

Reviewer #1:

**Scientific Quality:** Grade C (Good)

**Language Quality:** Grade C (A great deal of language polishing)

**Conclusion:** Major revision

**Specific Comments to Authors:** Dear authors, In this paper, you sought to assess the outcomes following locking plate fixation of lateral malleolar fractures. Please find my comments below. Introduction section: In this section, you have not made any mention on the primary vs secondary stability concepts which are fundamental when it comes to selecting different modes of fracture fixation. On top of that, language use should be improved given you've mentioned the word 'ankle' multiple times in the first paragraph of the paper. What is more, connection words are missing so you facilitate reading of the manuscript. In the methods section, you have not described your statistics precisely. For example, normality tests / data distribution has not been commented on. Last but not least, discussion section needs to be better organised. For instance, the first paragraph of it is too lengthy and I believe it's not helpful for the readers.

thanks for your suggestions!

- 1) I have included the primary vs secondary stability concepts in the introduction section
- 2) I avoided repeating the term "ankle" many times and I added connection words in the text
- 3) in the methods section I described the statistic mode
- 4) I have better organized the discussion section I have shortened the length of the first paragraph
- 4) I'll send the manuscript to an editing company as soon as the revision is complete

Reviewer #2:

**Scientific Quality:** Grade B (Very good)

**Language Quality:** Grade B (Minor language polishing)

**Conclusion:** Accept (General priority)

**Specific Comments to Authors:** It is a well-design study adding new information to the literature. According to my knowledge, it is a novel paper in its field opening new horizons for further evidence. Authors, succeed to present their findings in a clear way. In addition, the object as well as the results are appropriately discussed in the context of previous literature explaining the importance of the manuscript in its field. Authors succeed to present their data in a clear way adding information to the existing literature. Therefore, I have no corrections or further work to propose for the improvement of the manuscript and therefore it can be published unaltered.

Thanks for the comments on my manuscript!

Reviewer #3:

**Scientific Quality:** Grade C (Good)

**Language Quality:** Grade B (Minor language polishing)

**Conclusion:** Major revision

**Specific Comments to Authors:** The study has certain clinical value, but there are still some doubts. 1. In the result part of the text of the manuscript, the age of the first group and the second group is  $\geq 65$  years old, and there may be description errors. In addition, the dividing age between the elderly and the young is 65 years old, but generally speaking, most studies use 60 years old. 2. In the conclusion part of the manuscript, it is mentioned that "Although in literature the locking plate has been associated with delayed union or non-union, we did not observe it our study". I think this sentence should be modified because the observation time of some patients in the manuscript is not very long, and the overall included samples are also limited. 3. Are there any differences in scores between genders?

thanks for your suggestions!

- 1) I corrected the description error in the manuscript

2) I changed the sentence based on your comment

3) No, there aren't; for this reason I have not inserted this particular in the text