Acknowledgement to our reviewers and to the quality of the English literary expression in “International Orthopaedics”

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International Orthopaedics, in common with the majority of prestigious journals, is written in English. This is a historical fact, although it was originally written in French and published for many years in both French and English, more recently in English with French abstracts before becoming an official English-only language publication. English is a mixture of languages and has been formed over the centuries to become what it is today. It has its roots in ancient English, Celtic languages, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, Norse and most recently French. Now of course there are American adaptations which mainly influence spelling and grammar. International Orthopaedics is now written in the native tongue of the British Isles referred to as the Queen’s English or perhaps more recently Boris’s English. This can cause problems as spell checkers tend to use American versions and Google will refer to British English, a dreadful term!

The correct use of language in International Orthopaedics is fundamental to getting an article’s message across. This not only includes spelling and grammar but also clarity of expression. There seems little point in striving to get the science right but failing to deliver the message in a clear and understandable form. This is achieved by the use of editing at two stages during the acceptance process for an article. The first step is from the editing team at Springer. The article is checked for basic language and punctuation and to ensure it follows the ‘instructions for authors’. It would be sensible to read the journal to understand the style used before submitting an article. The article is then submitted to Andrew Quaile, as content editor, for a further check. He edits the English to the correct

version and relies upon the Oxford Dictionary and New Harts Rules for both spelling and grammar.

A second reason for being very particular about the language in an article is the fact that English is not the native language of a very large volume of the readership. It is our opinion that it is therefore important to educate in the use of language. This is to an extent a subliminal role of the journal.

When the book “Eats, Shoots & Leaves” was published it became a bestseller, an unusual occurrence for a book that is all about punctuation [1]. However, people see language as a reflection of competence. Make lots of writing mistakes, and you will come across as uneducated and uninformed. Poor spelling and grammatical errors signal a lack of attention to detail and do not inspire confidence. A good command of punctuation and knowing how to avoid simple, and unfortunately all too common, mistakes can make a world of difference to the way your article is perceived [2, 3].

Finally, the journal must have the last say in how an article is produced and published. It is clearly in the journal’s best interests to publish attractive readable articles which will increase the journal’s impact factor. However, our main goal is to improve our readers knowledge and to provide continuous medical education [4–7]. This will benefit both authors and the general readership. There are sometimes debates about how words should be spelt or used but the final decision must be for the Editor and Editorial Board. We publish Editorials based on some issues which merit debate or on what seems important for us [8–15]. Many of our reviewers, corresponding members or board members are authors or co-authors of those Editorials, helping us to keep an open written interaction with our contributors. More recently, social media helps in getting controversial issues debated, and it is surprising that the most discussed papers are not exactly the most cited ones, making Altmetrics another field of interest to follow [16, 17].

International Orthopaedics is the official journal of the SICOT and represents several tens of thousands of members, affiliated members and specialists from over 100 countries on five continents. We are one of the most visible and appreciated

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medical publications in the field of orthopaedics worldwide, and this is due in major part to your work for which we must acknowledge and give praise.

We are a drop in the ocean of medical progress, but we see our numbers and parameters grow with our visibility improving every year. Our current impact factor is growing and we are currently included in the first quartile of the indexed publications in the Connective Tissue specialities, including Rheumatology, Bone Metabolism, Biomechanics, and finally Orthopaedics.

The vast majority of our reviewers are also authors and we strongly encourage our reviewers to publish with us, as reviewing is one of the best methods to improve one's writing skills, evaluating other colleagues work in the process of peer review. It is not a secret that many major names in medical science, notorious researchers and academic surgeons act as reviewers for different publications; their relation with the Editorial Board is improving with every quality review and their names are commonly cited in our Board Meetings. Recently we issued a reviewer's certificate that is issued by our office and that can be delivered by request to all our active reviewers; this could eventually help to acknowledge their efforts or be used for academic promotion purposes.

In our last Board Meeting in November 2017 we voted for 30 new Corresponding Members for our Board. All those highly respected individuals from many countries and orthopaedic schools are important for us and contribute significantly to our success, to a quicker-paced and more efficient workflow. Our role is to provide the necessary advice.

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