

ESP
 curriculum reform
 medical and dental
 globalism

English Curriculum Reform for Internationalization at Kanagawa Dental University —Toward joint development of ESP with Dokkyo Medical University—

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(Received: March 1, 2022, Accepted: April 4, 2022)

Abstract

Both Kanagawa Dental University and Dokkyo Medical University as adjuncts to hospitals, accepting patients from abroad, require students to acquire sufficient English skills and communication skills for Internationalization. Because of the geographical location, communication in English is very important for both universities. Furthermore, since both universities are in a cosmopolitan area, rapport in English with patients is essential for hospital training. In a medical school with a vast number of subjects for medicine, English education is also required to teach English effectively and to encourage students to acquire international sense as a member of medical professionals. We would like to continue to improve English curriculum for Internationalization to foster medical professionals with an international perspective by introducing English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

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Introduction

According to the Japan Tourism Agency launched in 2008 “Survey on Medical Care of Foreign Visitors to Japan,” 6% of those surveyed were injured or became ill while visiting Japan. This survey was conducted by following, period: August 2019 - December 2019, number of responses: 3,115, survey location: Narita International Airport, Tokyo International Airport, Kansai International Airport, New Chitose Airport¹⁾. There is no doubt that medical institutions that are not active in medical tourism will know an increase in the number of foreign patients they treat. However, medical institutions are faced with issues such as the lack of doctors and nurses who can speak foreign languages and the difficulty of dealing with multilingual and multicultural patients, and there is an urgent need to educate medical staff in languages and to increase the

number of medical coordinators. Therefore, Kanagawa Dental University and Dokkyo Medical University would like to research and develop the possibility of developing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes in relation to medical related classes. ESP is defined as follows. “ESP is an approach to language teaching that targets the current and/or future academic or occupational needs of learners, focuses on the necessary language, genres, and skills to address these needs, and assists learners in meeting these needs through the use of general and/or discipline-specific teaching materials and methods”²⁾.

Objectives

Kanagawa Dental University is in Yokosuka City, which is an international city with about 6,000 foreign residents in Yokosuka alone³⁾. Even in this cosmopolitan

Table 1 Philosophy of both universities^{6,7)}

Contents	Philosophy of Kanagawa Dental University	Philosophy of Dokkyo Medical University
1) Cultivate communication skill	To provide safe, gentle, and high-quality medical care to patients. To promote research and development of advanced medical care.	Respect the dignity and rights of life, and do our utmost to serve the sick with high ethical standards. In order to provide medical care that seeks the highest potential in the ever-advancing medical field, we strive to improve ourselves tirelessly and provide a high level of knowledge and skills for the benefit of all. As an educational institution, the university hospital fosters its students and faculty members to become high-quality medical professionals who can carry out team medicine to confront illnesses with a common understanding and grow to become members of high-quality, safe medical practices. To provide highly advanced medical care as a hospital with special functions, and to take pride in being a medical center at the core of the local community, and to build good relationships with other medical institutions in the community.
2) Thorough medical ethics	provide safe, gentle, and high-quality medical care to patients.	
3) Fostering English skills	contribute to the improvement of health and hygiene in the local community by placing importance on cooperation between doctors and patients.	
4) Development of English language skills		To contribute to society by eradicating disease and seeking the truth for the sake of people's peace and well-being, and to work diligently as a research institution on the path to advanced medical treatment. As an educational institution, the university hospital fosters its students and faculty members to become high-quality medical professionals who can carry out team medicine to confront illnesses with a common understanding and grow to become members of high-quality, safe medical practices.
5) Develop competent medical personnel with rich humanity.	Promote research and development of advanced medical care.	

city, the university and the general hospital are located next to a US Navy base. On the other hand, Dokkyo Medical University, based in Mibu-machi, Tochigi Prefecture, is surrounded by Utsunomiya City, Oyama City, and Tochigi City, where 25,000 foreign workers, about half of the foreign population of Tochigi Prefecture, live⁴⁾. Since both universities are in a cosmopolitan area, rapport in English with patients is essential for hospital training. Because of the above geographical location, communication in English is very important.

As shown below, the management philosophy of university hospitals and communication techniques are deeply intertwined. Takahashi, (Eds) (2020) states, “Students who will become medical professionals are

required to have English skills that enable them to communicate with non-Japanese speakers in multidisciplinary medical care.”⁵⁾ As mentioned above, communication skills and English skills are related to each of the objectives required by hospitals, so it is necessary to lay the foundation for these in the basic grades.

The following is the philosophy of each hospital (Table 1).

Kanagawa Dental University values “Fostering English skills”, on the other hand, Dokkyo Medical University values “development of English language skills”. This means that there is a difference in language skills between medical and dental students. In the case of medical school, the development of language is more

important because it can be fatal if language is not available.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) promotes the strategic revitalization of university education through public and private universities. The Strategic Promotional Funds for the Revitalization of University Education (“Re-Promotion Funds”) focus on policy issues proposed by the Central Council for Education. They are designed to:⁸⁾

1. enhance the presence of higher education and academic research in Japan by dramatically increasing the functions of universities that practice world-class, top-level education and research activities and disseminating them to the world
2. support projects that enhance university education and improve its quality by supporting and disseminating efforts to develop and implement innovative and leading education and research programs at universities and system reforms that should be realized promptly.

