



TIPS FOR AUTHORS

Standard Terminology

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In any scientific communication, it is important for authors to use the standard terminology of the discipline. Correct terminology makes your writing specific, ensures that it will be consistent with the work of other prosthodontists, and contributes to clarity for your readers. Always strive to use the most accurate and current terms to describe your materials, your methods, and your statistical analysis. If you need advice, consult the most recent *Glossary of Prosthodontic Terms* (8th Edition) (*J Prosthet Dent* 2005;94:10-92). The *Glossary* should always be your guide when preparing a manuscript.

Examples of some commonly misused terms include the following.

Post vs. Dowel Dowel/Post: It is incorrect to use dowel and post interchangeably in your manuscript. The *Glossary* defines “dowel” as “[a] **post** usually made of metal that is fitted into a prepared root canal of a natural tooth.” In your manuscript, you may be describing a “pre-fabricated dowel,” a “dowel/core,” or a “custom cast dowel/core.” The term “post” is usually only when referring to a “post and core crown” which is defined as “a restoration in which the crown and cast post are one unit.”

Matrix/Patrix vs. Female/Male: In many contexts, the terms “female” and “male” are used to describe the inter-connecting parts of an attachment system that can be described as analogous to human anatomy. In the discipline of Prosthodontics, the terms **matrix** and **patrix** are preferred. The *patrix* is defined as “the extension of a dental attachment system that fits into the matrix.” (*Glossary*, p. 60.)

Poly(vinyl siloxane): This term represents one of the most heavily debated terminology issues in the publication of prosthodontics research. The *Glossary of Prosthodontic Terms* prefers “poly(vinyl siloxane)”, while *Craig’s Restorative Dental Materials* (2nd ed., Elsevier Mosby, St. Louis, MO, 2006) uses the term “vinylpolysiloxane.” To confuse matters further, manufacturers may use other variations on these two terms. The preferred term for the *Journal of Prosthodontics* is **poly(vinyl siloxane)**, as the *Glossary* suggests. However, the editors will also accept Craig’s version of the term, “vinylpolysiloxane.” Whichever version of this term you prefer, be sure to use that choice consistently throughout your manuscript!

Specimen vs. Sample: Authors sometimes confuse these two terms. A **specimen** is a single item in a category or group. It might be a single tooth, or a single section of tooth enamel, or an entire prosthesis, but in any of these cases, it is a single example of some category that the researcher has defined for hypothesis testing. A **sample**, on the other hand, is the whole set of items (teeth or enamel sections or prostheses) selected for comparison and statistical analysis. **Sample** in this context is a formal statistical term meaning the set of entities the researcher will evaluate. **Sampling** is the formal process through which the particular set is selected. The **sample** is what the researcher analyzes, and it will be made up of a group of **specimens**.

Making certain that your terminology is correct, that it is consistent throughout your entire manuscript, and that it conforms to the standards of the discipline of Prosthodontics helps prevent delays in your manuscript’s travels toward publication. And, when in doubt, consult the *Glossary of Prosthodontic Terms*. We will discuss other commonly misused terms in the next “Tips for Authors.”

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