect people with similar interests. When you first log in, Academia.edu asks you what your interests are and what your research is about. Then it tries to connect you to other people who have those similar interests. It also promotes the work of other people who have interests similar to yours.

Academia.edu is not specifically designed to promote dialogue or interactions between academics. Most academics use it for broadcasting. They put up their work, they find other people's work that might be interesting, and they see who has downloaded their papers. If you were to look at my Academia.edu profile page, you would see it looks very much like Facebook. It shows how many people have viewed my profile, how many people have viewed the documents that I've uploaded, how many followers I have, how many people I follow.

Today, publishing in a top journal is considered a "stamp of approval". In your opinion, what will be the future Web equivalent of publishing in a high-impact journal?

There will be a family of credibility metrics that reflect the impact of a piece of research on the scientific community. Ultimately, a credibility metric is trying to reflect the sentiment of the scientific community toward a particular piece of content. The historical peer review process ends up taking the opinions of two peer reviewers as a proxy for the opinion of the scientific community. As noted above, 2 people is not a large enough sample size.

One feature of the future of credibility metrics in science is that they will be based on much larger sample sizes. It is going to be possible to see what hundreds of scientists think of a paper, and not just what two people think.

Another feature is that there is going to be a family of signals about the quality of any given paper. Historically, there has been one signal of quality for an academic paper, and that has been the title of the journal that the paper is published in. In the last 5-7 years, citation counts have also emerged as a valid credibility metric, mainly because Google Scholar started making them available for any given paper. Academia.edu’s Analytics Dashboard is helping scientists see usage metrics associated with their work: page view counts, download counts, and related metrics.
4.3. Who uses Academia.edu?

Academia.edu’s motto, “share research,” may sound like a godsend to scholars who want to do everything possible to make sure their work echoes far beyond the ivory tower. The pared-down social network lets users connect with colleagues, post their own publications, and track the readership of their work—all without having to dig through photographs of people’s cats and reactions to whatever is on TV.

It’s a message with resonance, as the site’s growth bears out. More than 7 million people have created academic profiles on the site, says Richard Price, the company’s founder and CEO, with more than 800,000 joining each month. “Around 25 percent come back each month,” he says, “which is a return rate comparable to Twitter’s.”

But the appeal of that motto is precisely what worries publishers like Elsevier, the self-declared “leading provider of science and health information.” Starting in late 2013, Elsevier began demanding that Academia.edu—and institutions such as University of Calgary, University of California-Irvine, and Harvard University—take down research publications that, in many cases, authors had posted

https://chroniclevitae.com/news/345-should-you-share-your-research-on-academia-edu (14/11/15)
4.3. Who uses Academia.edu?

Miller has seen, through the analytics function, that his posts are being viewed across the globe: in Iran, Algeria, Bangladesh, Georgia, Romania, Indonesia, Turkey, India, Chile, and Macedonia in just the past month.

“I've done a fair amount of work in post-socialist countries such as Hungary and the Republic of Georgia, where scholars' access to published materials may be uneven or restricted by past and present collections and subscriptions,” he says. “I appreciate that Academia.edu may be playing an important role in making more publications available to scholars outside the hegemonic countries of North America and Western Europe.”

With academic presses suffering from limited resources and staffing, Academia.edu can also be helpful—if one can steer clear of complaints from Elsevier—for scholars who want to promote books that might otherwise go under-advertised.

https://chroniclevitae.com/news/345-should-you-share-your-research-on-academia-edu (14/11/15)
4.3. Who uses Academia.edu?

I created a profile on Academia.edu about a year ago, but it was always clear to me what protocol I should follow regarding posting. Copyright is copyright, regardless of the medium. Once I've published an article, the journal has the copyright and authors should respect this. My policy has always been to post only the link to the journal's web page on which the article is published. Journals typically allow free access to an abstract and the reader has the option to purchase the article, unless of course their University library subscribes to the journal, which allows the free access. Some journals published by university presses allow free access to their publications and will post a freely accessible PDF on their site. Only in these cases do I post the article itself on Academia, but I also post a link to the journal. I am surprised, however, that the notion of copyright is still so murky to many academics, whose reputation for being 'out of touch with the world' is sometimes well-deserved. Publishing is a business, from which academics benefit greatly. Academics should respect copyright laws and the legal rights of the publishers, as well as the (either tacit or explicit) agreement that they made with the journals when their articles were published to respect such laws.

