

日本の学術誌における英文校閲を考える

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# Editing

Its role in improving the quality of  
English journals published in Japan

# Objective

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- To show how editing can help achieve better language quality and thus improve the readability of journals
- To present opinions and suggestions to help you assess and improve the quality of your journal

# Agenda

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- **Importance of language quality**
- Role of editing in enhancing language quality
- Two standard approaches to editing by journals
- Suggested approach for gakkais in Japan
- Summary

# Importance of Language Quality

Scholarly writing is published to share new information. Its success/application depends on effective communication.

Thus,

**Language Quality**



**Communication Quality**



**Research Quality (& Readership Quality)**

**If Low**

- Unclear, wordy text
- Poor flow of ideas
- Poor presentation of data

- Study/findings not understood completely or found lacking
- Reader is distracted; forms a weak impression of paper/journal

**Result**

- Importance of research is lost
- Good research may be not be recognized

- No international recognition
- Limited reader base
- Fewer citations

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# Role of Editing in Enhancing Language Quality

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*Example*

*Nature* and the *Nature* research journals copyedit (subedit) scientific research papers to

- Ensure that the journal reads in correct English
- Enhance the reader's perception of the journal

➔ Attention to language quality will impact target audience—more people will read it, cite it, it will receive more media coverage, and so on.

SOURCE: [www.nature.com/nature/authors/get\\_published/index.html](http://www.nature.com/nature/authors/get_published/index.html)

# Impact of Editing on Language Quality (1/4)

*Example*

Author submits an unedited manuscript to a journal

Journal finds language weak and suggests professional editing

Author gets manuscript edited & resubmits it to the journal

## A. Unedited manuscript

Now, a lot of techniques exist in an analysis of phosphorylated peptides, but many established methods have many preparations like antibody or enzyme reaction. (3-6)

In this study we discussed whether the measuring the phosphate group in phosphorylated peptides is possible by using microscopic Fourier Transform Infrared spectrometer [FT-IR].

## B. Professionally edited manuscript

Although there are several established techniques to analyze phosphorylated peptides, they require extensive preparation for antibody or enzyme reactions (3-6)

In this study we investigate the possibility of measuring phosphate groups in phosphorylated peptides by using a microscopic Fourier transform infrared spectrometer [FT-IR].

### Output has

- ✓ Correct grammar
- ✓ Formal tone

# Impact of Editing on Language Quality (2/4)

*Example*

## B. Professionally edited manuscript

Although there are several established techniques to analyze phosphorylated peptides, they require extensive preparation for antibody or enzyme reactions. (3-6)

In this study we investigate the possibility of measuring phosphate groups in phosphorylated peptides by using a microscopic Fourier transform infrared spectrometer [FT-IR].

1. Incorrect placement of period
2. Incorrect use of hyphen (should be an en dash)
3. Missing comma
4. Extra space
5. Incorrect type of bracket



Yet, the language quality is not very good because

- Too many oversights (punctuation, etc.)
- Readability is low (wordiness, etc.)

## Why?

- ▶ The quality of English in the original manuscript is low.
- ▶ The editor is probably inexperienced or does not have a good eye for detail.

# Impact of Editing on Language Quality (3/4)

*Example*

## C. Published after proofreading

Although there are several established techniques to analyze phosphorylated peptides, they require extensive preparation for antibody or enzyme reactions (3–6).

In this study, we investigate the possibility of measuring phosphate groups in phosphorylated peptides by using a microscopic Fourier transform infrared spectrometer (FT-IR) and assess whether this technique is easier and faster than using established methods.

No proofreading errors

Readability is low

Sentence is more concise

Better word choice

Technical oversight corrected

## D. Published after editing

Established techniques for analysis of phosphorylated peptides require extensive preparation, for instance, antibody or enzyme reactions (3–6).

In this study, we report a new technique for measuring phosphate groups in phosphorylated peptides using a microscopic Fourier transform infrared spectrometer (FTIR), and assess whether this technique is easier and faster than using established methods.

