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The necessary work for developing a scientific publication is sometimes underestimated and requires the effective participation of many players to obtain a result in good standard. Initially it depends upon the determination of the authors that decide to write the scientific article. Scientific writing is a very challenging and time consuming task, but at the same time essential for any scientist. A published scientific article is unquestionably one of the main indicators of scientific production, especially if published in a qualified scientific journal with highly qualified editorial committee and strict peer review procedure. By looking at evaluation criteria for scientific production of the several Thematic Scientific Committees of the Brazilian Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) it becomes clear publications in scientific journals that has certified quality is the most important item in the evaluation of a scientist production.

The process of scientific publication creates the opportunity of interaction among the editor, authors and peer reviewers. This may result in significant experience exchange and learning opportunity for all involved. In general, the editor is responsible for the overview of text preparation for publication (Kunsch, 2004) and assumes an important role in the intermediation of the communication among authors and peer reviewers to improve the quality of the scientific article to achieve the quality standard established by the journal's editorial board.

A scientific publication has to follow rules established for the journal since the article submission throughout the evaluation and review process. However, before the norms, comes the scientific content. It is essential that each article has a significant contribution to science advancement or reveals new knowledge about a theme or a particular region. According to Kunsch (2004) it is important to distinguish between “discover context” and “presentation context”. In general, the first context determines whether the article has the potential to be published while the second context can be improved during the editorial and review process. It only requires critical sense, humbleness, persistence and interaction.

The structure of the text is essential. It is based on chapters that follow a logic sequence to expose the ideas that come from the experience reported by other authors, experimental data, analyses, etc. Articles with good scientific content presented in poor structured format are common. Krzyzanowski and Ferreira (1998) reporting on a critical analysis of scientific journals pointed out the following flaws: irregular publication and distribution of issues; lack of normalization of article's and journal's presentations; lack of editorial committee and peer reviewers. In addition, they reported that Brazilian journals have the difficulty of Portuguese language penetration and sometimes the lack of originality in the articles.

The editorial process of a scientific journal is complex because it involves articles from different authors, each one with particular style and approach. The editorial process involves the preparation of the original text for publication following the rules established for the journal. This necessarily requires standard procedures for evaluation and review of the submitted articles to achieve the quality goals established by the journal. For scientific

journals, the language details are less important than the technical evaluation of the scientific content of the article. However, it is essential that the text has good grammar standards and clarity. Thus, in an interdisciplinary journal must have a well composed peer review panel with broad scientific structure of proved qualified members. Therefore, this edition that closes the first published volume of *Ambiente e Água – An Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Science* is dedicated to the peer reviewers, individually acknowledged in the first pages of this issue.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

The review process starts with the authors since the very first lines of the text. The authors should read the text from the beginning every time he/she restarts writing the article for continuous improvement of the language. This is an opportunity to revisit the text with different time perspectives. However, the author's vision can be amplified if the publication process offers plentiful opportunities for interaction. The process involves the work of scientists that have volunteered to review the scientific content of the article and critically analyze the scientific method and results. However, once the scientific analysis is concluded, the article should undergo a language review by a linguistic professional that will check the syntax, grammar, punctuation and expression clarity by eliminating any ambiguity in the text. A noticeable improvement in the initial text should be expected as a result of this procedure and although the article had significant scientific content, it might have had flaws in communication. The fundamental principle of this process is interaction. The reviewer cannot alter the meaning of the authors. Therefore, it is important the interaction between the reviewer and the authors to improve the text without missing any information. This is the fundamental role of the editor that intermediates the blind review process in which the authors and reviewers don't know the identity of each other. The editor should keep an efficient dialogue with the authors to make sure that the reviewers' suggestions are correctly interpreted and implemented.

