

SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) – SCIENTIFIC REPORT

The STSM applicant submits this report for approval to the STSM coordinator

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STSM title: Epistemological priorities, values and processes as reflected in research article acknowledgments across disciplines

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PURPOSE OF THE STSM

The purpose of this short term scientific mission was to identify core academic values and key research processes as reflected in research article acknowledgments in different disciplines and from international vs local publications perspective. By analysing acknowledgments in research articles in various science fields representing a continuum from hard sciences to soft sciences in English (the international dimension), and in Lithuanian and French, whenever possible bearing in mind the limited availability of research works in national languages in some of the science fields (the local dimension), we have tried to establish specific disciplinary values that authors demonstrated in order to prove their membership in a particular disciplinary community. We have also looked into the processes that are reflected in acknowledgments in an attempt to trace back specific epistemological patterns characteristic to different disciplines. Interviews with scholars about their own acknowledgment writing practices as well as the trends dominating in their fields cast light on the data received from the acknowledgments corpus. By combining a quantitative and qualitative analysis of acknowledgments with the data from the interviews, we also sought to establish whether and how specific disciplinary values and processes reflected in acknowledgments link to research, writing, learning and teaching skills.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE STSM

The objectives of the STSM were achieved in several stages. The first stage included the preparation of the study design. Together with the host of the STSM, we discussed the methods, potential theoretical framework and data collection principles. The method chosen for the study was contrastive corpus-based quantitative and qualitative analysis that has proved to be especially useful for academic discourse investigations. The backbone of the theoretical framework for the study is Becher's (1989) concept of academic tribes and territories as well as Atkinson's (2003, 2004) notion of the national or 'big' culture vs 'small' cultures, such as classroom culture or professional-academic culture, and their role in text construction.

The data collection constituted a very important step in the study as we had to compile a corpus of acknowledgments in several disciplines and several languages. In order to represent a continuum of disciplines from soft to hard science domains, we have decided to focus on Literary studies, Linguistics, Economics, Medicine and Mathematics. One international journal was selected for each of the disciplines to compile the English language data set. We judged whether a journal was international by looking at the description of its aims and scope, the publisher, the editorial board and the affiliation of contributors from the recent issues. The following journals were selected for the study: *Critique: Studies in contemporary fiction* (Literary studies), *Lingua* (Linguistics), *Journal of International Economics* (Economics), *The Lancet* (Medicine), *Advances in Mathematics* (Mathematics). Only research articles were selected for the study, excluding other genres one can find in a research journal, such as, for example, editorials or review articles.

The initial idea was to collect acknowledgments from all articles covering a ten-year span, however, when we started collecting the data, it turned out that most of the journals had many issues each year. For example, *Advances in Mathematics*, published by Elsevier, issued 19 Volumes just in 2017, with each Volume having on average 25 articles. The total number of articles published just in 2017 was 472. Having in mind the scope of the study and the time constraints we had, it was not possible to look through so much data. We have decided, therefore, to limit the scope of the study to 5 years (2013-2017) only. However, even a five-year span yielded 203 articles for English Literary studies and as many as 309 articles for English Linguistics - the two disciplines we used as a pilot. Since the plan was to investigate acknowledgments in 5 disciplines in 3 languages, it was decided to use a limit of maximum 150 articles to be downloaded from each journal, selected for the analysis, throughout 2013-2017.

The situation with French and especially Lithuanian data collection was different, as there were less journals published in these languages than in English and their publishing frequency was typically much lower. It was not possible to find French journals which would publish only French researchers' work. In all disciplines articles were written in French, however not only by French scholars, but also scholars from Belgium, Switzerland, Canada or any other country. In the Lithuanian sub-corpus, the articles written in Lithuanian were primarily authored by Lithuanian scholars. Thus, the final data sets could be classified as international (English), local (Lithuanian) and between international and local (French). For the Lithuanian sub-corpus we used the following journals: *Colloquia* (Literary studies), *Lietuvių kalba* (Linguistics), *Taikomoji Ekonomika* (Economics), *Medicinos teorija ir praktika* (Medicine), and there were no journals for Mathematics published in Lithuanian. For the French sub-corpus we used the following journals: *Littérature* (Literary studies), *Langue française* (Linguistics), *Revue économique* (Economics), *La Revue de Médecine Interne* (Medicine), and no journals for Mathematics. The number of articles taken for the analysis followed the same principle as for the English data set.

