

Dear Editor, I have read with great interest the commentary of ***** et al on the editorial published on the topic of Eponyms.(1), and as a Spanish doctor I am very grateful for this letter that complements the editorial.(2)

Spanish contribution to Science has not been as important as Spanish contribution to art. During the Spanish Golden Age painters and writers but not scientists stood out. This fact is also mirrored on the unbalanced distribution of Nobel prizes. Only two out of the eight Spaniards awarded with this recognition were scientists. The remaining six were writers.(3) Nevertheless the distribution of eponyms does not make justice to the Spanish contribution to science.

As ***** states, the small number of Spanish eponyms is also related with the imposition of English as a *lingua franca*. This preponderance began in the twentieth century. When the First World War broke out, the language of culture and science in Europe was either German or French.(4) In those days the level of American medicine was lower than the level of European medicine. Indeed the four founding fathers of American modern medicine (William Osler, William Halsted, Howard Kelly and William Welch) copied the model of the German Heidelberg University to found the Johns Hopkins University, the first real health research institution in the United States.(5) When the war ended the world changed completely. Since then, the influence of the United States has made English the *lingua franca*, to the point that it is sometimes called *Globish*.(4)

We agree with ***** on that the hegemony of English language favors Anglo-Saxon authors. Several years ago, in our journal, a series of articles discussed if the Van Herick sign should have been named the Vena sign. Antonio Vena was a Spanish ophthalmologist who described a method similar to Van Hericks` to estimate the depth of the anterior chamber at almost the same time.(6-8) When a discovery or

description is made simultaneously, the mere weight of Globish would favor the English or North-American author over other scientists.

We are very pleased to see the names of our antecessors in a document that will be indexed in Pubmed and easy to consult in the future. The genius/ingenuity of Ignacio Barraquer Barraquer, who appears nine times in this table, is certainly remarkable.

Arruga and Barraquer also share the merit of having transmitted the love for ophthalmology to their offspring, thus initiating a family tradition that continues in our days. Their descendants are active ophthalmologists among us. We hope that this table will inspire younger ophthalmologist to write about those brilliant Spaniards that have contributed to the development of Ophthalmology.

Among the Spanish ophthalmologists there is great interest on this topic, which was addressed in 1993 in the annual book of the Sociedad Española de Oftalmología.(9) In Spain there is an active group of Ophthalmologists interested in History and Humanities which organizes an annual meeting. This year the meeting has been cancelled due to COVID-19, but we would be very glad if in 2021 we could have colleagues from abroad to discuss this topic.

Reference List

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9. Cotallo de Cáceres JL, Hernández Benito E, Munoa Roiz JL, Leoz de la Fuente G. Historia de la Oftalmología Española: Sociedad Española de Oftalmología; 1993.