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# Past, Present, and Future of the Korea-Japan Joint Symposium on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Michio Kaminishi<sup>1</sup> and Hirohumi Niwa<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Showa General Hospital, Tokyo, <sup>2</sup>St. Marianna University School of Medicine, Kanagawa, Japan

We herein discuss the history, the present situation, and the future prospects of Korean Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (KSGE) and Japan Gastroenterological Endoscopy Society (JGES). Through the symposiums, endoscopy medicine in both countries has developed and matured remarkably, and Korea and Japan have taken a leadership position in this field. In the future, we continuously challenge to advance the symposium further, to hold international sessions, to develop the new KSGE journal *Clinical Endoscopy* and the JGES journal *Digestive Endoscopy* through friendly competition. Through those above, we will share useful information with the world and provide leadership in the field of endoscopy medicine.

**Key Words:** Korean Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy; Japanese Gastroenterological Endoscopy Society; Endoscopy medicine; Joint symposium; History of Korea-Japan Joint Symposium on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

## INTRODUCTION

The Korean Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (KSGE) and Japan Gastroenterological Endoscopy Society (JGES) have taken turns hosting the Korea-Japan Joint Symposium on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (KJSGE/JKSGE) every year. So far, the two Societies have hosted 10 joint symposiums together, and have made a significant contribution to the promotion of bilateral exchanges and improvements in digestive endoscopy medicine. At now, on the launching of KSGE English journal *Clinical Endoscopy*, we would like to elaborate on the history, present situation, and future direction and prospects of the KJSGE/JKSGE.

## PAST

The official relationship between Korea and Japan in diges-

tive endoscopy dates back to 2002. On behalf of the KSGE, Prof. In Sik Chung proposed the bilateral joint seminar on digestive endoscopy to the JGES then-President, Hirohumi Niwa. After a great deal of consideration, the Joint Symposium of two countries was held in Seoul, Korea in March 2003. We discussed whether to call this symposium the first KJSGE. However, because the President of the JGES Congress had held the exchange meeting before then, at the request of the Korean Society, and although satisfactory results were not achieved on that occasion, it is true that the meeting was the beginning of communication between the two countries. Therefore, we decided to designate that initial meeting as the 1st, and the joint symposium in 2003 as the 2nd KJSGE (Table 1).

After that, the KJSGE/JKSGE has been held every year alternately in the two countries, on the day before the Endofest Korea in March in Korea, or on the third day of the JGES Congress in spring in Japan. Also, we have held an interim meeting every summer alternately in the two countries to review the contents of the symposium and have promoted mutual friendship between the Societies.

Table 2 is a brief summary of past joint programs. As you can see, we have picked about four topics each time, named expert speakers from both countries and conducted living debates on these topics. Looking back on these topics we can see the development of digestive endoscopy medicines, as the major topics

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**Correspondence:** Michio Kaminishi

Showa General Hospital, Tenjin-cho 2-450, Kodaira, Tokyo, Japan

**Tel:** +81-42-461-0052, **Fax:** +81-42-465-8677

**E-mail:** kaminishi.michio@gmail.com

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**Table 1.** Successive Presidents and Venues of KJSGE/JKSGE

| No. | Venue    | Date       | Korean President | Japanese President | Joint Congress (President)          |
|-----|----------|------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2   | Seoul    | 2003-03-29 | In Sik Chung     | Hirohumi Niwa      |                                     |
| 3   | Kyoto    | 2004-05-28 | In Sik Chung     | Hirohumi Niwa      | 67th Congress of JGES (Katsu K)     |
| 4   | Seoul    | 2005-03-26 | Yong Bum Yoon    | Hirohumi Niwa      |                                     |
| 5   | Tokyo    | 2006-05-16 | Yong Bum Yoon    | Hirohumi Niwa      | 71st Congress of JGES (Kaminishi M) |
| 6   | Seoul    | 2007-03-24 | Kyu Yong Choi    | Hirohumi Niwa      |                                     |
| 7   | Yokohama | 2008-05-26 | Kyu Yong Choi    | Hirohumi Niwa      | 75th Congress of JGES (Saigenji K)  |
| 8   | Seoul    | 2009-03-28 | Joon Soo Hahm    | Hirohumi Niwa      |                                     |
| 9   | Tokyo    | 2010-05-15 | Joon Soo Hahm    | Michio Kaminishi   | 79th Congress of JGES (Tajiri H)    |
| 10  | Seoul    | 2011-03-26 | Chang Duck Kim   | Michio Kaminishi   |                                     |
| 11  | Tokyo    | 2012-05-13 | Chang Duck Kim   | Michio Kaminishi   | 83rd Congress of JGES (Obara K)     |