The literature review stage primarily included the review of the empirical studies published within the thematic field and could be grouped into two big areas: cross-disciplinary studies of acknowledgments (Cronin et al. 1993, Hyland 2003, Hyland & Tse 2004, Diaz-Faes & Bordons 2014, among others) and cross-linguistic studies of acknowledgments (Giannoni 2002, Cheng 2012, Alemi & Rezanejad 2016).

After the journals and the scope of the data required for the study was determined, each article was downloaded and carefully searched for acknowledgments. Both acknowledgments that appeared in the special section at the end of the article or at the beginning of an article (Example 1) and acknowledgments footnoted in the body of the article (Example 2) were selected for the study:

(1) *Acknowledgment. Many thanks to Dr. Duncan Chesney for his invaluable advice and guidance.* (Literary studies EN)

(2) ¹⁰*We thank an anonymous referee for this suggestion.* (Economics EN)

Each extracted text of acknowledgments was pasted into the Excel spreadsheet detailing the name of the journal, the date, the issue number, the name of the author(s). For the qualitative analysis, each acknowledgments text was carefully read and analysed into the categories that could help trace back the disciplinary or cultural values and processes reflected in the acknowledgments.

Based on the preliminary results, a short semi-structure interview grid was prepared and a total of 8 interviews were conducted with scholars of different disciplinary backgrounds.

Based on the quantitative and qualitative results obtained from the study, the final stage of the STSM was to make the sketch for the research article, parts of which are presented in this report.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

Quantitative analysis

The quantitative analysis yielded the following results (Table 1):

Table 1. The number of articles with and without acknowledgments in the three data sets

Discipline	Lithuanian			French			English		
	nr of articles analysed	no ackn. (%)	with ackn. (%)	nr of articles analysed	no ackn. (%)	with ackn. (%)	nr of articles analysed	no ackn. (%)	with ackn. (%)
Literary studies	62	58 (94%)	4 (6%)	167	158 (95%)	9 (5%)	203	155 (76%)	48 (24%)
Linguistics	51	45 (88%)	6 (12%)	150	101 (67%)	49 (33%)	309	43 (14%)	266 (86%)
Economics	44	44 (100%)	0	150	38 (25%)	112 (75%)	150	3 (2%)	147 (98%)
Medicine	150	147 (98%)	3 (2%)	106	79 (75%)	27 (25%)	150	7 (5%)	143 (95%)
Mathematics	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	27 (18%)	123 (82%)
Total:	307	294 (96%)	13 (4%)	573	376 (66%)	197 (34%)	962	235 (24%)	727 (76%)

A total of 1,842 articles were downloaded and investigated for acknowledgments. 937 articles or 51% of the whole data set contained an acknowledgment, a result which suggests that thanking in writing is important in academic culture. The international vs local dimension of the analysis points to interesting trends with Lithuanian scholars barely using acknowledgments in their research articles (only 13 articles (or 4%) out of 294 contained an acknowledgment) and the international authors expressing thanks frequently in their writing (727 articles (or 76%) out of 962 articles contained an acknowledgment). The French data set shows a middle position with 34% of all downloaded articles having acknowledgments.

While a reference to different systems of values might be too far fetched at this point, we can safely assume that there is a clear manifestation of different traditions of thanking. The interviewed Lithuanian scholars admitted that there has been no tradition of expressing thanks in a written manner in Lithuanian academic culture, especially in the research article genre. Especially those scholars who were representing research areas of a more local character (Lithuanian Philology) said that they have not thought of writing acknowledgments, even though they admitted that it was an important element of academic culture. Lithuanian scholars exposed to international publishing more (English Philology or cooperating with international partners) confirmed that they are very well aware of the tradition to thank people or institutions which in one way or another contributed to the work done and that they typically did that. They have also admitted that this awareness came as a result of reading articles or other texts in English, and that this tradition is already finding its way into the Lithuanian academic culture as well. Even though we can assume that there is influence of English academic tradition, the journals selected for the analysis were mainly representative of the national research areas: the linguistic journal *Lietuvių kalba* (Lithuanian language) is devoted to research on Lithuanian, the literature journal *Colloquia* is published by the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore and focuses mainly on Lithuanian literature. The scholars writing for those journals might have been keen on keeping to the Lithuanian tradition of writing rather than following the English one.