No proofreading errors

Improved readability

# Impact of Editing on Language Quality (4/4)

## Effective editing ensures

### Correct English

- ✓ No grammar and punctuation errors
- ✓ No spelling errors
- ✓ No word/phrase choice errors

### Better Readability

- ✓ Native English
- ✓ Crisp, formal tone and consistent style
- ✓ Elimination of ambiguity or poor logic

## Effective editing depends on

- (1) Skills and expertise of the professional editor  
(which depends on the author's ability to select a good editor)
- (2) The process and tools the editor uses to ensure that there are no oversights and the correct style is followed
- (3) Quality of the original manuscript  
(which depends on the author/translator's English skills)

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# Two Standard Approaches to Editing by Journals

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Approach 1: Author Responsibility

Approach 2: Complete Journal Responsibility

# Approach 1: Author Responsibility

Outcome: Gated Quality Control

IEEE Microwave Magazine

IEEE Microwave Theory & Techniques Society

## Readability

“Given the goal of the Magazine, the articles are expected to meet a considerably higher level of readability and lucidity than other publications of the Society. This burden must fall on the authors, because there are no technical writers or editors available to re-write and improve the organization, language, or grammar of submitted articles. Where necessary, please consult knowledgeable colleagues, native speakers of English, technical writers, or professionals in the field.”

*Extract from the Editorial Submission Guidelines*

SOURCE: <http://www.mtt.org/publications/Magazine/magazine.htm>

# Approach 2: Complete Journal Responsibility

## Outcome: Complete Quality Control

### **National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Journal** Iowa State University

#### **Editing**

“Both editorial changes and the first round of copy editing are done in our offices, after which the manuscript is sent to an external copy editor and then to the compositor. Authors may receive queries at each stage in this process:

1) during our in-house editing, 2) following external copy editing, and 3) after copy is set by the compositor...”

“When questions occur, the NWSA Journal uses as its style manual, the Chicago Manual of Style, 15<sup>th</sup> edition. Please download the NWSA style guide for exceptions to formatting and mechanics.”

SOURCE:

[http://www.nwsaj.engl.iastate.edu/Editorial\\_Policy.htm](http://www.nwsaj.engl.iastate.edu/Editorial_Policy.htm)

### **Nature**

Nature Publishing Group

#### **After acceptance**

“Your accepted manuscript is prepared for publication by copy editors (subeditors), who refine it so that the text and figures are readable and clear to those outside the immediate field and the papers conform to house style. The copy editors will give advice to authors whose native language is not English, and will edit those papers with special care.”

SOURCE:

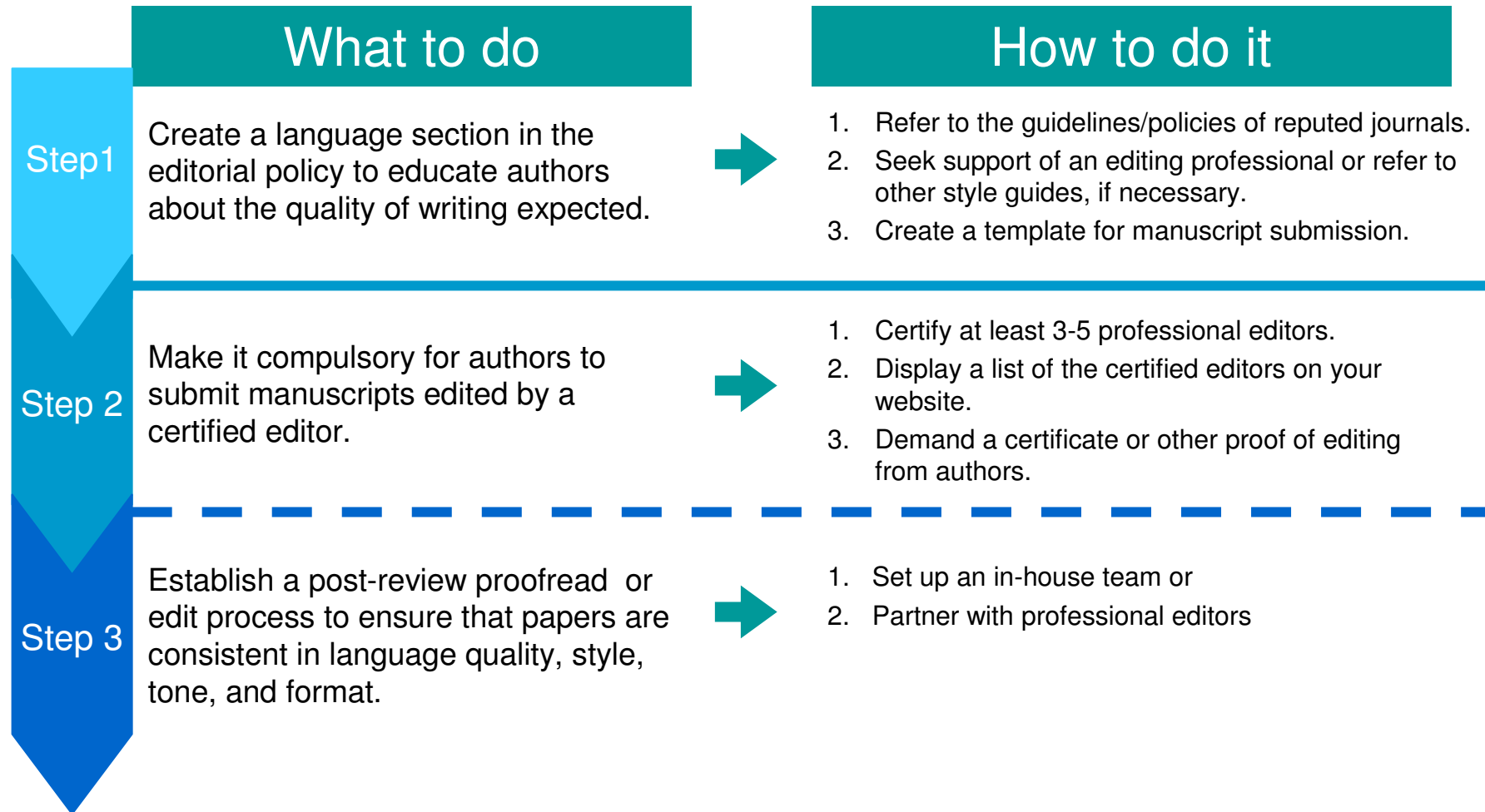
[http://www.nature.com/nature/authors/get\\_published/index.html](http://www.nature.com/nature/authors/get_published/index.html)

