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Abstract

*As with most emerging-nation journals, South American scientific journals struggle in their efforts to reach the global market. Nonetheless, there are exceptions to this trend. This paper chronicles the journey of one of those exceptions, the Brazilian journal **Psychology & Neuroscience**. I focus on events leading up to and consummating the publishing partnership between **Psychology & Neuroscience** and its current publisher, The American Psychological Association. An analysis is presented that examines the journal in terms of its publication language, business model, editorial stability, editorial board makeup, and the international qualities of its editors. I present this with the hope it may be useful to emerging-nation scientists and scholars, as well as publishers and institutions, that share similar objectives of distributing their findings to the global market.*

Keywords: Internationalization, Globalization, Psychology, Brazil, Emerging nations, Science

Introduction

In Brazil, in the area of psychology, there are now two journals published in the global market: *Psychology & Neuroscience*, published by The American Psychological Association (APA), and *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica*, published by Springer. The advantages for these journals are manifold. The publishers provide the hosting platform, distribution, publication, and professional proofreaders and reviewers (Fradkin, 2017a; Landeira-Fernandez, Cruz, & Ventura, 2015; Remor, 2016). In addition, the association with a global publisher enhances the reputation of the journal considerably (Björk, 2015; Fradkin, 2018; Meneghini, 2012).

But what about these journals placed them in this fortuitous position? Did they have a method or template for success? Did they actively pursue a major publisher worldwide? Or were they simply in the right place at the right time? The answers to these questions are not particularly clear. There is sparse literature

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on journals of this sort. In light of this omission, this paper will examine the transition of one of those rare journals.

The subject of this study will be the journal *Psychology & Neuroscience*, the first Brazilian journal in its field to publish globally. Through emails and interviews, we will follow its transition from domestic to global publication. This work is presented with the hope that it may be useful to emerging-nation scholars, publishers, and institutions, who share similar objectives of strengthening their output, and distributing their findings to a larger market.

Chronicle of an Emerging Nation Journal

Background

The journal *Psychology & Neuroscience* was the initiative of a group of Brazilian neuroscientists with an educational background in psychology. Meeting for the first time in 2002 at the IX meeting of the “Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Psicologia” (ANPEPP, National Association of Research and Graduate Education in Psychology), by 2006 at the XI ANPEPP meeting, the group had committed to launching a new journal. The founding editors were respected experts in the field: J. Landeira-Fernandez of Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), and Universidade Estácio de Sá; A. Pedro de Mello Cruz of Universidade de Brasília (UnB); and Dora F. Ventura of Universidade de São Paulo (USP). From its debut in 2008, *Psychology & Neuroscience* published articles and reports grouped in five thematic sections—Psychophysics and Perception, Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology, Plasticity and Neural Development, Behavior/Systems/Cognition, and Neuropsychopharmacology. The journal is notable for being the first Brazilian journal in its field to publish exclusively in English. Startup was provided by members of the ANPEPP working group, but was sustained by grants (CNPq, FAPERJ, FAPESP, USP, PUC-Rio)¹ from 2009 onwards.

Transition to global publication

The transition of *Psychology & Neuroscience* from domestic to global publication began at the XV Symposium on Research and Scientific Exchange of ANPEPP, in Bento Gonçalves, Brazil, May 6-9, 2014. In its seventh season, *Psychology & Neuroscience* was a relative newcomer in the field, although it had distinguished itself by publishing in English. At this gathering, Assistant Editor Daniel Mograbi approached Merry Bullock, Senior Director, Office of International Affairs of the APA, regarding the omission of *Psychology &*

¹ CNPq, Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico; FAPERJ, Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro; FAPESP, São Paulo Research Foundation; USP, Universidade de São Paulo; PUC-Rio, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

Neuroscience from an APA presentation on Brazilian journals in the field (D. Mograbi, personal communication, December 20, 2017). Bullock, apparently, had assumed that *Psychology & Neuroscience* was not a Brazilian journal, because its articles were published in English. Having clarified this point, the conversation shifted. Mograbi expressed his editors' interest in internationalizing the journal, through a partnership with a global publisher (D. Mograbi, personal communication, December 20, 2017). Bullock listened to his pitch. It appeared she was receptive.