Marina Banchetti
over 1 year ago

https://chroniclevitae.com/news/345-should-you-share-your-research-on-academia-edu (14/11/15)
The Chronicle of Higher Education reports that Elsevier has issued a sweeping series of Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) take down notices regarding Elsevier-published content to Academia.edu, a file-sharing network for researchers and other academics. This has prompted a storm in the Twittersphere, a response from Elsevier, a number of commentaries on blogs and list-serves, and a truly bizarre article from CNET that casts Academia.edu as a “new school” “digital era” “publisher” and rival to Elsevier (who is couched as an “old school” “traditional company” – which just incidentally owns and operates a platform very similar to Academia.edu). Academia.edu for its part is reportedly encouraging authors of affected papers to sign this Elsevier boycott petition despite the fact that their own terms of use prohibit the posting of content that infringes on the copyright or license of publishers such as Elsevier.
Introduction

More than 3,000 scientists and engineers told Nature about their awareness of various giant social networks and research-profiling sites. Just under half said that they visit ResearchGate regularly. Another 480 respondents in the humanities, arts and social sciences were less keen on ResearchGate.

- I am aware of this site and visit regularly
- I am aware of this site but do not visit regularly
- I am not aware of this site

### Social sciences, arts and humanities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Awareness and Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Google Scholar</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ResearchGate</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academia.edu</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mendeley</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ResearcherID</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORCID</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Academic Search</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4. Why use Academia.edu?

The list of failed efforts to launch a ‘Facebook for science’ included Scientist Solutions, SciLinks, Epernicus, 2collab and Nature Network (run by the company that publishes *Nature*). Some observers speculated that this was because scientists were wary of sharing data, papers and comments online — or if they did want to share, they would prefer do it on their own terms, rather than through a privately owned site.

But it seems that those earlier efforts were ahead of their time — or maybe they were simply doing it wrong. Today, ResearchGate is just one of several academic social networks going viral. San Francisco-based competitor Academia.edu says that it has 11 million users. “The goal of the company is to rebuild science publishing from the ground up,” declares chief executive Richard Price, who studied philosophy at the University of Oxford, UK, before he founded Academia.edu in 2008, and has already raised $17.7 million from venture capitalists. A third site, London-based Mendeley, claims 3.1 million members. It was originally launched as software for managing and storing documents, but it encourages private and public social networking. The firm was snapped up in 2013 by Amsterdam-based publishing giant Elsevier for a reported £45 million (US$76 million).
4.5. Search options limited

![Search options limited on Academia.edu](image)
4.6. Academia.edu: debate

elimba75 · 4 years ago

These web sites have two main goals: serving as research repositories and a platform for connecting researchers. However, several reliable open access databases and repositories (ex. Citeseer, SciVerse, PLoS, DOAJ) have been around for a long a time, long before Facebook and Tweeter existed. Most researchers already know about these repositories and turn to them to freely find what they need.

Instead of creating "yet another document repository", a new initiative called Academic Joy (http://www.academicjoy.net/) has adopted a whole new approach, more pragmatic and mindful of the real needs of researchers, specially graduate students. Academic Joy presents a fine selection of life stories, provide pointers, references, news and encourages interaction. It even provides an open access journal as a stepping stone for publication in renowned academic journals. What else can a researcher ask for?

It is certainly not a good idea to assimilate the research community to a new "market" as many Facebook-like web sites do. The ultimate goal of academic research is the advancement of knowledge and the improvement of life. Big numbers and fat checks is not what drive serious research. It is the love of making earth a better place to live today and in the future. Researchers are constantly probing and questioning the past and the present to make sure we got the future right.

When in 1832 a German chemist experimented with salicin and created salicylic acid (Aspirin), he certainly did not intend to "find a market and moneytize it" although the company Bayer did that later. In addition, the purpose of many wonderful discoveries, inventions and scientific creations of the 19th century were not made for money. How much funding did great scientist like Newton, Galileo, Copernicus, Darwin, Einstein, Volta, Edison receive to make the stunning discoveries and inventions that we are enjoying today? It may be time to get money out of the picture and bring back real good will... again.
Perhaps the readers more than the article show the naïve nature of many internet users when it comes to the key word "social network". LinkedIn is there just to sell you their 'premium' service of having your named linked in searches. The site pulls from your contact list as a way to spam your friends into joining. Similarly, Academia.edu seems to be the main venue to graduate students to establish a web presence. There is no quality control or fact checking about who lists on academia.edu and what they list. It is also seriously incomplete when you peruse academic departments. The site makes you feel good by providing you a list of who is searching for you, feeding into some ego boost needed by younger academics.

natsteel 10293847 · 4 years ago

Though there are a large amount of graduate students (especially from Europe), there are also a decent number of established scholars in my own field that are on Academia.edu. It's just as easy for graduate students to setup their own free website or blog to maintain establish a web presence. Academia.edu offers (or will offer, as its user base grows) a bit more than that. I've made connections and read interesting papers there.