KJSGE/JKSGE, Korea-Japan Joint Symposium on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy; JGES, Japan Gastroenterological Endoscopy Society.

have gradually moved from diagnosis in digestive endoscopy in the early days to endoscopic treatment, especially with the high-tech work such as endoscopic submucosal dissection (ESD). In the 6th KJSGE held in Korea, live demonstrations were given for the first time for educational effectiveness. Many Japanese endoscopists with ample experience in ESD and hands-on trainees overseas training participated in the discussion about theoretical and technical matters.

ESD brought about a major change in the treatment of tumors in the gastrointestinal tract. It enabled many patients to avoid gastric or colon resection and accomplished favorable treatment results. However, the technique of ESD is a sort of sole surgery, so technical training and improvement of quality are important. For this reason, it seems natural that ESD becomes an important subject in the symposiums the following year.

Also, just as important is the program of State of the Art Lectures. In these symposiums up until the 6th KJSGE, speakers from both countries made presentations on the specific topic and had a discussion. However, considering the social and medical backgrounds of the two countries and the wide ranging challenges in endoscopy medicine, we decided to host a program where each country could present their current topics separately as the name of the program suggests. This new program enabled us to understand the medical situation of each country and further deepen the mutual understanding.

At the same time, we organized other programs including video sessions, oral presentations and poster sessions and promoted communication among endoscopists from the two countries through active discussions. Among the papers accepted from the public, we began to give the presentation award and honored the author at the social gathering after the symposium. The winner was awarded a prize of a free 1-year subscription to *Digestive Endoscopy*, the official journal of JGES and the Asia Pacific Society for Digestive Endoscopy.

## PRESENT

In the early period, the symposium was in the form of Japan's provision of their wide knowledge and information based on requests from the KSGE. However, with the eagerness and efforts of Korean endoscopists, the gap between endoscopy medicines in the two countries has rapidly been narrowed and now we can say that Korea has taken the lead over Japan in some respects. For example, in Korea the development of stenting techniques and devices for stenosed gastrointestinal tracts and biliopancreatic ducts are outstanding, and many achievements are published in *Gastrointestinal Endoscopy* (GIE), the official journal of the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE). Also, more ESD are performed at high-volume centers in Korea than in Japan and, along with the rapid improvement in the technique of ESD, many favorable outcomes come to be published in GIE.

In this way, it is no exaggeration to say that KSGE and Korean endoscopists are now in a leadership position globally in the field of endoscopy medicine, along with JGES and Japanese endoscopists.

On March 26, 2011, the memorable 10th KJSGE was supposed to be held in Seoul. However, due to the terrible earthquake and tsunami which hit eastern Japan on March 11 and the subsequent nuclear accidents, we were forced to cancel our participation in the symposium and present papers only in the journal, to our great disappointment. In this regard, we would like to express my sincere appreciation again of the members of the KSGE for understanding the situation and their support of us.