In late May, Mograbi followed up. In an email to Bullock, he restated the editors' desire to find a publisher for the journal; he said they would be happy to discuss APA's involvement, if there was interest. He touted the journal's selling points:

We are quite unique in the Brazilian context, because we only handle submissions in English and use Scholar One (provided by Scielo) as our editorial system. This has led to an increase in the quality of our articles, because we can rely on international referees during the peer-reviewing process. Also, we are one of the few journals, globally, to focus explicitly on the integration of Psychology with Neuroscience. (D. Mograbi, personal communication, May 29, 2014)

Bullock responded the same day: "I am forwarding your note to the APA publisher, Gary Vandenbos." She also sent links to other publishers (M. Bullock, personal communication, May 29, 2014).

In mid-June, Jason Winkler, Director of Business Development at APA, wrote Mograbi: "Merry Bullock passed along your note about Psychology & Neuroscience—I reviewed several of the articles and I believe that APA would be a natural home to publish the journal" (J. Winkler, personal communication, June 16, 2014). Mograbi replied positively to APA's interest in the journal. He then posed several questions of his own: "In terms of our current structure, what would change?" he asked, and: "How could APA help the journal's expansion strategy, in terms of indexing and reaching a wider audience?" (D. Mograbi, personal communication, June 16, 2014). The two agreed to a Skype meeting.

Before the meeting, Winkler wrote: "While APA primarily publishes subscription-based journals, we are growing our open access portfolio. The journal would not necessarily need to lose its open access status if it is critical to the mission of the journal." In response to Mograbi's inquiry about expansion strategy, Winkler touted APA's proprietary databases, which would expose *Psychology & Neuroscience* to more than 60 million potential readers worldwide (J. Winkler, personal communication, June 17, 2014).

The first of several meetings between Mograbi, Winkler, and Editor Landeira-Fernandez, was held on Skype, June 18, 2014. The discussion covered: potential business models (OA, subscription); the complications of three entities owning *Psychology & Neuroscience*; the possibility of transferring ownership of *Psychology & Neuroscience* to one society; the existing structure of the journal; funding of the journal to this point; and the journal's presence in the SciELO database (D. Mograbi, personal communication, January 8, 2018).

The following week, Winkler sat down with Gary VandenBos, Publisher of the APA. In an email to Mograbi, he relays: "I met with the APA Publisher yesterday to discuss the opportunity to publish *Psychology & Neuroscience*. He shares my excitement about the opportunity and had a number of questions about the journal which I am outlining below." The questions addressed: ownership of the journal; number of submissions annually; payment of editors, copyeditors, and administrative staff; term of editors; and potential business models that would serve both parties' needs (J. Winkler, personal communication, June 24, 2014).

Mograbi responded to the questions. With regard to ownership of the journal, he wrote, "We expect to transfer ownership to IBNeC [Instituto Brasileiro de Neuropsicologia e Comportamento], which was founded in 2009 and has over 2,300 members." With regard to potential business models, he told Winkler that the editors were "considering changing to a subscription based system if we close a deal with APA." With regard to term of editors, he disclosed that "there is no short-term plan to change the editors, but in the future, as the journal becomes more competitive, we hope to attract international researchers for the editorial board, including new editors-in-chief." Mograbi also disclosed payment information for journal personnel and the number of submissions annually (D. Mograbi, personal communication, June 26, 2014).

Within a few days, Winkler emailed options for potential business models. These included open access (OA) models funded by APCs, institutional investment, or membership dues from a society; and also a "delayed OA model." This last would be funded through individual and institutional subscriptions; and after an embargo period (~12 months), articles would become publicly available at no charge. Winkler also asked, "How does the journal currently handle conflicts of interest when an author from the editors' university submits?" (J. Winkler, personal communication, July 1, 2014).

Mograbi answered the next day:

Thanks for your e-mail. As we mentioned before, we would be willing to lose our open access status if needed. If we decide to go for a hybrid model, than it seems to us that the first model (delaying open access) is the most appropriate in our case. (D. Mograbi, personal communication, July 2, 2014)

With regard to the review process, Mograbi wrote:

[B]ecause we have 3 editors-in-chief from different universities, we can assign editors such that conflicts of interest are minimized. Essentially the journal admin will assign an editor according to the authors affiliation so that there is little interference in the reviewing process. (D. Mograbi, personal communication, July 2, 2014)

The next week, Winkler wrote back: “I agree that the delayed open access would be the most appropriate model to retain the journal’s open access status.” He said the next step from his end was to meet with VandenBos, and then come back with a proposal (J. Winkler, personal communication, July 8, 2014).

