



## EDITORIAL

## Hypsarhythmia or Hypsarrhythmia?

John J. Millichap MD<sup>1</sup>\* and J. Gordon Millichap, MD<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>Division of Neurology, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Chicago, I; and Departments of Pediatrics and Neurology, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, IL

\*Correspondence: Dr John J. Millichap, E-mail: j-millichap@northwestern.edu

**Keywords:** EEG; Epilepsy; Infantile Spasms

Hypsarhythmia was originally spelled with one 'r' by Drs Frederick and Erna Gibbs when they coined the term in 1952 [1]. They wished to emphasize that "the term applied to a specific type of electroencephalographic abnormality", and preferred the specific one 'r' spelling to avoid confusion with a literal translation of the two 'r' Greek root, "mountainous arrhythmia" [2,3]. The one 'r' spelling was the rule in the 1950s-60s [4]. The two 'r' spelling eventually became convention in the literature by the mid-1970s (Figure 1).

Although the Editor of *Pediatric Neurology Briefs* prefers the single 'r' spelling in deference to Dr Gibbs, the intended meaning is accepted for both spellings today.

**Disclosures**

The author(s) have declared that no competing interests exist.

**References**

1. Gibbs FA, Gibbs EL. Atlas of Electroencephalography. Volume 2. Reading (MA): Addison-Wesley; 1952. <http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/768435492>
2. Gibbs FA. Infantile Spasms and Hypsarrhythmia or Hypsarhythmia. *Dev Med Child Neurol* 1965 Jun;7(3):329. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8749.1965.tb10947.x> PMID:14343238
3. MacKeith R. Infantile Spasms and Hypsarrhythmia or Hypsarhythmia. *Dev Med Child Neurol* 1965 Apr;7(2):204. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8749.1965.tb10916.x> PMID:14317541
4. Millichap JG, Bickford RG. Infantile Spasms, Hypsarhythmia, and Mental Retardation. *JAMA* 1962;182(5):523-527. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1001/jama.1962.03050440015004>.

**Figure 1.** Google Ngram Viewer: Book text search for case-insensitive 'Hypsarrhythmia' (blue line) and 'Hypsarhythmia' (red line) from 1950-2008 in English. [Cited August 31 2015.] Available from: <https://goo.gl/sJI1uG>

