

EDITORIAL

Research quality in the face of political disdain

Calidad investigadora frente al menoscabo político

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Another year, and six have already passed, with the arrival of the summer EMERGENCIAS has received its impact factor (IF) published by Journal Citation Reports (JCR), corresponding to 2015¹. And once again this IF, 2.917, has been a source of great satisfaction for all: readers of the Journal, researchers who publish in it, members of the Spanish Society of Emergency Medicine (SEMES, owner of the journal), and editorial team. I would stress that the quality that EMERGENCIAS has managed to demonstrate all these years is mainly due to the researchers, usually emergency physicians, who entrust their work to be reviewed and eventually published in our journal. Therefore, this IF should be considered a reflection of the current health

of the research carried out in Spain in the field of Emergency Medicine (EM).

It is important that for six years now EMERGENCIAS has been among the most prestigious journals in the specialty of EM²⁻⁶, always in the first quartile of its category (Table 1). This is unprecedented for a Spanish scientific journal, which is worth highlighting. Although the journals published in Spanish have low representation in the global computation of world scientific transmission, some of them have a relevant impact, as in the case of EMERGENCIAS (Table 2). This should be valued, especially considering the “glamor” of publishing in English for more and more Spanish authors. Indeed, Spanish scientists often assume that their research results

Table 1. Journals indexed in the Emergency Medicine category of Journal Citation Reports, with the main bibliometric indicators corresponding to the year 2015

Position in the category of Emergency Medicine (n = 24)	Position in JCR SCI-Expanded (n = 8,778)	Full title of the journal	Impact factor	Impact factor (without self-citations)	Self-citations (%)	5-year impact factor	Citable published articles	Total citations received in 2015	Language
1	533	Resuscitation	5.414	3.583	33.8	5.395	294	13,081	English
2	619	Annals of Emergency Medicine	5.008	4.438	11.4	5.041	134	11,152	English
3	1,809	EMERGENCIAS	2.917	1.679	42.4	1.915	51	693	Spanish
4	2,278	Academic Emergency Medicine	2.537	2.148	15.3	2.542	174	7,349	English
5	2,647	Scandinavian Journal of Trauma Resuscitation & Emergency Medicine	2.310	1.987	14.0	2.539	94	1,151	English
6	3,023	Prehospital Emergency Care	2.104	1.743	17.2	2.091	70	1,663	English
7	3,187	European Journal of Emergency Medicine	2.026	1.800	11.2	1.625	77	1,271	English
8	3,397	Injury-International Journal of the Care of the Injured	1.910	1.520	20.4	2.406	501	10,092	English
9	3,558	Emergency Medicine Journal	1.836	1.717	6.5	1.883	173	3,962	English
10	4,173	World Journal of Emergency Surgery	1.583	1.443	8.8	1.492	58	507	English
11	4,404	American Journal of Emergency Medicine	1.504	1.299	13.6	1.474	546	5,880	English
12	5,179	Emergency Medicine Australasia	1.223	0.954	22.0	1.336	84	1,114	English
13	5,526	Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine	1.106	0.923	16.5	1.385	75	928	English
14	5,630	Emergency Medicine Clinics of North America	1.07	1.04	2.8	1.043	48	867	English
15	5,684	Journal of Emergency Medicine	1.048	0.975	7.0	1.238	334	4,218	English
16	6,116	Pediatric Emergency Care	0.923	0.855	7.4	1.059	190	2,796	English
17	6,287	Journal of Emergency Nursing	0.872	0.626	28.2	1.082	88	934	English
18	7,334	Unfallchirurg	0.581	0.485	16.5	0.595	136	1,290	German
19	7,764	European Journal of Trauma and Emergency Surgery	0.472	0.422	10.6	0.442	78	302	English
20	7,840	Ulusal Travma Ve Acil Cerrahi Dergisi-Turkish Journal of Trauma & Emergency Surgery	0.453	0.418	7.7	0.529	94	534	Turkish
21	7,988	Notarzt	0.408	0.224	45.1	0.260	42	51	German
22	8,253	Notfall & Rettungsmedizin	0.319	0.233	27.0	0.362	82	255	German
23	8,616	Signa Vitae	0.154	0.115	25.3	0.148	36	42	English
24	8,618	Hong Kong Journal of Emergency Medicine	0.153	0.121	20.9	0.181	52	122	English

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Table 2. Clinical journals published in Spain in Spanish or in both Spanish and English, indexed by Journal Citation Reports, with the main bibliometric indicators corresponding to the year 2015

