



In memoriam: Nobuhiko Isshiki 1930–2022

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The laryngological world lost a great man: prof. Nobuhiko Isshiki passed away on August 14th, 2022. He was 92 years. He survived his wife Keiko 5 years.

Professor Nobuhiko Isshiki, MD (Fig. 1), graduated from Kyoto University, Medical School, in 1954. In 1962, he extended his laryngeal research works for 2 years at UCLA at Dr. Hans von Leden's laboratory. After returning home, he performed intensive research into the mechanism of phonation using excised larynges at Kyoto University, during his work as instructor in the department of Laryngology. In 1977, he became associate professor, and in 1980 professor of that department.

After 22 years, he changed his career and moved to newly established dept. of Plastic Surgery, as a professor, until his retirement (1993). Thereafter, he became an emeritus professor, and opened Isshiki Memorial Voice Center of the mixed specialties. In 2011, he started working at the Hiroshima ENT Clinic in Kyoto. The majority of his patients suffered from voice disorders and congenital anomalies, such as cleft lip and palate. Even at the age of 90, he was still consulting with colleagues on, in his words, "some special cases".

He was a pioneer of phonosurgery, who developed a series of surgical procedures to improve the voice of patients with vocal fold paralysis, atrophy, after laryngeal trauma, pitch problems and later spasmodic dysphonia.

He scientific interest concerned voice and studies in cleft palate patients, yielding more than 120 publications, starting

in 1964. Based on the results, he newly developed the Laryngeal Framework Surgery, which permits the change in the position and tension of the vocal fold without touching it. This led to the famous book *Phonosurgery, Theory and Practice* (Fig. 2), first published in 1989. The classification into thyroplasty Isshiki types I–IV was given to those interventions not by himself, but by the laryngological community.

Prof. Isshiki organized workshops in Kyoto, and all over the world. In addition, he worked as instructor in Groningen and Amsterdam (Netherlands), Mayo Clinic (USA), Ankara (Turkey), Santiago (Chile), Seoul (Korea), Mumbai (India), Sao Paulo (Brazil), Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Manchester (UK) and several others.

His work has been recognized internationally. He was given several awards such as the Gould Award, Gutzmann's Award for Clinical laryngeal research work, Acta Prize, and the Isshiki Award (Royal Society of Surgeons, England) which was named after him. He became Honorary Member of Societies including Honorary Member of Hungarian Society of Otolaryngology, and Honorable Fellow of the American Laryngological, Rhinological and Otological Society.

Prof. Isshiki with his creativity, ingenuity, courage and skills was the initiator of a new era. Still—and decades after his first publications—we all use his techniques and are inspired by his insights, every day. The clinical contributions of Nobuhiko Isshiki will last for the years to come.

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Fig. 1 Prof. Nobuhiko Isshiki in 2021 (courtesy: Minako Hojo- Isshiki's daughter)

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Declarations

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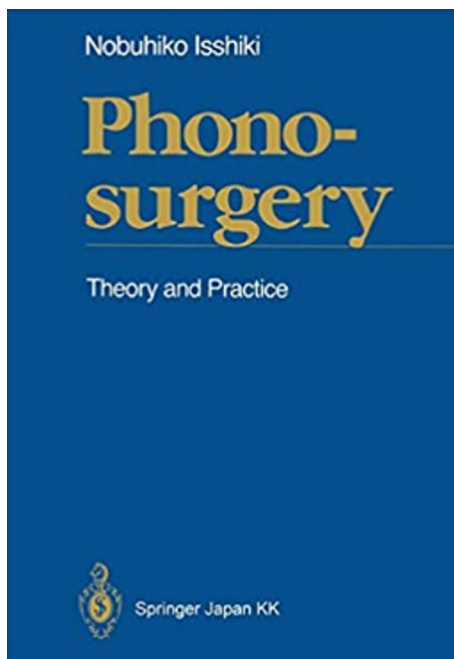


Fig. 2 Cover of Isshiki's famous book Phonosurgery, Theory and Practice (1989)

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