The interviewed French scholars provided valuable ideas as well. While generally inclined to write acknowledgments, one of them mentioned checking the policies and previous articles of a potential research journal. This is an interesting observation which might point towards the role of the journal policies and practices in increasing or decreasing the trends for acknowledging and thus forming particular values in the long run. Another French interviewee admitted to not writing acknowledgments but raised an important aspect of the role of the concerned discipline and its character. The comments of this interviewee suggest that some of the disciplines might be representative of the so called "pre-industrial" type which is based on individual reflexion and does not require a lot of cooperation and assistance. Therefore there is less need for actually acknowledging someone.

This brings us to the cross-disciplinary differences in expressing thanks. We can immediately see in Table 1 that in the French and English data the Literary studies field stands out as having the smallest number of articles with acknowledgments (the number of articles containing acknowledgments in the Lithuanian dataset is too small to make any relevant observations). On the soft to hard disciplinary continuum, the Literary studies stand on the furthest end of the cline and is arguably the most individualistic of the disciplines at hand. We can expect far less cooperation and need for help than in more applied or empirical sciences where it is customary for the groups of scholars to work together in order to get the results. The quantitative data echoes Hyland's (2003: 245) observation for Philosophy:

"Philosophers, for instance, are more likely to inhabit dispersed communities with little reliance on close interaction with others and so have low acknowledgement rates".

While the difference between Literary studies and Medicine could perhaps have been guessed intuitively, the patterns of acknowledgments in Linguistics, Economics and Mathematics were more difficult to predict. Linguistics is a discipline where research articles could range from theoretical observations stemming from only the author's intuitions to large corpora-based or typological studies requiring native language speaker informants or large amounts of data pooled out from various resources. The type of the study then could at least partly predetermine the presence or absence of the acknowledgments. This perhaps explains a larger share of acknowledgments than in Literary studies, but a smaller one than in Economics and Medicine, at least in the English data set. The articles in Economics constituted a surprising data set with virtually all articles in English containing an acknowledgment, and 75% of the articles in French having one. We will see in the qualitative analysis section that there are particular processes in Economics that stand out in the acknowledgments sections, just like in Mathematics.

A final note on the quantitative analysis is the average length of acknowledgments which is documented in Table 2.

Table 2. The length of acknowledgments in the three data sets

Discipline	Lithuanian			French			English		
	ackn. number ¹	total words	average words	ackn. number	total words	average words	ackn. number	total words	average words
Literary studies	5	109	21.8	9	325	36.1	49	2065	42.1
Linguistics	6	120	20.0	57	1501	26.3	179	11,119	62.1
Economics	0	0	0	115	6327	55.0	175	15,199	86.9
Medicine	3	47	15.7	27	1297	48.0	143	18,012	126.0
Mathematics	-	-	-	-	-	-	127	7429	58.5
Total:	14	276	19.7	208	9450	45.4	673	53,824	80.0

Taking into account the overall average word number of acknowledgments in the three data sets we have a pattern very similar to the one already observed. The shortest acknowledgments are in Lithuanian research articles, the longest acknowledgments are in the English articles. French occupies a middle position. So far as disciplines are concerned, the lengthiest acknowledgments are written by doctors, followed by economists and linguists, while the shortest thank you texts are in Literary studies articles. In the French data the articles in Economics enjoy the lengthiest texts of thanks, followed by medical and literary studies articles. French linguists are the most economical with words in their acknowledgments. In Lithuanian there is an opposite trend with the medical articles having the fewest number of words for thanks.

There are two major factors that could predetermine these results. In English medical articles it is customary to mention numerous people or institutions that contributed to the research. This results in quite lengthy acknowledgment sections. In French and English economics articles there is a tendency to thank for more varied types of support which results in higher word density in acknowledgments. This brings us to the second part of the analysis, i.e. whom and for what scholars thank in their acknowledgments.

Qualitative analysis

Tables 3 and 4 below show different categories of people and types of assistance that featured in the acknowledgments:

¹ The number of acknowledgments here and in Table 1 might be different because in Table 1 we list the number of articles with acknowledgments rather than the number of actual acknowledgments. One article can contain a number of acknowledgments as we have also taken into account footnoted acknowledgments in the body of the articles. Also in order to have a more comparable data set for the qualitative analysis we have taken only the first 150 articles in English Literary studies and Linguistics, as such an amount of articles was selected for English Economics, Medicine and Mathematics in the time span of 2013-2017.