## FUTURE

Through the symposiums, endoscopy medicine in both countries has developed and matured, but there are several prob-

**Table 2.** List of Scientific Programs of KJSGE/JKSGE

| Times            | Symposium & panel discussion  | State of the art lecture  |          | Others         |
|------------------|---|---|----------|----------------|
|                  |   | Title   | Speaker  |                |
| 2nd <sup>1</sup> | Update on endoscopic management of variceal bleeding                                      | New endoscopic diagnosis approaches to the GI malignancy                                    | Fujita R | Video forum    |
|                  | Pancreatitis and ERCP   | Recent endoscopic treatment approaches to the GI tumor                                      | Hyun JH  |                |
| 3rd <sup>2</sup> | Screening for colorectal lesions  |   |          |                |
|                  | Gastro-esophageal reflux disease  |   |          |                |
| 3rd <sup>2</sup> | EMR and laparoscopic surgery for gastric carcinoma  | Pathology of Barrett's esophagus epithelium   | Ajioka Y | Video session  |
|                  | Technologies of new diagnostic or therapeutic endoscopy and future endoscopy              | Trend of GERD in Korea  | Min YI   | Poster session |
| 4th <sup>3</sup> | Quality of colonoscopy: effectiveness, safety, outcome                                    |   |          |                |
|                  | Endoscopic treatment of pancreatic diseases   |   |          |                |
| 4th <sup>3</sup> | Endoscopic management of esophagogastric varices  | International guideline for treatment of IPMNs/MCNs   | Yamao K  |                |
|                  | EMR: how far can the endoscopist go?--Stomach   | Caustic tumors of pancreas in Korea   | Yoon YB  |                |
| 5th <sup>4</sup> | EMR: how far can the endoscopist go?--Colon   |   |          |                |
|                  | Pyloric stenting for malignant gastroduodenal obstruction                                 |   |          |                |
| 5th <sup>4</sup> | Biliary stenting for malignant biliary obstruction  |   |          |                |
|                  | Capsule endoscopy and double balloon endoscopy  | Barrett's esophagus and early esophageal cancer   | Kouzu T  | Video session  |
| 5th <sup>4</sup> | New endoscopy technologies; present and future  | Early colorectal cancer: what we know, and what we need to know                             | Choi KY  | Poster session |
|                  | Eradication of <i>H.pylori</i> and its long-term results                                  |   |          |                |
| 6th <sup>5</sup> | Tips and tricks for how to prevent complications and its endoscopic option for management |   |          |                |
|                  | Live demonstration  | Endoscopic diagnosis and treatment for esophageal cancer                                    | Saito Y  |                |
| 6th <sup>5</sup> | Upper GI  | A paradigm shift in battling gastric cancer in Korea  | Chul RJ  |                |
|                  | ESD   |   |          |                |
| 6th <sup>5</sup> | ERCPC   |   |          |                |
|                  | Lower GI  |   |          |                |
| 7th              | Present status and future perspectives of ESD and EMR for colon                           | Recent advances in endoscopic diagnosis for tissue atypia of esophageal and gastric cancers | Inoue H  | Video session  |
|                  | Present status and future perspectives of ESD for upper GI                                |   |          | Oral session   |
| 7th              | Present status and future perspectives of EUS & EUS-FNA                                   | Telemedicine between nations using high speed network                                       | Hahm JS  | Poster session |
|                  | New endoscopic diagnosis  |   |          |                |
| 8th              | EG junction lesions: debate between two countries   | Interventional EUS on pancreatobiliary diseases   | Mizuno N | Oral session   |
|                  | The role of endoscopy in the diagnosis & treatment of IBS                                 | Stenting in upper GI tract  | Yang CH  |                |
| 8th              | EMR and ESD: indications, results, complications and their management                     |   |          |                |
|                  | Advanced therapeutic ERCP: 'How I do it? --Tips and tricks'                               |   |          |                |

**Table 2.** Continued

| Times | Symposium & panel discussion                                     | State of the art lecture  |          | Others         |
|-------|--|---|----------|----------------|
|       |  | Title   | Speaker  |                |
| 9th   | Training system and registration of ESD                          | Current status and future prospects of NOTES                              | Yasuda K | Video forum    |
|       | The role of endoscopy in the diagnosis of small bowel diseases   | Now and the future of gastrointestinal and biliary stent                  | Kim CD   | Oral session   |
|       | Emergent endoscopy; indication and outcome                       |   |          | Poster session |
|       | Endoscopic treatment for bile duct stones; outcome & new methods |   |          |                |
| 10th  | Updates on EUS in pancreatobiliary disease                       | New challenge of endoscopic diagnosis and treatment for esophageal cancer | Muto M   | Video forum    |
|       | GI cancer screening system: present and future                   | The role of endoscopy in diagnosis of autoimmune pancreatitis             | Kim MH   | Oral session   |
|       | Updates on GI tract ESD  |   |          | Poster session |
|       | ESD complications: prevention and management                     |   |          |                |
|       | Endoscopic treatment of benign biliary stricture                 |   |          |                |