It is still early days for the site and I don't think anyone expects every 60-year-old scholar to join, but it seems geared mostly to appeal to graduate students and junior faculty (many of whom will eventually be junior and senior faculty). Criticizing it for being "incomplete" makes no sense. If you want a list of department members just look at the department website.

Furthermore, I am not sure what kind of "quality control or fact checking" you would expect from the site itself. What kind of "quality control or fact checking" is there of CVs by hiring committees? For those they find interesting, they then check those credentials, just as any user of Academia.edu can do to any other. You can check most claims on a CV or Academia.edu profile on Google in less than a minute.

And the site doesn't only tell you when someone has Google'd your name, but when your Academia.edu page has shown up in Google searches. This is useful because it shows you the keywords people are searching that bring your name/page up in the search results.

The site isn't perfect and its owner has been a bit "spammish" in his promotion of it, but it is an interesting model that, like any other social network, will only be as good as its users make it.
4.7. Academia.edu vs. ResearchGate ("notifications")

Figure 2: Monthly Email Notification Activity Covering a 12-Month Period

(Murray 2014: 4)
4.7. Academia.edu vs. ResearchGate ("publication alert")

New research from your network

Publications

NOVEMBER 2015

Yasemin Bayyurt published this article.

Article: Authorial presence in L1 and L2 novice academic writing: Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural...

Duygu Candarli, Yasemin Bayyurt, Leyla Marti

View full-text
4.7. Academia.edu vs. ResearchGate (“Q&A”)

Q&A Highlights

Questions matching your expertise
3 researchers are waiting for someone with your skills and expertise to answer these questions.

Does anybody know when the first metaphors in our modern understanding appeared in English (Old English, Middle English)?

- 17 answers added

How do I use semantic text analysis to extract connections?

- 5 answers added

How can I detect multiple languages of a sentence?

- 7 answers added
4.7. Academia.edu vs. ResearchGate

Christoph Lutz  ·  27.96  ·  5.34  ·  University of St. Gallen

I prefer ResearchGate, as it's more interactive and easier to navigate. However, I'm more familiar with ResearchGate, so maybe I'm biased. I think ResearchGate lays a heavier focus on collaboration, discovery and interaction, whereas Academia.edu is trying to encourage researchers to share their articles directly with the community, i.e. they cover the publication aspect more directly. And the third big player, Mendeley, is definitely the best solution for literature search and citation management. In the end, all of the three have their strengths (niches) and I perceive them as being complements rather than substitutes.


https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_are_your_impressions_on_ResearchGate_versus_Academiaedu_versus_Mendeley12
4.8. Academia.edu for me?

Since I’m writing this post as a way of thinking through the possible issues, I’d just like to pose a number of open questions:

If academia.edu is increasingly used by a public audience to find ‘us’, perhaps researchers might want to consider the way in which they present themselves to that audience. For example, the way biographies are presented on academia.edu seems to be typically academic-facing, emphasising a person’s specialised fields of research, key publications and awards, teaching. Portrait images are often quite formal. Many biographies, I suspect, are a straight copy-and-paste from biographies on institutional websites which are, let’s face it, often pretty dull. The self-presentation on academia.edu is not necessarily ‘friendly’, especially when compared to the flexible and jovial way many academics present on social media. Should academics adapt their profile even on what has been a traditionally ‘academic’ network?

As research assessment such as the REF seems increasingly likely to be metric-driven, we need sharper tools to diagnose just who is bookmarking, citing, and sharing research. For instance, if a research paper is bookmarked by 100 non-researchers, this hints that the impact of the research is outward facing.

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4.9. Academia.edu writing clues

has no writing advice, no peer review, no editors

-> language clues are even more important, but you have to down-load all the texts (requested texts are probably more reliable, because of copyright
5. Conclusion
RQ1) Who uses – how/why?

young academics can use Wikipedia
• as an entry into a new field, for a new topic, as a jump page to primary data;
• to search for terms in context;
? to discuss
?? no quality control
+ some concern for academic writing conventions
+ quantity: encyclopaedic

Academia.edu
• to follow researchers and (sub-)disciplines;
• to discover papers;
• to promote texts and publications (marketing)
+ names
???? (quality) control
- no concern for academic writing conventions
- search combinations
• “waiting for the big picture to emerge”??
Results – hedges per 100,000 words

Wikipedia

Britannica Online

RQ2) linguistic clues to test reliability
Results - Modal Verbs

RQ3) Academia.edu as a research base

Fig. 2: Relative frequencies of modal verbs in the Academia.edu-Corpus

- May
- Might
- Should
- Must

Frequency per 100,000 words

Ghanaian, Nigerian, British, German, Chinese, Italian, Russian
Fig. 2: Personal Pronouns in the Academia.edu-Corpus per 100,000 words
References