Position in JCR SCI-Expanded (n = 8,778)	Full title of the journal	Impact factor	Impact factor (without self-citations)	Self-citations (%)	5-year impact factor	Citable published articles	Citations received in 2015	Quartile
748	Revista Espanola de Cardiologia	4.596	2.635	42.7	3.104	84	2758	Q1
1,809	EMERGENCIAS	2.917	1.679	42.4	1.915	51	693	Q1
3,664	Neurología	1.790	1.546	13.6	1.349	66	739	Q3
3,688	Adicciones	1.780	1.136	36.2	1.361	24	362	Q4
3,710	Archivos de Bronconeumologia	1.771	1.425	19.5	1.759	69	1341	Q3
4,004	Revista De Psiquiatria y Salud Mental	1.650	1.175	28.8	1.39	23	178	Q3
4,329	Enfermedades Infecciosas y Microbiologia Clinica	1.530	1.213	20.7	1.51	98	1276	Q3
4,390	Gaceta Sanitaria	1.509	1.236	18.1	1.333	71	1272	Q3
4,420	Nutricion Hospitalaria	1.497	0.667	55.4	1.473	735	2907	Q4
4,531	Revista Espanola de Enfermedades Digestivas	1.455	1.179	19.0	1.389	86	1008	Q4
4,561	Revista Iberoamericana de Micologia	1.444	1.367	5.3	1.369	52	690	Q3
5,066	Medicina Clinica	1.267	0.992	21.7	1.144	127	2492	Q2
5,223	Nefrologia	1.207	1.018	15.7	1.282	61	914	Q4
5,268	Medicina Intensiva	1.193	0.782	34.5	1.114	55	524	Q4
5,551	Atencion Primaria	1.098	0.759	30.9	0.966	67	875	Q3
5,583	Medicina Oral Patologia Oral y Cirugia Bucal	1.087	1.025	5.7	1.293	111	1662	Q3
5,791	Revista Espanola de Quimioterapia	1.014	0.845	16.7	0.888	55	252	Q4
5,833	Cirugia Espanola	1.000	0.796	20.4	0.81	77	552	Q3
5,906	Revista Espanola de Medicina Nuclear e Imagen Molecular	0.983	0.704	28.4	0.863	47	320	Q4
5,971	Actas Urologicas Espanolas	0.964	0.667	30.8	0.863	93	704	Q4
6,492	Actas Espanolas de Psiquiatria	0.813	0.733	9.8	0.796	25	446	Q4
6,534	Gastroenterologia y Hepatologia	0.800	0.640	20.0	0.635	40	455	Q4
6,610	Anales del Sistema Sanitario de Navarra	0.783	0.348	55.6	0.564	37	249	Q4
6,641	Anales de Pediatria	0.773	0.530	31.4	0.725	89	748	Q4
6,688	Revista Clinica Espanola	0.76	0.600	21.1	0.614	52	495	Q4
6,957	Revista de Neurologia	0.684	0.377	44.9	0.724	156	1658	Q4
7,247	Revista Española de Salud Pública	0.606	0.532	12.2	0.832	55	595	Q4
7,982	Neurocirugía	0.410	0.385	6.1	0.472	44	239	Q4
8,020	Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte	0.396	0.354	10.6	0.530	48	199	Q4
8,285	Archivos Españoles de Urología	0.307	0.281	8.5	-	76	494	Q4
8,454	Revista Internacional de Andrología	0.238	0.167	29.8	0.223	26	32	Q4

should be published in English language journals. And this is not without reason, because the supremacy of the English language in the scientific field has been established since the second half of the twentieth century, without expectations of change in the coming decades⁷⁻⁹. Thus, the best scientific journals, to date, are published in English¹⁰⁻¹². Moreover, in this scenario, there is a growing tendency towards publication of articles directly in English by journals published in Spanish-speaking countries¹³. EMERGENCIAS has always had a special sensitivity towards the defence of the use of Spanish as a vehicle of scientific transmission^{8,9,14-22}. And for this to be maintained, all parties involved in scientific publication - authors, readers and editors - must commit to creating and disseminating science in Spanish. Even knowing that it is not science of the highest level, we must also recognize that it is possible to publish quality articles in Spanish. It is certainly not an easy task. Thus, the review of the journals that were included in JCR 2014 (the year before the one recently published) showed that of the 8,659 journals catalogued in 176 different disciplines of knowledge, only 154 (1.8%) were published in Spanish-speaking countries²³. Of these, 71 (46.1%) are published in Spanish (all articles published in their printed version are in this language), 48 (31.2%) are bilingual (articles

appear in two languages, generally Spanish and English) and 35 (22.7%) are published in English. Therefore, if we focus on those edited exclusively in Spanish, they account for only 0.8% of the total repertoire indexed by JCR. That is, less than 1% of the best journals in the world are published exclusively in Spanish. And distribution by quartiles (Q) is not homogeneous: only 3 of them (2.0%) were in the first Q (the best), while 19 were in Q2 (12.5%), 23 in Q2 Q3 (15.1%) and 107 in Q4 (70.4%, the worst). In 2014 the three journals in Q1 are published in Spain: they are EMERGENCIAS, Revista Matemática Iberoamericana and the European Journal for Philosophy of Science (published in Spanish, bilingual and English, respectively), to which we must add the Revista Española de Cardiología this year, 2015¹. All this serves to put into perspective the achievement of EMERGENCIAS during recent years.

With this increasing demonstration of the possibilities of investigation, the indifference, if not disdain, on the part of national administrations is disturbing. On the one hand they proclaim the need for Spain to differentiate itself from its immediate competitors with a firm commitment to research, development and innovation (R&D&I) of its companies, but on the other they (administrations) significantly reduce our budget assignment

year after year. Thus, in the specific field of science, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), investment in Spain decreased by 34.69% between 2009 and 2013, the country of the European Union that made most cuts in scientific research during that period²⁴. This message, disconcerting for those who really believe in R & D as the only way out of the current crisis, with a competitive advantage, only highlights the lack of belief of our administrations in research by Spanish investigators. In some areas, the brain drain is alarming²⁵. And this, which is generally true, is even more so when we analyse the particular situation of research in EM. Without a positive reinforcement policy for an area with late development with respect to other medical areas, without research networks that give it continuity and a stable structure, without a specialty that regenerates research skills, without a formal commitment to the development of an area of knowledge that would potentially generate benefits for an immense majority of citizens (more than 25 million a year consult Spanish hospital emergency departments), the current situation of the journal EMERGENCIAS seems more attributable to a miracle than to political determination and planning. And perhaps because of that, the situation is more the exception than the rule. Achieved with the research effort of all, with scarce resources and with minimal support of the administration, it is apt to conclude by paraphrasing Winston Churchill: "Never was so much owed by so many to so few."

Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest related to this article.

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