KJSGE/JKSGE, Korea-Japan Joint Symposium on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy; ERCP, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography; ESD, endoscopic submucosal dissection; EUS, endoscopic ultrasound; EUS-FNA, EUS-guided fine-needle aspiration.

**Table 3.** Topics of the 11th KJSGE/JKSGE and International Symposium during the 83rd JSGE

| International Symposiums of the 83rd Congress of JGES |  | Conjunction    |
|---|--|----------------|
| I   | EUS-FNA: current status and new developments                                     |                |
| II  | Endoscopic management of esophago-gastric variceal bleeding                      |                |
| III   | ESD for gastric cancer: current status and new developments                      | the 11th JKSGE |
| IV  | Therapeutic ERCP: current status and new developments                            | the 11th JKSGE |
| V   | The 2nd ESGE-JGES joint symposium: endoscopic management of colorectal neoplasia |                |

KJSGE/JKSGE, Korea-Japan Joint Symposium on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy; JGES, Japan Gastroenterological Endoscopy Society; EUS-FNA, ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspiration; ESD, endoscopic submucosal dissection; ERCP, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography; ESGE, European Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy.

lems we have faced. One was the language barrier. For better mutual understanding, the symposium has been held with simultaneous interpretation, and its effect was remarkable. However, many notable achievements from Korea and Japan come to be published in international journals such as GIE and Endoscopy (the official journal of European Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy [ESGE]), and two papers written by Japanese authors even made the 10 most cited papers in Endoscopy. It is obviously important that language is the key factor in sharing the information and English is the most commonly used in the world.

Also, Korea and Japan are in the leadership position globally in the field of digestive endoscopy, so it is especially important to raise the level of endoscopy medicine in Asian countries. In this way, presentation and discussion in English, as the international language, and the cultivation of younger resources who will play a major role in future endoscopy medicine are in urgent need.

With this in mind, we come to the idea that not only Japanese

but also Korean endoscopy medicines have matured enough and the joint symposium should develop on the basis of a more global standpoint. Based on such a belief, the 11th JKSGE will be held during the 83rd Congress of JGES in May 2012 with the two themes of “ESD for gastric cancer: current status and new developments” and “Therapeutic ERCP: current status and new developments.” We are expecting active discussion among the named and publicly-offered speakers from both countries. In this Congress, three other international symposiums are planned and speakers will be accepted from all over the world (Table 3). We especially would like to ask Korean endoscopists for the active submission of abstracts.

## CONCLUSIONS

We have discussed the history and the future prospects of KJSGE/JKSGE. We would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation again to everyone who has made a great deal of effort for the development of our joint symposium.

sium. Also, please accept our sincere congratulations and best wishes for the launch of the official English journal of KSGE *Clinical Endoscopy* based on the achievements of the symposiums and the remarkable development in endoscopy medicine in Korea.

The official English journal of JGES, *Digestive Endoscopy*, was first published in 1989, and with ceaseless efforts of successive Editors-in-Chief and members of the editorial board, the journal gained an Impact Factor in 2010, which jumped to nearly 1.0 in 2011. The journal has also formed an official affiliation with the World Endoscopy Organization (WEO/OMED).

Reflecting on the excellent quality of endoscopy medicine in Korea, we have no doubt that *Clinical Endoscopy* will gain an Impact Factor in near future. We have great hopes that the two English journals grow up together through friendly competition and play the role of information center in the field of

digestive endoscopy medicine, not only in Asia but also all over the world.

#### Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no financial conflicts of interest.

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