Forward

It has been decided that the “Journal of Arrhythmia” will be published in English, rather than Japanese, as it has always been until now. This is to say that the journal will be re-born as an English journal. It goes without saying that this journal is the official journal of the “Japanese Society of Cardiac Pacing and Electrophysiology”, which is a specialized society of pacemakers, ICD and other arrhythmia related fields. To mark this occasion, the above-mentioned academic society has renamed itself, the “Japanese Heart Rhythm Society”. This journal was first published in 1984, under the name “Cardiac Pacing”. Later it was renamed, “Journal of Arrhythmia” and by 2005, it had published 21 issues. It has always been a possibility for this journal to make a contribution in English, and a number of chapters had been published this way, however its numbers have been minimal. Taking this opportunity of renaming the journal, as well as the academic society, English is to become the standard language in making any contribution to the journal.

It is possible to say that this series of change is a direct influence of a change, which took place in a similar academic society in the United States of America. The American academic society, NASPE (North American Society of Pacing and Electrophysiology) has renamed itself as “Heart Rhythm Society” and its official journal PACE (Pacing and Clinical Electrophysiology) has been similarly renamed, “Heart Rhythm”.

Lately, there has been much attention on diagnosing and treating disease based on clinical results or EBM (Evidence Based Medicine). Numerous guidelines on treating different types of disease based on EBM have been published. As a result, the importance of information one can obtain from medical articles or books has increased. In addition, searching for articles over the Internet has become so simple and accessible that it is often unnecessary to go to the library, which was once the norm for researchers. However, it is difficult to understand an article found on the Internet, unless it is written in your language or at least in English. I can just imagine the disappointed look on the face of a foreigner who discovers that the article he or she wanted to study was written only in Japanese. Many articles have summaries in English, but it is not possible to completely understand a thesis, without reading it in its entirety.

Dr. Sunao Tawara whom contributed tremendously to the advancement of cardiology and electrophysiology, through the discovery of impulse conducting system of the heart has written his thesis in German. However there are not too many doctors who can understand German today. The same can be said for French or Spanish.

The reality is that the majority of international conferences held by most international societies all over the world use English as the official language. Hence, at least in the scientific world, you can say that English is the international language of choice. My hope is that, this change in making English the standard language of this journal will allow more people to subscribe and cite it, and it will allow as many people as possible to contribute to it. I hope that this will give this journal an opportunity to grow into an international medical journal with a higher “impact factor” than ever before.

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