



Letter to the editor

Scientific Writing: the importance of this skill for the Brazilian medical student

Escrita científica: a importância dessa habilidade para o estudante de medicina brasileiro

Escritura científica: la importancia de esta habilidad para el estudiante de medicina brasileño

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Dear Editor,

The contact with written language generally happens in the early age of the vast majority of individuals. During Elementary School the students are encouraged to write their ideas down on a paper simply and mechanically. Through the years, those same students evolve more robust and complex writing skills and start to learn about the difference between the types of texts and the context in which each of them must be applied.

Nevertheless, it is during undergraduate that scientific writing starts to be, directly, part of the teaching and learning dynamics of the students. This type of writing can be defined as the research of new ideas, concepts, interpretations and theoretical models that aim to inform, directly and objectively, about a given topic(1).

During undergraduate of Medicine, scientific writing skills are extremely important for the students learn process and their professional qualification as future doctors. The development of these skills, especially scientific reasoning and writing itself, as mentioned, contribute straight to the improvement of the Public Health scenario, as soon as the understanding of scientific language within the academic environment allows the medical student to perform, in medical practice, the scientific knowledge learned during the program(2).

Therefore, the student– and future health professional – can play different roles in society. At first, we can see the doctor or the medical student as the one who develops the research and, later, the scientific knowledge acquired from it. On the other hand, the doctor or student also plays the role of a mediator who spreads this scientific knowledge to the population. The health professional is who will propagate to his patient, in a simplified, objective and simpler language, the knowledge from several pieces of research in the field of science.

As a result, medical training requires an understanding of scientific knowledge and the ability to pass it along to society in a clear, objective and simplified way. Ensuring that this knowledge, previously restricted to an academic

language, often robust and complex, reach all layers of society and be understood by a wide range of people.

The understanding of why scientific writing skills are important to medical programs takes place as academic education progresses. Students from more advanced periods, who already had experienced research, initiation and scientific production, understand more easily about this importance, because, in most cases, they have already developed a part of their critical maturity on this topic(3).

Following this logic, the National Curriculum Guidelines (free translation to Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais - DNC) of the undergraduate medical course in Brazil requires that doctors comply with a couple of conducts for the proper practices of Medicine. Between those conducts, DCN mentions skills related to science, enhancing their importance for the professional training of future doctors, as shown down below(4):

1. Master the basic scientific knowledge of the biopsychosocioenvironmental nature related to medical practice and be critical in the interpretation of data, identifying the type of problems in medical practice and solving them.
2. Perform medicine using diagnostic and therapeutic procedures based on scientific evidence.
3. Properly use semiological and therapeutic resources, scientifically validated, contemporary, hierarchical for comprehensive health care, in the first, second and third levels of care.
4. Know the principles of scientific methodology, enabling them to critically read technical-scientific articles and participate in the production of knowledge.

Based on that, DCN reinforces the importance of science and scientific knowledge for Brazilian students of Medicine. From the initial contact with scientific articles and journals during undergraduate to working with patients in primary and secondary care, or in more complex cases of health

care, all the actions of a student and future doctor must be based on scientific proof.

To conclude with, scientific writing skills are essential to the professional qualification of Brazilian doctors, who must understand the science and make it understood by all of society, responsibly cooperating with Brazilian Public Health.

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