

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Dr. Candice Welhausen  
**CC:** Dr. Derek Ross, Dr. Chad Wickman  
**FROM:** Brandi Jean Jones  
**DATE:** February 05 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Technical Editing Markup – Meta-Analysis (Technical Editing)

This memorandum, for the attention of my Masters of Technical and Professional Communication (MTPC) graduate committee, is to detail and analyze my completion of a technical editing project completed in Dr. Susan Youngblood's English 7000 course, Technical Editing.

This memorandum will detail the background of the project, the overall goal and execution of the project, and the rhetorical choices that I made as a technical and professional communicator to best serve the needs of my client.

Keywords: technical editing, audience analysis, technical editing checklist

### **Background of Project**

This technical editing project was completed independently in Dr. Susan Youngblood's English 7000 course, Technical Editing, in Fall 2018. The project consisted of reviewing, editing, and providing electronic markups to international authors for an academic manuscript submitted to the *International Journal of Acoustics and Vibrations* (IJAV) for consideration of publication. This project was completed in Microsoft Word 2018, with the track changes and comments features being displayed.

With this project, I was responsible for ensuring that the manuscript accurately followed the style guide utilized by the IJAV editorial team, the manuscript correctly followed the submission guidelines outlined in the author instructions, and that the overall language used in the document was clear and understandable by a broad audience.

The manuscript I received for technical editing project was titled "Measurement of Classroom Acoustic Parameters in the Public Schools of Medellin," written by Juan R. Aguilar and Luz M. Tilano from the Universidad de San Buenaventura in Medellin, Colombia. This highly technical document detailed the results of a scientific engineering study that revealed how poor classroom acoustics in Medellin public schools had detrimental effects on the academic performance of students in the area.

### **Audience of Project**

The primary audience of my technical editing project consisted of the document's original authors (to whom my author queries and memorandum were directed to) and the editorial team of IJAV. However, my technical editing decisions were made for the interest of the document's reader, to guarantee the text was understandable, accessible, and consistent with previous IJAV publications.

## Goal and Execution

The goal of this project was to confirm that the manuscript was of the highest quality possible before being forwarded to IJAV's Editor-in-Chief for review. As I was coming into this project unfamiliar with the standard of work accepted for publication, I familiarized myself with current IJAV publications to gain better insight into the editorial process. I examined two different published IJAV articles and completed an in-depth analysis of each piece to gain a better understanding of the affiliation of the authors, the accessibility of the article to a general audience, and the overall structure and layout of the articles.

This research gave me insights into critical areas that I should focus on when beginning the technical editing process of my manuscript. One such insight I gleaned from my research was the application of American Standard English (ASE) in all published articles by IJAV. Noting that the journal published articles from international researchers, I prioritized keeping a sharp eye out for words that did not follow ASE format.

During the process of reviewing published works, I took detailed notes and created my own personal style guide to follow alongside with IJAV's official style guide. These notes supported me in guaranteeing the manuscript I was responsible for maintained consistency with previously published works. Examples of my findings include noticing that:

- the initial placement of STEM terminology and abbreviations is left to the editor's discretion (these were found to be in various locations throughout articles)
- numbers are spelled out at the beginning of a sentence (Example: "Zero voltage constraint is applied to the master nodes at the bonded faces of the patches." (pg. 417, IJAV 22.4))
- casual phrasing is placed in single quotation marks (Example: "'sweet spot' frequencies" (pg. 418, IJAV 22.4))

These types of observations helped ensure that the manuscript I was responsible for would maintain consistency with IJAV's brand and identity as a high-quality academic journal. During this process, I also detailed what I was evaluating by creating a "Good Editing Checklist," as described by Kelly Schrank (Schrank, 2013). This editing checklist helped me stay methodical in my steps, and allowed me to be confident about my decisions as an editor. For example, I noted in my editing checklist that I should ensure that all Figures in the document were referred to as "Fig." after the first mention. This editing checklist helped me stay efficient when editing the dense text.

During the editing process, I would leave author queries to obtain clarification on questions concerning the manuscript. One such example included two references that involved broken DOI links. Using an author query, I was able to signalize the broken links and prompted the authors to contact the Editor-in-Chief with functioning links for further consideration. Following Mackiewicz and Riley's advice to "be polite to maintain good working relationships with writers," I was careful to balance clarity and politeness when addressing the authors in my author queries (Mackiewicz & Riley, 2003).

## **Conclusion of Project**

Upon completion of the project, my final technical editing document, along with a memorandum directed to the authors, was sent to IJAV's editorial team for review. My documents were then forwarded to the manuscript's authors so that changes could be made for resubmission.

## **Contact**

If you have any questions or comments regarding the IJAV technical editing project, please contact me at [bjj0011@auburn.edu](mailto:bjj0011@auburn.edu).

## **References**

Mackiewicz, J., & Riley, K. (2003). The technical editor as diplomat: Linguistic strategies for balancing clarity and politeness. *Technical communication*, 50(1), 83-94.

Schrank, K. (2013). Using editing checklists for more efficient editing. *AMWA J*, 28(4), 164-6.