The first draft of the contract arrived on August 1 (J. Winkler, personal communication, August 1, 2014). To the surprise of Mograbi and Landeira-Fernandez, the contract specified a transfer of the journal to the APA. In a meeting with Mograbi, Landeira-Fernandez was particularly critical of the proposal, due in part to his years invested in the journal. Mograbi, on the other hand, while resistant to the idea, saw the proposal as an opportunity for dialogue (D. Mograbi, personal communication, August 1, 2014). A Skype meeting with Winkler was scheduled the same day.

In the meeting, Mograbi and Landeira-Fernandez were firm about retaining ownership of the journal. They agreed, however—in consideration of APA’s preference for conducting business with societies and their aversion to dealing with institutions—to assign that ownership to IBNeC. A standard subscription model was agreed to. When discussing APA’s financial investment in the journal, Winkler informed them that some societies were funded by the journal’s profits. To this option, Landeira-Fernandez answered, “No.” In his mind, he could not see the journal turning profit. When all points had been covered, Winkler said he would present their ideas to VandenBos (D. Mograbi, personal communication, January 8, 2018).

On August 11, the second draft of the contract arrived. The term was seven years, commencing January 1, 2015. Full ownership of the journal would be retained by IBNeC. APA would be responsible for all profits and all losses. It would be a standard subscription model, “with the option for the authors to pay to make their manuscripts open access” (J. Winkler, personal communication, August 11, 2014). Mograbi and Landeira-Fernandez were pleased with the results and sent the contract to editors Pedro Cruz and Dora Ventura (D. Mograbi, personal communication, January 8, 2018).

A Skype meeting was planned for August 14, between Mograbi and the three editors of the journal. Cruz emailed his endorsement (P. Cruz, personal communication, August 14, 2014) and thus the meeting was held between

Mograbi, Landeira-Fernandez, and Ventura. As the contract was based on assigning the journal to IBNeC, this brought to the surface some contention. For some time, Ventura had been petitioning for the journal's recognition as an official publication of the Institute of Psychology at USP. Landeira-Fernandez and Mograbi reminded Ventura that APA conducted business primarily with societies, not institutions. After considering the exposure APA could bring to the journal, Ventura agreed to go with APA. There was one condition: that the names of the three editors and their respective institutions be included in a paragraph that defined editorial control (D. Ventura, personal communication, January 19, 2018).

With all three editors on board, Mograbi shared the news with Winkler. He also sent the text change from Ventura (D. Mograbi, personal communication, August 14, 2014). Winkler acknowledged the receipt: "Your recommended text looks straight forward—I will let you know what my legal counsel says" (J. Winkler, personal communication, August 14, 2014).

On August 22, the third draft of the contract arrived, which included the text change as requested. Mograbi emailed Winkler about a minor spelling change (D. Mograbi, personal communication, August 22, 2014). Winkler emailed back that he would send the contract off to legal, with Mograbi's change included. He said the processing might take several weeks (J. Winkler, personal communication, August 22, 2014).

On September 2, the fourth and final draft arrived.

On September 5, J. Landeira-Fernandez, on behalf of IBNeC and the three editors, signed the seven-year contract with the APA—with witness' signature and legal stamps.

On September 10, the final agreement arrived, countersigned by Gary VandenBos. In an email, Winkler sent his thanks to the editors for choosing APA, and said he looked forward to a successful future (J. Winkler, personal communication, September 10, 2014). Mograbi replied that he too did as well (D. Mograbi, personal communication, September 10, 2014), and with that the season's work drew to a close.

Post transition

On March 16, 2015, APA announced by press release it was now the worldwide publisher of *Psychology & Neuroscience* (American Psychological Association, 2015). Mograbi was promoted to associate editor. He was promoted to editor in September, 2017. At this juncture, the three original editors assumed "founding editor" positions. By the end of 2017, the journal was in two more databases—Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Psychology and Online Computer Library Center—but the critical database—Medline/PubMed—still eluded them. Surprising to the editors were the APA Publisher Reports,

which for 2015 and 2016 showed the journal made a profit. This unexpected boon was a thorn for Landeira-Fernandez, who had not envisioned the journal turning profit; and had declined the profit sharing model.