Table 3. Categories of thanks in the English data set

Processes and individuals acknowledged	Literary studies (%/raw nr ²)	Linguistics (%/raw nr)	Economics (%/raw nr)	Medicine (%/raw nr)	Mathematics (%/raw nr)
Collegial feedback	69% (33)	70% (85)	82% (121)	20% (28)	73% (90)
Assistance of the editor	6% (3)	5% (6)	52% (76)	-	-
Anonymous peer reviewing	13% (6)	74% (90)	78% (115)	1.5% (2)	41% (50)
Funding	19% (9)	54% (66)	50% (73)	81% (116)	50% (61)
Data, resources permissions	10% (5)	7% (8)	15% (22)	15% (21)	5% (6)
Research assistance	-	23% (28)	19% (28)	50% (72)	-
Moral support & hospitality	17% (8)	6% (7)	9% (13)	3% (4)	25% (31)
Conference participants	19% (9)	43% (52)	86% (126)	2% (3)	7% (8)
Study participants	-	23% (29)	-	45% (64)	-
Centers, offices & teams	-	2% (2)	-	55% (79)	-
Writing assistance	-	11% (14)	-	18% (26)	-
Technical assistance	-	5% (6)	6% (9)	8% (11)	0.8% (1)
Disclaimer	2% (1)	32% (39)	48% (70)	23% (33)	1.6% (2)

Table 4. Categories of thanks in the French data set

Processes and individuals acknowledged	Literary studies (%/raw nr)	Linguistics (%/raw nr)	Economics (%/raw nr)	Medicine (%/raw nr)
Collegial feedback	67% (6)	67% (33)	69% (77)	11% (3)
Assistance of the editor	-	-	21% (24)	-
Anonymous peer reviewing	-	45% (22)	71% (79)	-
Funding	22% (2)	10% (5)	32% (36)	22% (6)
Data, resources permissions	11% (1)	8% (4)	6% (7)	7% (2)
Research assistance	-	20% (10)	11% (12)	37% (10)
Moral support & hospitality	11% (1)	-	3% (3)	7% (2)
Conference participants	-	-	34% (38)	-
Study participants	-	-	-	19% (5)
Centers, offices & teams	-	4% (2)	3% (3)	48% (13)
Writing assistance	-	-	3% (3)	19% (5)

² The percentage is derived from the total number of articles in a particular language and discipline. The raw numbers show how many articles had acknowledgments for one particular process or group of individuals, and are given for comparative purposes.

Technical assistance	-	2% (1)	3% (3)	7% (2)
Disclaimer	-	8% (4)	40% (45)	-

The acknowledgments categories presented in Tables 3 and 4 have been derived from the analysed texts during qualitative analysis. All the 13 categories are exemplified below:

Collegial feedback:

- (3) *The author would like to thank Michael Wemyss for many useful discussions. She would also like to thank Johan de Jong, Michel Van den Bergh, Alexander Kuznetsov, Julian Holstein, Greg Stevenson, and Long Dao for helpful conversations.* (Mathematics EN)
- (4) *We thank Victor Aguirregabiria, Christian Catalini, Alberto Galasso, Avi Goldfarb, Matthew Grennan, John Horton, Mario Macis, and Heather Royer for thoughtful input on earlier drafts.* (Economics EN)
- (5) *Už pagalbą, kurios dėka pavyko ne tik nepasiklysti intertekstų labirinte, bet ir identifikuoti šią nuorodą, nuoširdžiai dėkoju Irinai Melnikovai* (Literary studies LT).
'For the help which allowed me not only to avoid getting lost in the labyrinth of intertexts, but also identify this reference, I sincerely thank Irina Melnikova'.

Assistance of the editor:

- (6) *L'auteur tient à remercier l'éditeur et un rapporteur pour leurs remarques et suggestions.* (Economics FR)

Anonymous reviewing:

- (7) *Je souhaite remercier les trois rapporteurs anonymes pour leurs commentaires qui ont permis d'améliorer ce travail.* (Linguistics FR)
- (8) ⁸*The author gratefully acknowledges the suggestion on the part of an anonymous reviewer to characterize the behavior of tokens in utterance initial position.* (Linguistics EN)

Funding

- (9) *The author gratefully acknowledges financial support in the form of an AARMS Postdoctoral Fellowship and, earlier, an NSERC Postdoctoral Fellowship.* (Mathematics EN)

Access to data, resources, permissions:

- (10) *We are indebted to the other members of the Beta-Blockers in Heart Failure Collaborative Group for database access and extraction support (full list available in Kotecha and colleagues).* (Medicine EN)

Research assistance:

- (11) *We are grateful to Juan José Cortina, Sebastián Cubela, Julián Kozłowski, Matías Moretti, and Lucas Núñez for excellent research assistance.* (Economics EN)

Moral support and hospitality:

