

# Disseminate your work beyond your research field through self-archiving

S. Todoroki\*

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## Abstract

A research paper that I presented in English at a material informatics workshop caught a Japanese linguist's eye. This is because I self-archived its Japanese translation thus making accessible to him on the net without any language barrier. An analysis of visits to my homepage over the past four years reveals that they are closely related to my publications in domestic journals.

## Self-archive your work in your native language

Web search engines have become indispensable tools. Our typical first action when we want to know more about something is to type some key words in our native language into a search engine window. This is also true in our scientific research activities even if we admit English is the standard language of science. It is difficult to abandon the language that we know best.

The reverse is also true. As non-native speakers of English, we always encounter a language barrier when disseminating our work. Although we publish original papers in academic journals in English, the potential readers are usually limited to researchers within our specialist areas. To provide those outside our fields with some idea of our activities, we should try to deliver it in our mother tongue. Therefore, we should not disregard requests for contributions to domestic journals. The publication of your manuscript on the net, if the publisher permits it, will attract new readers via search engines.

Recently, this self-archiving service has become affordable for ordinary researchers. Institutional repositories provide this service for those in universities and research institutes. Others can upload their articles to document sharing websites such as `scribd.com` known as the “YouTube for documents”. This article focuses on native language dissemination via self-archiving.

## Self-archiving attracts visitors to your website

I set up my homepage in 1995 and began self-archiving there in 2000. Figure 1 shows cumulative page views (thick line) and my publications, which consist of peer-reviewed papers in English (blue squares) and non-peer-reviewed and self-archived articles in Japanese (red circles). The relationship between these data seems obvious. However, I found certain interesting correlations after a detailed examination.

In July 2007, I published an essay in the bulletin of an academic society that described useful ideas for managing manuscript writing activities<sup>†</sup>. At the same time, I published the corresponding

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\*National Institute for Materials Science, JAPAN

[http://www.geocities.jp/tokyo\\_1406/](http://www.geocities.jp/tokyo_1406/)

<sup>†</sup>English translation is available[1].

