



Ailish M J Maher

IMRaD Translating & Editing

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## SCIENTIFIC WRITING SEMINAR

for

POST-GRADUATE AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS

University of Vigo

17 JULY 2018

### INTRODUCTION

Successful communication is fundamental for academics to publish their work, obtain funds and gain recognition. Competition, nonetheless, has become intense, whether for funding or publication space in high-impact journals. Spanish researchers have an additional disadvantage in that they usually need to rely on commercial translation or editing services to bolster their capacity to express themselves coherently and confidently in English.

Most academics receive little formal training in 'scientific writing', which in the broad sense, covers the entire publication process — from deciding on authorship, selecting a journal, dealing with journal editors and reviewers, planning and preparing the manuscript, avoiding inadvertent plagiarism, deciding on tables and figures, selecting references and applying house style. Non-native English speakers have the added complication of having to draft and revise manuscripts — and deal with editors and reviewers — in a language in which their capacity for coherent expression may be inhibited by their English language skills. There is also a cultural bridge that needs to be crossed, as writing in English requires an appreciation of 'plain English', that is, English that is simple, clear, concise and cohesive.

### OBJECTIVE

To provide an overview of the IMRAD publication structure and its components, to raise awareness of technical and linguistic requirements for articles submitted to international journals in English and to develop scientific writing skills in English, addressing the specific English language difficulties of Spanish authors.

### CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The seminar will provide **both training and practice** in the basic tools necessary to **plan, draft, revise and edit** manuscripts for publication in scientific journals. Each part will consist of a PPT presentation followed by practical pair/group activities. **Part A** will provide a brief overview of the IMRAD structure, of the Results, Methods and Tables/Illustrations components and of basic scientific English writing principles. **Part B** will focus on Introductions, Discussions and TAK (titles, abstract and keywords) and will include a "revision/editing

slam” aimed at developing awareness of the requirements of scientific writing in English and understanding how to write the kind of English expected in major journals. Miscellaneous other issues related to editor, reviewer and reader expectations and the submission process will be addressed along the way.

#### **WHO WILL BENEFIT?**

The seminar is focused especially on post-graduate and doctoral students with little or no experience of publication in English. However, it is also open to anyone who is interested in picking up tips regarding publication success and in obtaining some guided practice in writing English with a view to publication. Participants should have a satisfactory level of English at the passive level at least (good reading and listening skills).

#### **SCHEDULING/LANGUAGE**

**Dates:** Tues 17 July 2018, 10.00 -14.00 h & 15.00-18.00 h + 3 hours of pre/post-seminar activities online.

**Venue:** University of Vigo-Campus de Marcosende (Aula 6, Facultad de Biología Bloque B, planta baja).

**Language:** English.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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#### **ABOUT THE FACILITATOR**

**Ailish Maher** has a degree in business studies (University College Dublin), a master’s degree in translation (Dublin City University) and the IOL diploma in translation. In the last 20 years, she has acquired further training in scientific writing and publication through attendance at numerous workshops and presentations. In 2013, she was awarded a distinction in ‘Writing for the Sciences’, a course offered by Stanford University (via Coursera).

As a freelance translator and editor for over 20 years, she has gradually come to specialize in editing non-native academic articles in several disciplines (geology, rock mechanics, medicine, economics, communication studies, journalism, higher education, history, etc) for some 15 Spanish universities and hospitals. This service often involves closely working with authors on successive versions of an article.

She has given Scientific Writing courses in English to post-graduates at the University of Vigo (2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017) and at UPF/UAB/TecnoCampus in Barcelona (2015 and 2016) and also to medical researchers at the Hospital de Mataró (2014 and 2015) and the Agència de Salut Pública de Barcelona (2015). She has also lectured in Scientific English Translation at Dublin City University (2016).

An experienced workshop facilitator who has published several academic articles on translation, she is a member (formerly responsible for Continuous Professional Development) of Mediterranean Editors and Translators ([www.metmeetings.org](http://www.metmeetings.org)), the only association in Spain that provides training to editors and translators in English. MET profile: <http://www.metmeetings.org/en/detail/ailish-maher:19-1264>