

# REPORT ON THE XXIV BIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM OF THE INTERNATIONAL EVOKED RESPONSE AUDIOMETRY STUDY GROUP, BUSAN, KOREA, 10–14 MAY, 2015

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The 24<sup>th</sup> Biennial Symposium of the International Evoked Response Audiometry Study Group (IERASG) took place in Busan, South Korea on 10–14 May, 2015. The meeting was co-organized by Dong-A University in Busan and Seoul National University. The chair of the organizing committee was long-standing IERASG Council member, Prof. Lee-Suk Kim (Dong-A University) and the general secretary (and principal organizer of the scientific program) was Prof. Jun Ho Lee (Seoul National University). The venue was the Paradise Hotel Busan, located at Haeundae Beach, said to be Korea's most famous and beautiful beach.

The meeting began with two pre-symposium workshops. The first was on advanced AEP (auditory evoked potential) analysis, and was organized by Andrew Dimitrijevic (University of Cincinnati). The workshop was devoted to source analysis, time-frequency analysis, and the ICA (independent component analysis) method to reduce cochlear implant artifacts. The second workshop was on VEMPs (vestibular evoked myogenic potentials), and was divided into sections related to neural physiology of VEMPs (led by Toshihisa Murofushi), basic principles of recording and interpretation (Hong-Ju Park), clinical application of VEMPs (Toru Seo), and special considerations and demonstrations (Myung-Whan Suh). This was the first time that an IERASG meeting had featured workshops with hands-on courses. Since both courses were well attended, it is likely that they will become a regular feature of future Biennial Symposia.

The conference proper started with the Hallowell Davis lecture. This is a regular feature of all Biennial Symposia and is named after the great founder of IERASG and contributor to the whole audiology discipline. This year's lecture was given by Terence Picton (one-time chair of the IERASG Council and former organizer of a Biennial Symposium). Its title was, simply, "Hearing speech". Prof. Picton started his lecture by displaying the title in different characters of modern Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and old Chinese. He spoke of the Korean, King Sejong the Great, who introduced the Hangul Alphabet in the XV<sup>th</sup> century. He also pointed out that Tripitaka Koreana – the movable alphabet for printing Buddhist scriptures – was introduced two centuries before Gutenberg. The lecture itself was devoted to envelope and frequency-following responses and late-latency and other cortical responses. A light moment occurred initially when technical problems prevented the presenter from playing his recordings of sample Korean phonemes, but this impediment didn't discourage



Statue of Go-Woon Choi Chi-Won in Dong Baek Park, Busan

the lecturer, who proceeded to produce the sample sounds himself. A major point of the lecture was that hearing aids are not created for the reception of clicks but specifically for speech. Therefore, speech-like stimuli rather than clicks should be used to test both hearing aids and CIs (cochlear implants). Picton ended his talk in Latin: *Imago animi sermo est; qualis vir, talis oratio* (speech is the mirror of the soul; as the man is, so is his speech).

This year, for the first time, a round table was part of the IERASG program. It was entitled "Clinical applications of auditory evoked potentials: novel stimuli and signal-processing strategies". The moderator was Robert Burkard, and the panelists were Manuel Don, Terence Picton, James W. Hall III, and Kelly Tremblay.

Guest lectures covered "Clinical applications of temporal non-linear otoacoustic emissions" by Roger Thornton, and "Are we at a loss to explain how hearing loss affects AEP measures?" by Manuel Don. The presenter of the latter raised questions that still remain unanswered. Dr Don speculated that we are at a loss to explain the effect of hearing loss on standard AEP measurements such as the ABR wave V latency. Thus, such measures lack prognostic value. Useful measures will require novel ideas, creative stimuli, and new analysis. There is a tendency for clinicians to ignore the use of new techniques that may give us better knowledge because of higher cost, in terms of both time and money. However, Dr Don cautioned that if we think that these newer techniques are costly, "try ignorance and see what it costs".



John D. Durrant and Lee-Suk Kim



Jun Ho Lee



Group photo of participants of IERASG 2015

There were three keynote lectures: “New applications for auditory evoked potentials in cochlear implant users”, by Carolyn J. Brown; “Changes in cortical resource allocation in hearing loss”, by Anu Sharma; and “Older ears and older brains: implications for clinical assessment and rehabilitation”, by Kelly L. Tremblay.

Some important events took place during the closing ceremony. First, John D. Durrant summarized the symposium and awarded appreciation plaques to Lee-Suk Kim and Jun Ho Lee. Next he retired from his position as IERASG Council Chair. The new chair, Suzanne C. Purdy, gave a talk on Prof. Durrant’s contributions to IERASG, and presented him with a commemorative plaque. For good measure, another plaque was presented to him by George Tavartkiladze on behalf of the International Society of Audiology (ISA), a society to which IERASG is affiliated. In addition, it was announced that the new Vice-chair would be Andy Beynon (the Netherlands), and a long-time IERASG member and symposium summarizer, Robert Burkard (USA), would become a member of the IERASG Council.

Finally, it was announced that the next IERASG symposium, the XXV Jubilee, would take place in Poland in 2017. Representatives of the Organizing and Scientific Committees of the future symposium, Krzysztof Kochanek and Wiktor Jędrzejczak, announced that the Symposium



Suzanne C. Purdy and John D. Durrant

will take place in Warsaw on April/May of that year (details pending and to be announced at [www.ierasg.ifps.org.pl](http://www.ierasg.ifps.org.pl)). They illustrated the delights of the city and summarized the congress facilities and nearby attractions. Later, the Australian delegation, led by Robert Cowan, put forward their country as a candidate for the XXVI IERASG symposium in 2019. The proposal was favorably received by participants and by Council, and there were no other candidates. According to IERASG rules, the final decision will have to be made no later than the next biennial meeting in 2017.

In summary, the 2015 Biennial Symposium of the IERASG was a great success. All invited lectures and the round-table session were very interesting, and were of very high scientific standard. The average level of free papers and posters was high, many presenting fresh results of novel research. Attendance was above that at recent meetings. It is worth mentioning that, for the first time, there were

a significant number of participants from China, members of the newly created Chinese Society of Evoked Response Audiometry. Finally, the organizers of the symposium should be congratulated on excellent organization and very high quality of venue, and the same can be said of the accompanying social and cultural events.