The editor of a scientific journal should verify whether the set of articles are written following the journal's rules. To accomplish this, it is critical that, in accordance with international standards, the journal has clearly established a format for presentation and explicitly describe its procedure for the evaluation of submitted articles. The editor should guarantee that all operational details are running smoothly and the periodicity of publications are met, that a respectable panel of experienced peer reviewers is able to cover a broad diversity of knowledge and geographical areas.

Thus, the first editorial decision of *Ambiente e Água - an Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Science* was to define the procedure for evaluation and review of submitted articles.

THE REVIEW PROCESS OF AMBI-ÁGUA

All of the submitted articles are examined by the editor to verify whether the content of the article is appropriate for the journal and whether the manuscript was prepared in agreement with the instructions to the authors. The editor can reject the article if he/she detects: major disagreement with the instructions; careless writing; or if, the work doesn't contain enough scientific or technological merit. Once that phase is over, the editor will send the manuscript to a member of the Editorial Committee that will suggest at least two peer reviewers with knowledge in the theme of the proposed manuscript. The reviewers should be scientific specialists that work in areas related with the theme of the submitted manuscript and, therefore, should be fully qualified to evaluate the manuscript and to recommend the

acceptance or rejection. The reviewers will receive the manuscript, without any identification of the authors, a letter with instructions concerning the review process, and an evaluation form to manifest their comments and recommendations on the acceptance, correction or rejection of the article.

The reviewers will strictly consider all criteria suggested in the form for the evaluation of the submitted manuscript, and they will examine the quality of the text.

In any stage of the process, the reviewers will not know the authors' identity, as well as, the authors won't know the reviewers' identity.

After examining the reviewers' recommendations, the editor will take one of the following decisions: To accept the article with small changes and, in this case, the editor will return the manuscript to the authors with a list of small corrections to be implemented. Examples of small changes are typographic mistakes, pages without numbering, articles mentioned in the text that don't appear in the references and vice-versa, small discrepancies between the abstract in the two languages of the journal, and small corrections in the text. If the modifications don't alter the text significantly, the editor will read the article and conclude the process. Otherwise he will opt to send the next version of the manuscript to the reviewers of the manuscript.

When more significant modifications are needed, the editor will return the manuscript with a list of suggestions that the corresponding author should comply with to enable the article to be considered for publication. Examples of these modifications include the re-analysis of data using statistical proofs, revision of tables and figures, replication of experiments, and deep revision or substantial changes in the text. The opportunity to review the corrections after their suggestions will always be given to the reviewers.

In the case of rejection, the editor will inform the corresponding author the reasons for not publishing the article. In general, the reasons for rejection involve inappropriate content of the manuscript for the journal, serious violations of the publication rules, or article without scientific or technological merit.

When the final version of the manuscript is received, the editor will confirm to the corresponding author the acceptance, indicating the volume and issue it will be published and then the corresponding author will receive the proofs. At this time the authors will return a signed form, by regular mail authorizing the publication and attesting the originality of the article.

FINAL REMARKS

The integrated management of a scientific journal using a digital system that operates from any place with access to the Internet allows the monitoring of an article from the submission to the publication as in the Electronic Journal Publishing System (SEER, Soares et al., 2004). This represents a great progress in the editorial process not only for saving paper and mail costs, but mainly for fostering the editor's communication with the authors and reviewers. The editor should be extremely careful in fomenting that interaction. The motivation for publications varies among submitters and could affect the different phases of the publication process. Many students submit manuscripts to accomplish course requirements and when they have to face the revision process they give up since they already accomplished the requirement and don't want to invest the necessary time for improving their article. The editor has the role of intermediating interactions in search of quality improvement. The editor should be more than a transmitter of the reviewers' observations; he should also interpret the suggestions and interact with the authors to guarantee that the revisions are appropriately implemented for the sake of the article improvement. When

closing the first volume, the editorial board of *Ambi-Água* has the satisfaction of manifesting that the continuous interaction with the authors and reviewers resulted in a minimum processing time from the submission to the journal issue publication.

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