

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Asian Pacific Journal of Tropical Disease

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/apjtd

Mini review

doi: 10.1016/S2222-1808(15)61006-4

©2016 by the Asian Pacific Journal of Tropical Disease. All rights reserved.

Picture for tropical medicine article: How to provide the qualified one?

Somsri Wiwanitkit^{1*}, Viroj Wiwanitkit²¹Wiwanitit House, Bangkhae, Bangkok, Thailand²Hainan Medical University, Haikou, China

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 11 Nov 2015

Received in revised form 20 Nov 2015

Accepted 30 Nov 2015

Available online 20 Jan 2016

Keywords:

Picture

Tropical medicine

Communication

Article

ABSTRACT

Picture is an important media for communication. A picture can represent hundreds of words. In tropical medicine, picture is important for the description in many situations. To prepare and provide a good picture is an important step for publishing an article in tropical medicine. How to provide qualified picture is hereby discussed. Also, the authors discuss an important publication ethical problem, picture plagiarism.

1. Introduction

Picture is an important media for communication. A picture can represent hundreds of words. In tropical medicine, picture is important for the description in many situations. To prepare and provide a good picture is an important step for publishing an article in tropical medicine. In the past, a picture must be derived by photography taking by a classical camera and the photography is the standard type of picture for journal to prepare an article. However, due to the advanced computational technology at present, a picture can be taken using many digital tools and the picture can be saved as a computational file. In medicine, the use of digital image has been seen for around two decades[1]. The images help article readers visualize the actual scenario, shape, size and color of the presenting objects. At present, there are several tools for helping picture manipulation and prepare it

for presenting in scientific article[2]. It is usually suggested that picture should be provided in any article if it is applicable. To get a good article, a good picture should be selected. How to provide qualified picture is hereby discussed. Also, the authors discussed an important publication ethical problem, picture plagiarism.

2. What is a good picture for a tropical medicine article?

To have a picture becomes an easy thing at present. As noted, many tools are available for generating a picture. To get a picture from the real object is the first concept to get the good picture. This means that the picture should be taken from the real specimen, real setting, real patient and real situation. In case that the problem is serial such as the progression of a tropical disease, then the corresponding serial pictures should be prepared. The real picture is more preferable. Although there are some new tools (such as FigureJ[3]) for adjustment of the picture, it is not recommended. The details of a picture (what, where and when) must be provided and the name of the photo taker should also be presented. In case that the picture is gotten from a microscope, the type of microscope and magnification should be indicated. Also, since pictures in medicine usually relate to the patient, the privacy

*Corresponding author: Somsri Wiwanitkit, Wiwanitit House, Bangkhae, Bangkok, Thailand.

Tel: +66870970933

E-mail: somsriwian@hotmail.com

The journal implements double-blind peer review practiced by specially invited international editorial board members.

of the patient must be focused. The eyes of the patient must be blinded and the informed consent and permission is needed before taking any photography. For the derived picture, security is needed. The security of digital photography is a big legal issue at present[4].

In case that the picture cannot be taken from the real things, it is suggested not to use the picture from other sources although it is available. It is advised to use drawing to generate a picture instead. It should also be noted that the picture must be processed by journal process and modification of the size of picture can be expected. In general, the picture will be resized to fit a single journal column. This implies that a 1-cm-wide figure will be transformed to 1-point type. For a general journal, a single column is approximately 8 cm or 8-point size.

3. Picture plagiarism: important thing to be avoided

The picture published in a journal is usually the property of the journal since the copyright is usually transferred from the author to the journal before publication. However, the big concern is on the publication ethics. Sometimes, the authors might present the pictures that belong to others and this can result in problematic situation. First, the copyright violation to the original publisher can be seen. In addition, it is an academic dishonesty. It is called picture or figure plagiarism[5]. This kind of plagiarism is difficult to detect by simple computation plagiarism screening tool[6,7] (the examples of the figure plagiarism can be seen at “J Singapore Ped Soc 1978; 20: 122-41” and “Chula Med J 1980; 24: 597-604”; and “J Med Assoc Thai 2015 May; 98 Suppl 4: S22-6” and “Asian Pac J Cancer Prev 2015; 16: 2323-6”).

It is the role of the author to provide original picture and the journal editor and reviewer take the role for screening for unethical plagiarism[8]. Finally, one might raise a query how to detect a picture plagiarism. This can be simply done using online computational search engine such as images.google.com with reverse image search technique. In case that picture plagiarism is detected, proper management must be done. Withdrawal (in case of in press, Epub before) or retraction should be done. Notification to plagiarist's institute and sanction/banning or punishment should be set to the plagiarist. It is noted that although some plagiarists try to ask for using copyrighted picture from the original publisher after the problem is detected, it only solves the copyright problem, not the unethical plagiarism (see examples in “Nat Rev Genet 2007; 8:480-5” and “J Med Assoc Thai 2008; 91(2): 268-71”).

4. Conclusion

To have a good picture is important to generate a good article in tropical medicine. Picture from real things without modification plus details is preferable. It is advised to avoid using any other's

picture. The problem of picture plagiarism is serious and common at present. It is an unacceptable thing that should be sanctioned by the scientific community.

To prevent the problem is very interesting. The first important thing for any author is the ethical mind. Not copying or stealing the other belongings is the important basic concern. Also, the truth is needed, falsified or fake picture is also a kind of scientific misconduct. To avoid the problem, these suggestions should be kept in mind. The author has to strictly follow the instruction to author of the journal and attach to the standards of publication ethics. The author should take the photo or draw the picture by his/her own self. It is suggested to avoid the copying or using the other's figures for modification. If the manipulation of the existed picture, either in hand-drawing, painting, printed or digital format is required, permission asking from the primary source is needed and proper substantial modifying is needed. When the modified picture is used, clarification and notification that it is a modification from the original source is required[9-11].

Conflict of interest statement

We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Furness PN. The use of digital images in pathology. *J Pathol* 1997; **183**(3): 253-63.
- [2] Stuurman N, Swedlow JR. Software tools, data structures, and interfaces for microscope imaging. *Cold Spring Harb Protoc* 2012; **2012**(1): 50-61.
- [3] Mutterer J, Zinck E. Quick-and-clean article figures with FigureJ. *J Microsc* 2013; **252**(1): 89-91.
- [4] Thomas VA, Rugeley PB, Lau FH. Digital photo security: what plastic surgeons need to know. *Plast Reconstr Surg* 2015; **136**(5): 1120-6.
- [5] Wiwanitkit V. Plagiarism: ethical problem for medical writing. *J Med Assoc Thai* 2008; **91**: 955-6.
- [6] Wiwanitkit V. Plagiarism: word, idea, figure, etc. *Croat Med J* 2011; **52**(5): 657.
- [7] Wiwanitkit V. Plagiarism, beyond crosscheck, figure and conceptual theft. *Sci Eng Ethics* 2014; **20**(2): 613-4.
- [8] Wiwanitkit S. Plagiarism and journal editing. *Acta Inform Med* 2013; **21**(1): 71.
- [9] Cromey DW. Digital images are data: and should be treated as such. *Methods Mol Biol* 2013; **931**: 1-27.
- [10] Mraz P. Against abuse of digital photography techniques in morphology--Ethical Code of Slovak Anatomical Society. *Bratisl Lek Listy* 2007; **108**(12): 533-5.
- [11] Hayden JE. Digital manipulation in scientific images: some ethical considerations. *J Biocommun* 2000; **27**(1): 11-9.