EDITORIAL

WHY DO I DO IT AND NOT PUBLISH IT? Part 2

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The following guidelines to scientific writing, present in the Part 2 of the editorial "Why do I do it and not publish it?", are directed to quantitative research, but can also be used by researchers using qualitative approaches.

1) Choose the journal you are going to send your paper to and write it according to that journal's rules since the beginning. Read some papers from the last number of the journal: that allows you to get used to the style of the papers already published.

2) Before beginning a randomized clinical trial, you should read the guidelines to this kind of research and register it at the Clinical Trials Brazilian Registry Registro de Ensaios Clínicos Brasileiros (REBRAC)[1] or at the Clinical Trials website[2]. National and international journals ask for the registry number when you submit your article.

3) It is highly recommended that you use statments for scientific writing according to the design of your study. The main kinds of studies and their statements are: randomized clinical trial, CONSORT[3]; cross-sectional studies, STROBE[4]; diagnostic studies, STARD[5]; systematic reviews with meta-analysis, PRISMA[6]; and qualitative studies, COREQ[7].

4) You can occasionally write in the first person in a scientific publication, but the third person is usually preferable.

5) Scientific writing should be clear, objective, and written in direct order with short and striking sentences.

6) Before beginning to write, make a script with your ideas and the logical order they will be presented. You can only write clearly if you have clear ideas in mind. Some research groups, such as Duke University's Research on Research, provide templates in the internet. These templates help guide your writing and make it easier[8].

7) Have a dictionary nearby and, when in doubt, use it.

8) Write in direct order: subject + verb + complement. Specialists in rhetoric, linguistics and psychology give us wonderful tips on the sequence words and ideas should be in a text[9].

9) Watch out for sentences that need too many commas. A sentence full of commas needs some periods. If you are in doubt, use the period. If the information you are trying to convene does not deserve a new sentence, it is probably not important and may be eliminated.

10) Avoid interspersed phrases, parentheses and dashes.

11) Use only essential adjectives and advebs,

12) Avoid repetitions. Try not to use augmentatives, diminutives and superlatives more than once in a paragraph.

13) Avoid echoes (ex. "evolução da produção") and cacophonous words and phrases (ex. "... uma por cada tratamento")

14) Use affirmative sentences.

15) Sentences in the passive voice are used in many scientific reports and papers, but some journals recommend that it not be used.

16) A paragraph is a unit of thought. Its first sentence should be short and emphatic, and it should contain the mos important information. Subsequent sentences should corroborate the content of the first one. The last sentence should act as a link to the next paragraph. The main purpose of a scientific text is not only to present ideas, but to really communicate information and thoughts. Editors and readers need to identify exactly what the author had in mind[9].

Dear researchers, the suggestions above, as well as the references of this editorial, bring more details about scientific writing and they deserve to be read. Every author has its writing style; however, some of the guidelines above are consensual in the scientific community.

The articles in this edition exemplify this way of thinking, for they were reviewed in accordance with parameters demanded by international databases. This evaluation process lends scientific status and credibility in the scientific community to publications, and that is the case of Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem.

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3 Schulz KF, Altman DG, Moher D; CONSORT Group. CONSORT 2010 statement: updated guidelines for reporting parallel group randomised trials. BMJ. 2010;340:c332.

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5 Bossuyt PM, Reitsma JB, Bruns DE, Gatsonis CA, Glasziou PP, Irwig LM, et al. Towards complete and accurate reporting of studies of diagnostic accuracy: the STARD initiative. Fam Pract. 2004;21(1):4-10.

6 Liberati A, Altman DG, Tetzlaff J, Mulrow C, Gøtzsche PC, Ioannidis JP, et al. The PRISMA statement for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses of studies that evaluate health care interventions: explanation and elaboration. PLoS Med. 2009;6(7):e1000100.

7 Tong A, Sainsbury P, Craig J. Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. Int J Qual Health Care. 2007;19(6):349-57.

8 Duke University. Research on Research [Internet]. Durham; [20--] [cited 2011 June 09]. Available from: http://www.researchonresearch.duhs.duke.edu/.

9 Gopen GD, Swan JA. If the reader is to grasp what the writer means, the writer must understand what the reader needs. Am Sci [Internet]. 1990;78:550-8 [cited 2011 June 09]. Available from: https://www.americanscientist.org/issues/id.877,y.0,no.,content.true,page.1,css.print/issue.aspx.

RECOMMENDED READING

1 Valenti WC. Cientistas também precisam ter estilo. J Cons Reg Biol. 1998;49:7.

2 Davidson AJ, Carlin JB. What a reviewer wants. Pediatr Anaesth. 2008;18(12):1149-56.

3 Van Way III CW. Writing a scientific paper. Nutr Clin Pract. 2007;22(6):636-40.

4 Abrahamsohn PA. Redação científica. Guanabara Koogan; 2004.