

What is an Editor of a Scientific Journal in Latin America?

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Being an editor has committed my life, and I will try to show in this editorial, from my long experience, what is to be an editor in Colombia and the region.

When I was 12 or 13 years old, I edited my first newsletter in the neighborhood that I lived in. The publication was from a youth association that did not prosper, but I still have a copy that was printed on *stencil* (a blue paper that allows to multicopy). Later, when I was 16 or 17, I was part of a magazine that aimed to organize information from several newspapers of the world. It was an effort to systematize international news and it was called DATO. Over time, this magazine died, it was ahead of its time, but that did not prevent it from sinking.

The innumerable solo lectures and soliloquies about the philosophy of science at my university absorbed me for at least three years, ended on the publication of my first article about *The concept of Progress on the Contemporary Philosophy* in the year 1989 (López-López, 1989), that forever marked my conceptual sustentation and sense of commitment to the understanding of the dynamics of scientific communication. Besides, it gave life to my career as an editor from a research line that has not stop through the years: the one of mapping with scientometric and bibliometric tools the scientific production of Iberoamerica.

In 1990, between the end of my undergraduate and my beginning as a university professor, I took on the edition of the newsletter of the *Asociación Latinoamericana de Análisis y Modificación del comportamiento* [Latin-American Association of Analysis and Behavior Modification] (ALAMOC). Each time that a number was published it was an achievement, and then its distribution was the end of the task. At that time, I began to discover that the editing processes were necessarily tied to the construction of communities that connected the region and passed through internationalization. The in-paper bulletin ended up disappearing and, thanks to the community

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built around it, it opened the way to a new organization: the *Association for Behavior Analysis International* o ABAI and ABA Colombia in the year 1999, which was developed as a communication platform through the internet. On the ABA Colombia website, we made several bulletins that exceeded my expectations. It grew exponentially in three aspects: first, in the amount of contents as a voluntary collaboration project of collective intelligence. Second, in the number of people and in the demands of these new audiences that accessed the contents (in short time we passed from a bulletin of 500 paper copies to several bulletins with thousands of visitors). Third, it became and formation scenario, dialogue and relationships. All those are central elements in the task of being an editor (Consoli, Flores, & Sharma, 2018).

Later on, I participated in the edition of a book with a group of pupils that nowadays are already professors. The *Manual of experimental behavior analysis*. Obviously, the edition process of a book was completely different from that of a journal; the latter is like a never-ending book, a book without and end, an infinite book.

Around that time (1995), I started to edit my first journal *Suma Psicológica*, a journal that already existed in the *Fundación Universitaria Konrad Lorenz*. I took as a personal purpose to give it an international perspective, and I got it. I formed an international committee, wide the call for papers to include authors from outside of the institution in the national and international context. I submitted the journal to PsycINFO, the database of the American Psychological Association (APA), and it was accepted. At that time, I understood that journals must be less endogamous, and they must look for international standards.

As its editor, I organized the *First Symposium of Editors of Psychology Journals of Iberoamerica*, in the frame of the *II Iberoamerican congress of psychology* in the year 1998 in Madrid. That gave place to the *Iberoamerican Network of Editors of Psychology Journals* that nowadays meet in the *Iberoamerican Congresses of Psychology*. It is organized by the *Iberoamerican Federation of Psychology Associations (FIAP)*, an entity that

I founded with some colleagues years later. I also participated in encounters framed on the *Interamerican Congresses of Psychology* and we created the *Editors Network* framed on the biannual encounter of research nodes organized by the Colombian Association of Psychology Faculties [*Asociación Colombiana de Facultades de Psicología*] (*Ascofapsi*). These scenarios were necessary since the qualification on editors would depend on the entry of the journals to the indexing systems and its visibility. A single journal could not be visible, nor could it give visibility to the rising production of the region. Latin America is the zone of the world with more training programs, more students and more psychologists, and it is the natural scenario of the usage of the knowledge that we produced. Therefore, the strategy was and continues to be cooperation over competition, and it is under this perspective that later on, I was invited to events for editors in Chile, Mexico and Brazil.

In 2002, I started several editorial projects, between the most important ones is the foundation of *Universitas Psychologica* in the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana –Editing this journal was my presentation letter for the dean of the time to appoint me as a fulltime professor at the university. Nowadays, *Universitas Psychologica* is a reference in the Latin American context, in it, I have tried to capture all my ideas, and I was able to do it with the support of different instances of the university.

During the same time, I created a journal at the airport of Bogota with a Spanish professor; the journal was called *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, I was the associate editor at the beginning, and then I had to detach from the journal (without my consent and in a very unfortunate way).

During this period, I also edited special numbers of the *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología*, and for the first years of the new millennia, I was reached by the general director of *Redalyc*, now my dear friend, *Eduardo Aguado López*, to guide the process of development of this net. Today, I can say that working with *Universitas Psychologica*, *Redalyc* and the Psychology portal *FIAP-Redalyc* (only open-

access portal of psychology journals) has been an essential part of my dreams and my realization as a researcher and psychologist. By building them, I have learned and consolidated the career of being a scientific editor.

I must mention that, at that time, I was elected as part of the *Scielo Colombia* commission, and other platforms that tried to contribute to improvement of the assessment process of journals for the Colombian system of science and technology *Publindex* (unfortunately without success), and I cannot emphasize enough how much I learned from *Félix de Moya* and the *Scimago* group.

On this path, I have been able to learn, share and build with other editors, authors, philosophers and sociologist of science, scientimetrists and bibliometrists the sense of the communication in science, its constants transformations and, of course, the permanent challenges that compromised the job of the editor of a scientific journal, especially in Colombia and Latin America, and the differences that entail with editors from other countries with more resources (Aguillo-Caño, Uribe-Tirado, & López-López, 2017).

An editor in Colombia and Latin America, besides attending the classic tasks of his/her position, also has to participate in the development of the editorial policy of the journal, and take care of its editorial and scientific quality, its visibility, diffusion, formation, administrative management, and policies. These processes require competencies that exceed the typical demands of a traditional academic, where the functions of teaching, research, and social projection are increasingly defined in terms of competencies and times, not as those of an editor of a scientific journal (López-López et al., 2018).

Through all these years, I have aim, in this editorial space, to contribute to transfer part of my experience and knowledge of these years as editor, part of it have been the processes of education through the editorial coordinators of the journal (López-López, 2008; 2009a; 2009b; 2010; 2015; 2017; 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; 2018d).

Universitas Psychologica has been a model and has always sought to be at the forefront in all its

processes. It has had some crisis due to its success, crisis that have allow us to learn. We have not always been able to respond to the velocity we would like; we often forget that *Universitas Psychologica* is still young (17 years old). This collective process has been able to grow thanks to the help of the national, regional and international academic communities. Thanks to the support of the faculty, the editorial, the academic vice rector and ultimately to the university that has committed and bet for the development of our journals.

From the condition of these infinite books, certainly, its editors will have to reinvent and transform ourselves over and over again.

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