

Astigmatism terminology and source references



The article by Trivizki et al.¹ used vector analysis in the understanding of correction of postkeratoplasty astigmatism. The article was effective in examining a complex subject of interest; however, there are problems of terminology and attribution of the source references used for the vectorial analysis.

The term *correction ratio* in the title and other terms used throughout the article are identical to the *correction index* and others I described in the method I developed and published in 1993² and subsequently, which were not referenced or acknowledged.

An editorial in the December 2006 issue of the *Journal of Cataract & Refractive Surgery* (JCRS)³ acknowledged that “Alpins’ [my] work was not acknowledged as fully as was warranted” in the paper by Eydelman et al,⁴ which likewise adopted several elements of my approach and was described as the non-peer-reviewed work of a subcommittee of the American National Standards Institute. A subsequent JCRS editorial by Dupps,⁵ as well as the JCRS information for authors, noted the importance of citing source references accurately to avoid “distorting the field by remapping key contributions inaccurately,” warning that “such errors are prone to propagation.” I believe this has occurred in the case of the article by Trivizki et al.¹

In response to my letter to the editor on this subject,⁶ the editors’ note stated, “We agree: It is important to recognize and reference Alpins’ pioneering work in this area and particularly the analytical system that he developed, a modified version of which was described by Eydelman et al.⁴ For purposes of clarity and consistency with the majority of papers that use this type of analysis, we recommend that authors use Alpins’ original terms and equations.”

It appears that at least 1 editor and 2 reviewers are not acquainted with the JCRS’ own guidelines. This practice of using nonconventional terminology can only result in confusion in the literature.

This issue was also addressed by the *Journal of Refractive Surgery* (JRS) in an editorial published in October 2014⁷ that instructed authors to use the seminal method that I published in JCRS in 1993 and 1997.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), in its journal *Ophthalmology*, has also followed the lead of JRS and published the following⁸: “For clarity and uniformity, manuscripts about astigmatism should adhere to terminology and graphical representations originally described by Alpins.² An editorial by Reinstein et al. outlines the argument for standardization.⁷”

The *Journal of Cataract & Refractive Surgery* should follow the example of the AAO for all the reasons set out clearly in the JRS editorial, and perhaps also for the fact that JCRS and *Ophthalmology* share the same publisher.

To reduce the impact of this deviation from other accepted author guidelines and avoid further propagation of these errors, I would also ask the authors to seek to amend the online copy of their paper, using the original terminology and the references from which the terms and methods used are derived.

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REFERENCES

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Reply: Dr. Alpins brought to our attention that we were remiss in not being precise in our use of the original terminology *correction index* in our paper, nor did we reference or acknowledge his pioneering work in inventing the analytical system¹ we used in our paper. We have nothing but respect and admiration for Dr. Alpins and did not have the remotest intention to slight him. We had used Eydelman et al.’s² modified version of the Alpins system that included minor changes in terms that had been acknowledged by the Astigmatism Project Group of the American National Standards Institute.

In deference to Dr. Alpins’ request, we will request the JCRS to amend our online version of the paper

