

Editorial

Over the years in which I have had the satisfaction of being editor-in-chief of the journal *Estudos de Psicologia* (Campinas-SP), I have reflected a great deal about what makes a good editor. The countless challenges which surface in the day-to-day exercise of this function are not limited to, nor are they exclusively punctuated by, the problems of funding, infrastructure and finding qualified staff to make its regular and systematic publication feasible. On the contrary, these problems have been worked around through the responsible actions of PUC-Campinas, which maintains the Publishing Office, and the skills of those who work there. The greatest challenges are represented by the decisions that an editor-in-chief needs to take, decisions which relate to ethics, to the relevance of the studies, to how to increase the journal's impact factor and the need for balance in publications distributed geographically and by area of Psychology. There is always a need to coordinate the interests of all those involved: Authors, readers, opinionists and the journal itself.

Latterly, there has been a frenetic search for space in scientific journals, both on the part of known and respected authors and also bursary students beginning their scientific investigations, who are seeking to have their work published. Some are monographs, others are end-of-course papers, sometimes studies based on dissertations or theses. The competition experienced by the more experienced authors is great since the number of beginners is far higher. Due to the large volume of works received, an editor often has to establish criteria that lead to some works being rejected, either as a result of the topic, the methodological approach employed for the research or the structure of the article itself; this is necessary due to the immense effort that each manuscript represents in terms of peer review, requests for reworking etc. I would stress that this selection process is carefully conducted and that there are works which, though they have their merits, are excluded as they do not conform to the journal's standards.

In addition, there is the difficulty of getting the collaboration of opinionists who can work to the journal's deadlines. A good opinionist is one that does research and publishes on a regular basis, who is used to giving objective opinions and who includes recommendations that help the authors. The better opinionists find themselves overwhelmed by studies for their evaluation, which makes their collaboration within the necessary timeframes more difficult.

There is also the challenge of motivating authors whose works are sent back for reworking, since it is necessary to get on with this quickly so that the article can be reconsidered. Some Brazilian authors still do not have the tenacity required to reformulate and resubmit a piece of work. This is an absolutely normal and not unexpected experience, since it is rare for a work to be accepted upon first presentation. The opinionist, in general, performs an extraordinary job in reading, evaluating and suggesting ways of making the work publishable. When an author does not respond, does not reformulate and does not re-present the article, all the work performed by the opinionist is for naught, both for the journal and for the author. Authors must reflect on this. A detailed opinion is of great assistance in improving the work and it should be regarded as such.

An additional challenge for an editor of a scientific journal is the responsibility of meeting the criteria of the evaluating bodies in order to maintain the evaluation obtained or, whenever possible, improve on it, in order to reach a higher level. On the same subject, it is very difficult to get close to the number of published articles by geographical region of the country, since there are certain regions that produce a significant number of studies, while others exhibit a certain paucity of submissions. The search for work from all the regions of Brazil has a great deal of merit and should doubtless be performed regularly. In the journal *Estudos de Psicologia*, one strategy we have tried to employ is that of inviting researchers from these regions to be opinionists. This generally arouses the interest of other researchers in the region, though it does not always generate the expected number of contributions.

So the challenges are enormous and the road to maintaining the quality of the publication is arduous. The demands that have to be met are great and sometimes difficult to comply with, however they are a determining factor in the search for excellence. At a time when I am taking over the Interim Presidency of the Brazilian Association of Scientific Editors in Psychology (ABECiP) (my official term of office begins in March 2010), I cannot but reflect on the need for great unity amongst the editors in the area, so that they may have greater power and influence over the destiny of psychology journals in Brazil.

In truth, it is an honor to be editor-in-chief of the journal *Estudos de Psicologia* of Campinas (SP), and I would like to congratulate the managers at *PUC-Campinas* for their continued help with the journal. I would also thank the Publishing Office and associate editors for their constant efforts on behalf of its excellence.

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Editor-in-chief