CORRESPONDENCE

Intra-abdominal Adhesions: Definition, Origin, Significance in Surgical Practice, and Treatment Options

by Dr. med. Dörthe Brüggmann, Dr. med. Garri Tchartchian, Dr. med. Markus Wallwiener, Prof. Dr. med. Karsten Münstedt, Prof. Dr. med. Dr. h.c. Hans-Rudolf Tinneberg, Dr. med. Andreas Hackethal in volume 44/2010

The Zeitgeist Dominates

The basis of the literature search for this article was, according to the authors, the database of the 'Clinical Adhesion Research and Evaluation' (CARE) working group. This database includes articles published in PubMed and Medline since 1960 and is updated with the latest relevant articles every month. Unfortunately this time restriction entails the entire loss of both German and European scientific literature predating 1960. (e.g. Payr, Arch. f. klin. Chir. 1919, 1922, Biermer, Zbl. Gynäk. 1949, Rössle, Zbl. Path. 1949, Trompke u. Siegner, Langenb. Arch. 1956). In the bibliography of this article, out of 25 references only one is from a German author (Dembrowski, 1889). 24 quotes taken from the database are from foreign scholars. The contemporary tendency to turn a blind eye to German scientific literature cannot be denied. Out of the 49 references to German institutions, amongst the 1755 relevant PubMed references, not one is mentioned in the bibliography of this review article. None of the 9 publications of the working group of the Department of Surgery at the University Hospital Aachen (Professor Schumpelick) is cited, nor are 3 publications from Austria and Switzerland worthy of mention. As a result, for us surgeons, this particularly interesting field; the problem of intra-abdominal adhesion is inadequately covered. The renunciation of the languages of European scientific research, including German, in favour of the English monoculture leads inevitably to linguistic impoverishment. The call by ADSiC (*Arbeitskreis Deutsche Sprache in der Chirurgie*; Working Committee for German Language in Surgery) for the conscious use of German scientific and technical language does not seem misplaced.

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REFERENCES

1. Brüggmann D, Tchartchian G, Wallwiener M, Münstedt K, Tinneberg H-R, Hackethal A: Intra-abdominal adhesions—definition, origin, significance in surgical practice, and treatment options. Dtsch Arztebl Int 2010; 107(44): 769–75.

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Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare that no conflict of interest exists according to the guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

In Reply:

Let us start by confirming that no substantial objections were brought forward by the ADSiC against our review article, but that we were included in a discussion on the selection of German language references in current review articles in *Deutsches Ärzteblatt*. The strategy of a selective literature search was clearly explained in our review article, and we selected recent and important research results into the subject.

If a desire exists to revive German as a scientific language then we think it is important to take a stand in favor of Germany as a research location.

That German does not play any important part in the scientific literature is shown, among others, by the fact that the well selected and critically peer reviewed articles of *Deutsches Ärzteblatt* are translated into English—an undertaking that deserves praise—in order to achieve global readability, citability, and international scientific recognition (which includes the Impact Factor).

In the age of the internet, iPhone, apps, Twitter, Facebook, and iPad, English has become the lingua franca for the purpose of establishing intercultural communication, and this includes communication in science.

Independently of quotas we think that the provenance of a journal, a publication, a scientist, or a well-founded research result is irrelevant in our everyday scientific and medical work.

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1. Brüggmann D, Tchartchian G, Wallwiener M, Münstedt K, Tinneberg H-R, Hackethal A: Intra-abdominal adhesions—definition, origin, significance in surgical practice, and treatment options. Dtsch Arztebl Int 2010; 107(44): 769–75.

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Conflict of interest statement

Professor Tinneberg has received travel expenses and honoraria for speaking from Baxter. Dr Hackethal has received travel expenses from Baxter and has contracts for advisory activities with NordicPharma and Fischer&Paykel. Dr Tchartchian has a contract as an adviser with Covidien and has also received travel expenses from this company.

Drs Brüggmann and Wallwiener and Professor Münstedt declare that no conflict of interest exists according to the guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.