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# A Suggested Approach for Gakkais in Japan



# Step 1: Create a Language Section in the Editorial Policy

## 1. Define a house style.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| ✓ Type of English  | ⇒ | British · American  |
| ✓ Type of writing style the journal appreciates or advises against | ⇒ | Tone · Minimal jargon<br>Wordiness · Gender bias  |
| ✓ Reporting scientific data  | ⇒ | Clinical trials & statistics<br>Gene & protein databases<br>Equations, units, & numbers<br>Abbreviations & acronyms |

2. Clearly specify that the manuscript should contain no language errors, and suggest how authors can achieve that.

3. Indicate the action that the journal is likely to take with manuscripts that contain language errors.

# Step 2: Certify Editors

## Why should journals certify editors?

- ✓ Ensure better and consistent quality input to the journal
- ✓ Improve manuscript processing speed
- ✓ Support new authors
- ✓ Ensure correct application of house style

## How to certify editors

- Do they have a good combination of English language skills and subject matter expertise?
- Is their quality good and consistent?
- Are they knowledgeable about the style and tone followed in your field of research?
- What kind of an editing process do they employ?
- Are their services reliable and sustainable?

### To maximize your benefits

- Clarify the desired quality output
- Share your house style in detail

# Step 3: Establish Post-review Editing or Proofreading

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This is an important step in ensuring good language quality

However, this is typically a budget-dependent step. But if you can do this, then ensure that you work with professionals.

## **Professionals**

- Are trained in journal style (ensures quality and consistency)
- Can support in developing a style guide or framing an editorial policy
- Will set and follow standard protocols (in editing, communication, schedules, etc.)
- Work with fixed, pre-determined TAT and schedules
- Can directly communicate with authors (minimizing gakkai resource utilization), if necessary
- Help to build a stable, reliable, and sustainable working relationship

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# Summary

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1. Good language quality attracts better research and improves visibility.
2. Editing enhances language quality by correcting errors in English and improving readability.
3. Two standard approaches to editing are author responsibility and complete journal responsibility.
4. A suggested approach for gakkais in Japan.
  - a) Create a section on language quality in the editorial policy.
  - b) Make it compulsory to submit edited manuscripts.
  - c) Certify editors to ensure good and consistent language quality.
  - d) To further improve readability, edit or proofread manuscripts before publication.

# Thank You

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