

# Electronic Publishing of the Online Journal “Forum: Qualitative Social Research” (FQS)

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## Abstract

In this work we present the electronic publishing process of the Online Journal “Forum: Qualitative Social Research” (FQS). We introduce technologies and tools used to optimize the publishing process, to provide sustainability of FQS publications and to extend the communicative possibilities, but also to net the FQS with other social research Internet resources and to make it accessible to other interdisciplinary groups.

## 1 FQS Publishing Process

“Forum: Qualitative Social Research” (FQS)<sup>1</sup> is a peer-reviewed multilingual online journal for qualitative research. The main aim of FQS is to promote discussion and cooperation among qualitative researchers from different countries and social science disciplines.

The FQS publishing process (Figure 1) includes three main components: authoring, review and presentation. Authors use a word processing tool, mostly Microsoft Word, to write an article. After the submission, the article passes through several review processes: technical, content, language and formal review. If the article is accepted for publication, the document is formatted and prepared for the final presentation. The article is then presented to the users in HTML and PDF format.

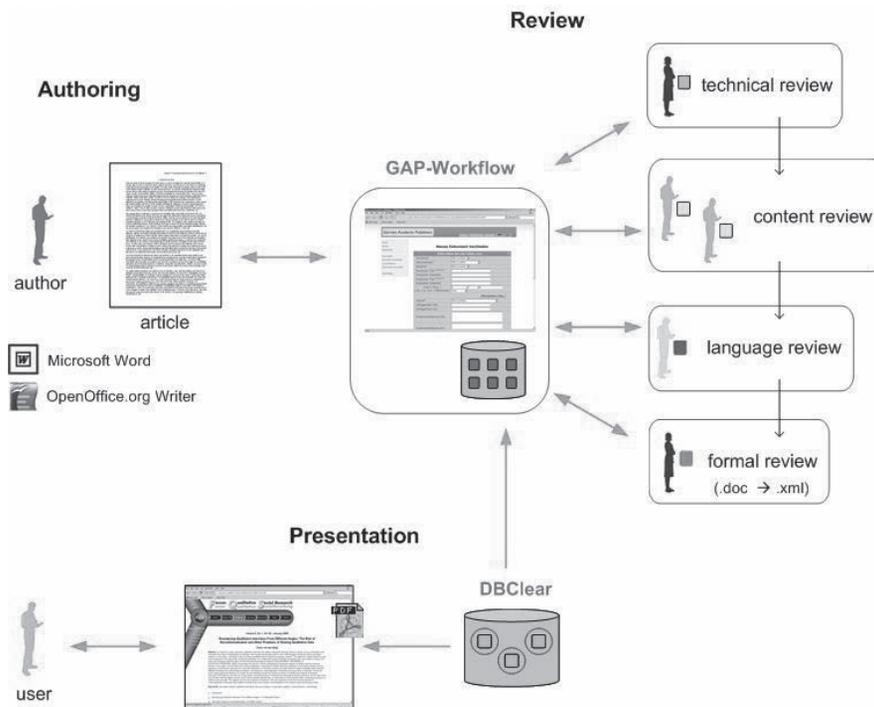


Figure 1. FQS Publishing Process.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs/>

## 1.1 Authoring

XML data format is used to automate the document processing. XML schema, which describes the FQS article structure and elements, and an XML-based authoring tool are required. The latter should provide WYSIWYG editing and authorial control over document layout. They should also work with the authoring tool as they are used to with a word processing tool like Microsoft Word. The diversity of authors and technical backgrounds does not allow us to assume that all will use the authoring tool immediately. Thus, the tool should also be used by the FQS staff for converting the Word document to a XML document.

The existing XML schemas DocBook DTD, WordML and OpenOffice.org XML, as well as the corresponding authoring tools were analyzed according to FQS requirements. OpenOffice.org Writer, an open source word processing tool similar to Microsoft Word, was chosen. The internal file format of the OpenOffice.org Writer is the OpenOffice.org XML format, which is the basis for the OASIS Open Document Format for Office Applications—a standard office format maintained by an independent consortium. The OpenOffice.org XML and OpenDocument format covers all FQS requirements on the layout. The information about the FQS article structure and elements can be added to the XML document using additionally defined templates (OpenOffice.org formatting styles). The transformations of the OpenOffice.org XML format to HTML and PDF already exist for most of the document elements.

## 1.2 Review

All editorial work, from the submission of a document by an author until the publishing release, will be organized by a web-based workflow system developed in the project German Academic Publishers (Braun, 2003). It provides the necessary infrastructure for a peer-review process and online management of users and roles. The system also includes automated extraction of the metadata and the OAI interface for the metadata harvesting. It supports double blind review and will provide the individual layout and workflow configuration - the features essential for FQS. The configurability of the workflow should enable the chief editor to define the workflow steps and the involved roles, as well as to determine the order, duration and names of the single workflow steps. GAP Workflow will also be released under an open source license.

## 1.3 Presentation

The presentation of published articles will be handled by DBClear—a database-based clearinghouse system (Hellweg et al., 2002). DBClear is used in order to integrate FQS into the information portal Social Science Virtual Library (ViBSoz). DBClear provides simple but advanced search functionality and offers an alternative browsing via the metadata fields, e.g. authors, keywords, etc. The data can also be harvested and searched by meta-search engines via OAI protocol. This will enable the FQS article metadata to appear in the central literature database in Germany, SOLIS, and thus will be found from the interdisciplinary information service infoconnex. The integration of FQS into the information portal ViBSoz provides a possibility to link a citation in an article to the bibliographic data in the information portal and thereby facilitates reader access to additional subject information.

## References

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