Analysis

In relation to its sister journals, *Psychology & Neuroscience* stood out from the crowd, well before its deal with APA. In terms of publication language, business model, editorial stability, editorial board makeup, and the international qualities of its editors, the journal had qualities unique within its field. I recap these qualities now with the hope they may be useful to other emerging-nation editors and publishers.

Publication language

Prior to its partnership with the APA, *Psychology & Neuroscience* was the first Brazilian publication in its field to publish content exclusively in English. At its inception in 2008, this was unique among Brazilian journals in the field, which, if publishing in English, restricted it to special English-language issues, or used it in a hybrid format (Portuguese, Spanish, English). Thus, the commitment of the journal, from volume 1, issue 1, was publishing in English for the global market. But publishing in English, by itself, does not make a journal global, due to the variability in translational integrity (Fradkin, 2015). Acknowledging this issue, *Psychology & Neuroscience* hired “two language reviewers (native English speakers who specialize in academic revisions)” for “assistance with language- and copy-editing” (Mograbi, 2014, p. 62). Their commitment in this area is consistent with the dual-stage approach to translation, which stresses the necessity of input from a native English-speaking scholar to smooth the draft into its final form (Fradkin, 2015, 2017b).

Business model

Psychology & Neuroscience was one of the first journals to be supported by an ANPEPP working group rather than a university pós-graduação program.² This arrangement enabled the journal to pursue outside sources for support (e.g., CNPq, FAPERJ), an activity less feasible under the traditional Brazilian model. It also fit well with APA’s preference for doing business with societies, rather than with academic institutions.

Editorial stability

Under the ANPEPP-based model, the three founding editors helmed the journal from 2008 to 2017, and provided a consistency in direction. This

² A pós-graduação program is the equivalent of a graduate program in the United States: it delivers Master’s and Doctoral degrees (Gomes & Fradkin, 2015).

consistency would have been less feasible under the traditional pós-graduação program model, in which editors rotate every several years. Based on results, this served the journal well.

Editorial board makeup

Empirical research finds a positive relationship between the prevalence of editorial board members based at native English-speaking institutions and the publishing performance of the journal (Fradkin, 2017a). From its onset, *Psychology & Neuroscience* has had a higher prevalence of editorial board members based at native English-speaking institutions (27%; Psychology & Neuroscience, 2013) than most Brazilian journals in the field. The same holds true for manuscript reviewers, in that *Psychology & Neuroscience* has had a higher prevalence of manuscript reviewers based at native English-speaking institutions (35%; Mograbi, 2014) than most Brazilian journals in the field. These resources enabled *Psychology & Neuroscience* to expedite the review process, which streamlined the time from receipt of manuscript to its appearance in the publication (J. Landeira-Fernandez, personal communication, June 8, 2018).

International qualities of editors

Among the founding editors of *Psychology & Neuroscience*, two of them, Landeira-Fernandez and Ventura, earned their PhDs at institutions in English-speaking countries. This was also the case with Mograbi.³ While other Brazilian journals at the time had editorial staff schooled in English-speaking countries, *Psychology & Neuroscience* had an advantage with three of its key personnel schooled immersion-style in English. This advantage is apparent in the email excerpts cited here, between Mograbi and native English-speaker Winkler. The clarity and coherence of Mograbi's English language emails is at the level of a native English-language speaker. From the perspective of a native English-speaking entity, this quality expedites the negotiating process.

Final Words

This paper chronicles the journey of an emerging-nation journal that resulted in a partnership with a global publisher. We have a journal that was founded by a handful of believers, bound together by a vision and a goal (Landeira-Fernandez, Cruz, & Ventura, 2008). And seven years from then, a chance encounter at a conference was the seed that helped that vision spring to life. While the story of *Psychology & Neuroscience* may be unique in its unfolding, in many ways it is a common tale. It is the tale of striving forward into areas unknown, without a map,

³ Landeira-Fernandez: University of California, Los Angeles, CA, US; Ventura: Columbia University, NY, US; Mograbi: King's College, London, UK.

without a compass. Joseph Campbell might have called this the classic “hero’s journey” (Campbell, 2008), with our editors, or heroes, forging forward towards their goal, and skirting obstacles they meet along the way. But when arriving at their goal, the elusive global market, our editors find further hills to climb. Thus this story, while completed in the sense of this one chapter, continues like a flower to unfold.

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