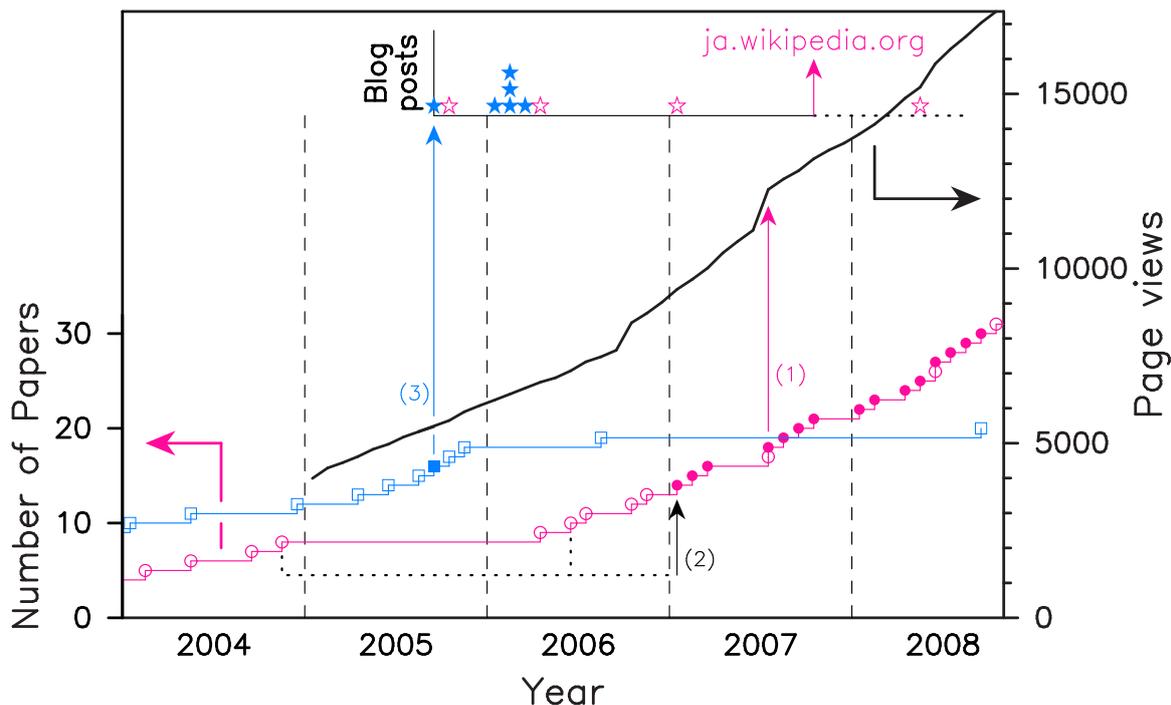


Figure 1: Page view progression of my homepage (thick line, right ordinate) and the cumulative total of my papers (left ordinate;  $\square$  peer-reviewed in English,  $\circ$  not reviewed in Japanese, and  $\bullet$  consecutive issues). The inset graph shows the number of blog posts that mention my paper [2] ( $\blacksquare$ );  $\star$  posts in English or Portuguese and  $\star$  in Japanese. The vertical arrows (1)–(3) show the correlation between these plots (see text).

manuscript file on my homepage and posted an announcement to a bulletin board unrelated to the society but aimed at people who may be interested in my article. Consequently, the total page views in a month was about 700 more than usual (see arrow (1)). This means that the announcement attracted additional readers equivalent to about 10 % of the journal's circulation of 6000 copies per month. Since most of these extra readers would have had no opportunity to see the original article, the effect of self-archiving of is worth noting.

Self-archiving also resulted in a series of invitations to submit contributions. The closed circles in Fig. 1 after February 2007 show the publication of consecutive issues. The first editor to contact me said that she took her cue from my previous articles on the net (see arrow (2)). Since then, I have had regular opportunities to publish serially in certain domestic journals.

Frequent publication brought about a steady increase in visits to my homepage. The thin line with circles in Fig. 1 shows that my self-archived publication of Japanese articles began to increase after mid 2006. This is followed by the increase in page views shown by the thick line, which was because these articles contain references to my self-archived papers with Uniform Resource Locators (URLs). On the other hand, there is no correlation between the page views and the number of peer-reviewed articles in English, shown by the thin line with squares. This is natural because of our behavior with respect to academic journals. We generally look for references in their original rather their self-archived form. Thus, few readers of my papers in English will visit my homepage in order to find cited papers.

## Translation promotes dissemination of your work

After giving a talk on blog-based research notebook at an international workshop on materials informatics in December 2004, a corresponding peer-reviewed paper in English[2] was published on

line in September 2005 (closed square in Fig. 1). Immediately, I uploaded a Japanese translation on my homepage for the convenience of domestic readers. As a result, three young Japanese scientists introduced the paper on their blogs (open stars in Fig. 1). Then, I compiled a list of links to their blogs on my homepage. The list may have led to further publicity about my work on the net; the translation was cited in the article “research notebook” in Wikipedia in Japanese in October 2007.

Subsequently, a post-doctoral fellow in linguistics read the article and posted a comment on the translation to his blog in May 2008. This dissemination beyond the border of specialty is partly because the topic dealt with in the original paper is not restricted to materials science. The most important point is that the self-archived translation attracted the attention of young Japanese researchers via Internet.

It is better to self-archive your work in your mother tongue first because this makes it easy for domestic readers to respond. The response then gives you an impetus to continue self-archiving. In my case, the series of blog posts encouraged me to translate my Japanese articles into English[3]. Fifteen months later, I found an article introducing my translation in a Spanish science blog. That is the joy of self-archiving.

## References

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- [2] S. Todoroki, T. Konishi and S. Inoue: “Blog-based research notebook: personal informatics workbench for high-throughput experimentation”, *Appl. Surface Sci.*, **252** [7] pp. 2640–2645 (2006).
- [3] S. Todoroki: “Two serendipitous episodes — How I embarked on fiber fuse research” (2007). (Translated from 2 articles; *Electric Glass*, **35** pp. 14–18, 2006 and *Industrial Materials*, **55** [4] pp. 97–101, 2007)

## Annotation

- The original article in Japanese will be published in *Materials Integration*, **21** [12] (2008).
- All the references including the originals and their translations are self-archived. You can find them via search engines.