- (12) *The author thanks Will Taggart for his tremendous support and thoughtful suggestions on the manuscript.* (Literary studies EN)
- (13) *HDB is grateful for the hospitality extended to him by the Centre de recherches mathématiques, where part of this research was carried.* (Mathematics EN)

Conference / seminar / workshop participants:

- (14) *The authors would also like to thank two anonymous referees, the Editor, and participants at the ASSET Annual Meeting, the Australasia Meeting of the Econometric Society, the ETSG Conference, the Resource Insecurity, International Trade and the Environment Workshop (University of Exeter), the 2nd Seminar on Asia and Pacific*

Economies (XJTLU), and seminars at the KDI School, Kookmin University, Sogang University, University of Cyprus, and Yonsei University for their very helpful comments and suggestions. (Economics EN)

Study participants / informants:

(15) *We thank all the pregnant women who participated in this study. (Medicine EN)*

Centers, staff, offices, teams:

(16) *We thank all the women who participated in the study, and all the staff in the Rosie Hospital (Cambridge, UK) and NIHR Cambridge Clinical Research Facility who provided direct or indirect assistance for the study. (Medicine EN)*

Technical assistance:

(17) *PADĖKA. Už pagalbą atliekant tyrimą dėkojame programuotojui Gediminui Sinkevičiui. (Medicine LT)*
'Acknowledgments. For assistance performing the research we thank the programmer Gediminas Sinkevičius'.

Writing assistance:

(18) *Acknowledgments. <...> Medical writing assistance was provided by Larissa Belova of AbbVie (Chicago, IL, USA). (Medicine EN)*

Disclaimer:

(19) *Il garde néanmoins la responsabilité de toutes les maladroites et imprécisions qui subsisteraient. (Linguistics FR)*

(20) *Any errors which remain are the sole responsibility of the authors. (Economics EN)*

The first finding that is immediately visible in Tables 3 and 4 is the importance of the feedback from colleagues. In all disciplines except Medicine in English and French this is the category of thanks that most of the articles with acknowledgments contained. Within this category we can single out three types of thanks for the support provided: (1) specific support of reading and commenting on earlier drafts of the manuscript, (2) a more general support of useful discussions and conversations which helped to come up with the idea for the article or facilitated interpretation or understanding of the problem, (3) the most general collegial support provided by individual colleagues in the form of general guidance or introduction into the research world. The third category is least frequent, however, it importantly exemplifies the teaching and learning processes in the academia:

(21) *The first author would like to show his greatest respect to Professor Gang Tian who brought him to the area of combinatorial curvature flows. (Mathematics EN)*

(22) *I would like to express my gratitude to the Fulbright Scholarship Program and my generous host, Prof. Donca Steriade. Without her guidance and persistent help this paper would not have been possible. (Linguistics EN)*

Thanks to colleagues for particular type of help here are expressed with a lot of modifying adjectives such as *useful, valuable, constructive, thoughtful, careful* and the like to emphasise the value of the support given and probably to add a personal touch to the expression of gratitude. This category seems to be the most reflective of the values one would expect in the academia - the exchange of ideas and discussions in the quest for the scientific truth. The feedback of colleagues while looking for ideas, constructing the argument or writing the manuscript, as reflected in acknowledgments, seems to be a crucial asset of academic life especially in the soft domains of science. The medical field, on the other hand, operates on a different level. Numerous individuals and institutions acknowledged in the papers or listed as authors of the article indicate a much broader scale of research and cooperation in this science field. The discussion of different research items could take place between the co-authors and since there are so many of them the paper might not be subjected to the feedback from colleagues who are not part of the study. The writing of the paper is very formalised, with clear structural grid, and frequently, as could be guessed from acknowledgments, written by scientific writers rather than the authors themselves:

(23) *Writing and editing support, including preparation of the draft manuscript under the direction and guidance of the authors, incorporating author feedback, and manuscript submission, was provided by Alan Saltzman, of Endpoint Medical Communications (Conshohocken, PA, USA), and Michael A Nissen of AstraZeneca; this support was funded by AstraZeneca (Medicine EN)*

In this discipline the process of giving feedback on the manuscript does not seem to be as important as in Literary studies, for example, where the construction of the text and the phrasing of ideas is a value in itself.

