It is with great satisfaction that I have received the news that the official journal of the Brazilian Society of Dermatology will now be published in English. This nearly centenary medical publication, originally called "Annaes Brasileiros de Dermatologia e Sifiligraphia (1925)," has successfully fulfilled the aspirations of the dermatology community throughout its admirable history, promoting the recycling of professionals and encouraging the culture of scientific writing among our colleagues.

But times have changed. Medical science has become universal, and over sixty years ago the world chose English as the code for information exchange, when the French school of dermatology started losing its hegemony to American and British schools. It is known that all journals indexed in Medline, with a relevant impact factor in dermatology (i.e. read and cited by peers), are written and published in the English language. As examples, among some of the dermatology journals published by counterpart societies but whose mother language is not English, we may cite Dermatology (French-Swiss publication), the Journal of Dermatology (Japanese Association of Dermatology), JDDG (Journal der Deutschen Gesellschaft Dermatologischen, of the German Society of Dermatology), Acta Derm-Venerologica (Scandinavia), International Journal of Cosmetic Science (French Society of Dermatology), among others.

Nearly 30 years ago, on a survey of several international information programs on science and technology, Garcia spoke on the adoption of the English language to divulge scientific information "English-speaking countries have taken a clear advantage over the others, and the latter have shown a tendency to adopt this language for purposes of scientific and technological information, as is the case of Japan."

Similarly to the second largest society of dermatology in the world, the Brazilian Society of Dermatology must adapt to the reality of current medical science, allowing everyone to access to information produced here and, even more, letting others know who we are and how we can contribute to knowledge in the area of dermatology.

The Portuguese language is extremely rich, but it wouldn’t allow us to be recognized as capable of exerting a dramatic influence in the area of dermatology in the global village of the XXI century.

To the Editors of the Brazilian Annals of Dermatology (Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia),

Paulo Ricardo Criado

To the Editors

I am taking the liberty of writing to you in an attempt to justify a request that I have defended since its inception regarding the language in which the Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia is published.

As I believe you may already know, I have been publishing papers regularly in some Brazilian and international journals, including the Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia, the Journal of the Brazilian Society of Tropical Medicine, the Journal of the São Paulo Institute of Tropical Medicine, the Toxicon and the Wilderness & Environmental Medicine. Some of these journals have a high "qualis" factor [a strange factor invented by CAPES (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior) to classify papers according to the name of the journal rather than on their specific merit]; others do not.

In my opinion, our publications should be aimed at a specific type of reader. An original paper within the field of dermatology is aimed at a certain segment of the public in an INDEXED dermatology journal. An accident involving some wild animal would be very well received in Wilderness &

REFERENCE


Vidal Haddad Junior

To the Editors
Environmental Medicine, just as the publication of papers on poisonous animals would be more appropriate in Toxicon. This should be the first step in publishing our papers rather than attempting to achieve goals established by CAPES, an institution that, incidentally, never helped me in any way whatsoever. This is a change of focus that needs to be made in our community and in our journal.

The second step is that, once it is made available, the paper has to be READ by dermatologists all over the world. In this respect, despite the availability of English versions on the Internet, all the versions of the papers that can be found in an Internet search are in Portuguese. With all due respect to our beautiful, complex language, this is the equivalent of burying the manuscript in a hole in the ground. Let me give you an example. Around five years ago, I published a study on accidents involving aquatic animals in aquariums (which, by the way, won an award in the Anais). The journal was not indexed and no complete English version was available in print. The result was that one year later a Polish author did exactly the same thing that I had done and published his results. To this day he is known as the author of the original idea.

There is absolutely no room for doubt. English is the universal language of scientific publications and our professionals will have to learn to live with this. Publishing the journal completely in English is an improvement that will ensure smoother circulation worldwide of both the printed edition (which is always held in high regard) and the electronic version, enabling the Anais to reach a wider readership and bringing it into line with all the best international journals. This will certainly contribute towards improving indexation, which is our principal objective.

With best wishes
Vidal Haddad Junior

Dermatology Department Tropical Medicine Foundation of the state of Amazonas

To editors
Sinésio Talhari

It was with enormous surprise that I read in the January/February 2011 edition of the journal of the Brazilian Society of Dermatology that from 2012 onwards only papers submitted in English will be accepted for publication in the Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia. It is most disagreeable to see that our own native language is no longer acceptable for the submission of scientific papers to the Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia!

However, I (and, I believe, many others) had been expecting this to happen. Actually, it had already been happening. We already had an on-line version of the articles in English.

In my opinion, the Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia has made great progress over recent years and has achieved an excellent standard. Throughout its history, many have worked (and continue to work) to ensure that our journal meets current international standards. As we know, the journal has been indexed. However, despite being indexed its impact factor is low. Scientific journals do need to increase their impact factor (and maintain it). In general, the higher the impact factor, the more papers the journal will receive and the greater the possibility of improving the quality of the journal. More of its papers will be quoted, the scientific impact of the papers will be greater, their authors will become better known and more respected, institutes with postgraduate courses will receive more credits and the possibilities of obtaining sponsorship for research will be greater.

At the present time, with the papers being published in Portuguese, the chance of increasing the journal’s impact factor is very slight. Good quality papers by Brazilian investigators are not written in Portuguese. They are written in English and published in international journals.

Worse than the impact factor is the fact that our language is not read by the majority of investigators in the international scientific community. Rarely is a paper in our journal cited. In my opinion, the best example of this is the paper published in Portuguese by Dr. Osmar Matos on the treatment of prurigo nodularis with thalidomide. Has anyone ever seen this paper cited anywhere? Unfortunately, this is just one example of a current trend. Either we publish in English or we continue to be forgotten by the scientific community.

Dr. Izelda and the editors of the Anais Brasileiros de Dermatologia are to be congratulated for the courageous attitude they have taken.

1 Dermatology Department Tropical Medicine Foundation of the state of Amazonas