

**Getting your research paper published.
A surgical perspective**

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Volume of 162 pages and 127 figures.

Much of the advice in this book comes into the class of “best practice” as distilled from the authors’ experience and intellectual appreciation of the methods and mores of scientific communication.

As such it is of general applicability and will guide you faithfully through the process of preparation and publication of the research paper.

But as the authors point out, each journal to which you are likely to submit also has its own peculiarities and stipulations, both as to what must be submitted and how, and also as to small (perhaps seemingly trivial) matters of presentation (headings to be used, forms of references and citation, and so on). As the authors also stress repeatedly, you should thoroughly familiarize yourself with those rules and observe them to the letter, and should not attempt even to bend them a little if you want your submission to be considered with the fewest obstacles. Some of the specific stipulations mentioned may conflict with the more general advice: the general advice always be good advice, but it should always be refined by specific requirements from your target journal.

There is rather more room for maneuver where matters of “style” are concerned. Some of these of course are embedded in national linguistic practices. Spelling of the English language differs between the major “camps” of American English and traditions of British English that still predominate in large areas that were historically influenced by British practice; and there are intermediate cases such as represented by Canadian English spelling among others.

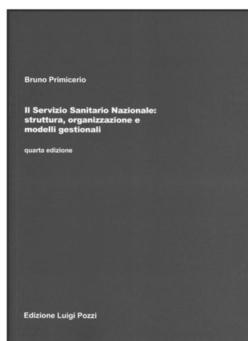
This book in Chapter 18 gives advice on grammar and punctuation based on “different sources that are very thorough on the subject matter,” and also indicates some of the differences in spellings that predominate. This manual is based on American sources. There are national (or transatlantic) differences, even in the placement of periods and commas with quotation marks, whether those quotation marks should be single or double, and attitudes to the use of plural or singular pronouns when referring to organizations or other “corporate” entities. And there is ample scope for variability in the degree to which relatively recent developments in the use of language are considered acceptable. Thus there are “rules” that can be bent to various degrees short of fracture, and with circumspection.

You will accordingly find instances in this book where “rules” laid down in one part are apparently broken in another. And of course, because of the use of material cited for illustration from a variety of published sources, you will encounter examples of British spelling. Various usages and styles employed even counter the publisher’s own Style Guide (such as the discipline-specific preference for the spelling “orthopaedics,” whereas Webster cites “orthopedic” as the standard and journal mentioned with “orthopedic” in their titles).

These are not “inconsistencies” but rather illustrations that it is not possible to lay down simple /simplistic) absolute “rules” in the complex field of human communication.

The emphasis of this book is always on the practical matter of putting your ideas and finds as clearly and forcefully as possible. Where the actual writing is concerned in this endeavour, as long as you appreciate which rules must be observed and which can tolerate some bending, the advice of the august Chicago Manual of Style can be applied to the rest.

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ALLEGATO

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