One more important aspect which shows certain disciplinary differences in values and processes characteristic to certain science fields is acknowledgments for peer review, which is an essential and inevitable element of the publishing process. It can be the case that the author has never received funding, has never looked for feedback and has never required technical or research assistance, so it is natural that s/he is not thanking anyone. However, every article has to go through peer review and every author receives those reviews, so in theory every author could have grounds to acknowledge this process in the article acknowledgments. As we can see in Tables 3 and 4 the trends in both English and French articles are similar. Scholars in Economics and Linguistics place a lot of importance on the peer review process as reflected in acknowledgments; conversely, in the fields of Literary studies and Medicine peer reviewing is barely acknowledged. Articles in Mathematics occupy a middle position in the English language data set with 41% of articles acknowledging peer review.

Especially in international Linguistics, peer review seems to be an essential process. The footnote area is the arena where scientific authors engage in their virtual discussion with anonymous reviewers. It is not infrequent that the space occupied by footnotes on the page is nearly equal to the space of the main text. It does not mean that authors always agree with reviewers and thank them. Quite frequently they explain in the footnotes why they disagree with the viewpoint of the reviewers and defend their own position. However, there are also frequent cases when authors thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and observations, and not only in the main acknowledgment text, but also in footnotes:

(24) <...> *I am also grateful to three anonymous reviewers of this journal for their constructive and thorough comments <...>. ¹⁰ I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this issue <...>. ¹³ I thank an anonymous reviewer for mentioning this potential problem <...>. ¹⁴ I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this issue <...>. ¹⁷ I thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting that I clarify how my arguments relate to Geurts' objection <...>. ¹⁹ I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this point <...>. ²⁰ I thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion and helpful examples illustrating this phenomenon <...>. ²¹ I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this question. (Linguistics EN).*

All 8 cases of thanks in Example (24) come from one article which is a clear witness to the importance and value of peer review.

An interesting aspect which was noted by an interviewee from Economics is that typically researchers specialise in narrow fields where they more or less know each other and as a result thanking a reviewer, even though it is an anonymous reviewer, is a good strategy to keep up good relations with peers in the field.

Another category that should be discussed in terms of disciplinary values and processes is the category of feedback from conference participants and support and hospitality. While seemingly unrelated at first sight, they point at different traditions possibly present in different disciplines. Thanking participants at various oral communication events, such as conferences, seminars, workshops seems to be especially characteristic to Economics articles in both languages. This suggests the importance and tradition to present the research at those events before actually publishing it. This is also evident in Linguistics, just to a smaller extent. Conversely, in Mathematics research articles thanking conference participants is not common; however, what is relatively common in that discipline is thanking colleagues for hospitality, which might point at a different medium of the exchange of research ideas and studies. Instead of presenting at conference it might be more typical to arrange research visits at host institutions.

In conclusion, the main aspects of acknowledgments are indeed indicative of certain traditions that can be linked to disciplinary or cultural values. Lithuanian scholars seem to value the oral tradition of thanking, with the written tradition probably slowly making its way into their research culture. In the international journals published in English most of the disciplines favour acknowledgments to a large extent. It could be a sincere wish to thank people involved in the study, or it could be a marketing strategy (as pointed out by one interviewee) or a way to keep good professional relations in the field. In any case they show a close link between research and writing, learning and teaching. The highest number of acknowledgments for collegial support in most of the analysed disciplines confirms the value of sharing ideas between colleagues, and this is one of the driving forces that facilitates research and writing. It is also indicative of learning and teaching processes as by reading and commenting on the manuscripts, colleagues, editors and anonymous reviewers all strive for an excellent research product that is written well.

The knowledge of those values and processes is crucial for showing oneself as an insider in the discipline. Some Lithuanian interviewees familiar with the tradition of acknowledgments said that they would be surprised if colleagues whom they have helped would not have acknowledged that assistance. On the other hand, the interviewees

less exposed to the English language tradition mentioned that it would be very strange if they were thanked in a written way. We have also seen that there are disciplines where acknowledgments are rare, so keeping in line with what is expected is very important to avoid rhetorical clashes.

FUTURE COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)

(max.500 words)

The future collaboration with the host of the STSM is to complete the article and submit it for publication this year.

It might be interesting to contact by e-mail some of the authors whose articles were analysed and inquire about certain aspects of acknowledgments which are not easily explainable. A case in point is, for example, a high frequency of acknowledgments to editors in Economics articles in English. The feedback from the people whose acknowledgments were actually analysed could enrich the study at hand and provide further useful insights into the values and processes characteristic of particular disciplines, as well as into the links between research, writing, teaching and learning skills required for successful publishing.

Looking at the further avenues of potential cooperation, it would be important to explore the values and processes reflected in the acknowledgments written by students in different disciplines and in different languages.