

Features of language use in scientific articles in emergency medicine

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The fact that linguists have begun to take an interest in aspects of language that were traditionally considered outside the scope of their discipline has opened up a novel line of enquiry, possibly as a result of interest on the part of members of specialist discourse communities themselves (the writers whose messages give rise to the texts that make up so-called special or field-specific varieties of language). Among the special languages receiving the most attention, for a variety of reasons, is that of medicine. The excellent results obtained are the fruit of collaboration between linguists and health-care professionals. It has become apparent that English continues to affect the language used in Spanish scientific articles in emergency medicine. Such English influence acts to the detriment of Spanish, not because of risk that foreign words or phrases will enter general usage (an event that poses no danger), but rather because such incursions unjustifiably impoverish our lexicon and syntactic structures. This, clearly, is prejudicial to proper communication. In the present paper we call attention to the word *patología* being used almost exclusively in place of the alternative words *enfermedad*, *dolencia*, *afección*, *lesión*, or *trastorno*. We also find the verb *visitar* in use rather than *atender*, *consultar*, *tratar*, or *diagnosticar*, along with the noun *visita* in place of *consulta*, *tratamiento*, or *asistencia*. We uncover new foreign influences and note the continued presence of departures from normal grammatical patterns, above all in the use of the passive voice and the gerund form, which have been noted on other occasions. [Emergencias 2009;21:133-140]

Key words: Linguistics. Emergency medicine. Medical terminology.