It will be necessary to plan lessons for the further development of medical professionals while taking the above into consideration.

Methodology

Instead of the conventional two-semester system, Kanagawa Dental University has introduced a five-stage system with one stage lasting seven weeks. The syllabus allows students to study a small number of subjects intensively and complete them steadily. Each subject is planned to be completed in about 7 weeks, and the 7th week includes a subject (module) examination and supplementary education to increase the educational effect by stepping up the support to prevent students from developing weak skills. On the other hand, Dokkyo Medical University has a three-semester system (Table 2) In addition, an English Community Lounge has been set up for all grades throughout the year, where native English-speaking teachers are stationed to help students and faculty of the School of Medicine and Nursing learn English.

Kanagawa Dental University should follow the example of Dokkyo Medical University and reform the English curriculum for internationalization. English classes in the upper grades related to ESP should be needed to prepare for internationalization.

As internationalization progresses, medical professionals who can use languages will be indispensable. Therefore, at Kanagawa Dental University, from next year, the number of English classes in the basic grades will double due to an increase in electives. We will be investigating how this will change language learning.

Syllabus contents

The Kanagawa Dental University has introduced a five-stage system of learning for first through fourth year students, dividing the year into five stages, prior to the practical training at the affiliated hospital for fifth year students who will engage in treatment as student doctors. The five-stage system consists of a unique curriculum that allows students to steadily acquire credits by studying a small number of subjects every two months. In addition, all classes are recorded, and students can freely repeat the lessons as many times as they want. We were one of the first universities to respond to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology’s “University Reform Action Plan” and are implementing a completely new educational program to train new dentists who will be the engine of a super-aging society. For English, three faculty members take turns teaching classes at the same stage, focusing on the skills that each faculty member specializes in. By receiving instruction in listening and speaking from teachers at Yokosuka Navy Base, students are able to acquire the attitudes and postures necessary for communication, and by receiving instruction in writing from a former teacher at a nearby international high school, students are able to compose English essays using the grammar they learned in high school. It is expected that these skills will not be concentrated in any one stage but will be well-balanced and useful for hospital practice in the upper grades. As for challenges, as Morita (2020) points out, there is a criticism that “the quarter system tends to reduce the content of the classes than the semester system,”⁹⁾ and this criticism will also apply to the five-stage system. In order to maintain the same amount of content as the semester system, it will be important to improve the syllabus and hand it over to the next year by introducing ESP.

Dokkyo Medical University aims to foster medical professionals with an international perspective, and many patients who communicate in English visit the university hospital. Therefore, the Medical University aims to train doctors who can conduct medical inter-

Table 2 Methodology1) First Year Foreign Language
Kanagawa Dental University

	Listening	Speaking	Reading & Writing
1 stage (7 weeks)		English I(6)	
2 stage (7 weeks)	English I(2)	English I(2)	English I(2)
3 stage (7 weeks)	English I(2)	English I(2)	English I(2)
4 stage (7 weeks)	English I(2)	English I(2)	English I(2)

※(module examinations in the seventh week)

Dokkyo Medical University

	Listening/Speaking Reading	Listening/Speaking Reading/Writing	Listening/Speaking Reading
1st semester	Medical English I	General English A	General English B
2nd semester	Medical English I	General English A	
3rd semester		General English A	

Electives: Speech Clinic, Intercultural Communication, TOEFL Writing, etc.

2) Second Year Foreign Language
Kanagawa Dental University

	Listening/Speaking	Writing	Medical English
1 stage (7 weeks)	English II(2)	English II(6)	English II(2)
2 stage (7 weeks)	English II(2)	English II(2)	English II(2)
3 stage (7 weeks)	English II(2)	English II(2)	English II(2)

Dokkyo Medical University

	Reading	Listening	Reading
1st semester		English IIL	English IIR
2nd semester	Medical English II	English IIL	English IIR
3rd semester	Medical English II	English IIL	English IIR

※Only Dokkyo Medical University has English classes for 3rd year students and above.

3) Third Year Foreign Language
Dokkyo Medical University

	Reading
1st semester	Medical English III

Electives: Overseas Training Program (Philippines)

4) Fourth Year Foreign Language
Dokkyo Medical University

	Reading
1st semester	Medical English IV

Electives: English Special Study (5 classes), Overseas Training Program (Philippines)

5) Fifth Year

Dokkyo Medical University

Electives: Overseas Training Program (Germany, USA)

6) Sixth Year

Dokkyo Medical University

Electives: Advanced Overseas Training Program (Germany, USA)

views in English, present at conferences, and write papers. In the first and second years, students learn basic general English and the rudiments of medical English, and English classes are provided until the fourth year. In the fifth and sixth years, students can choose to participate in overseas training programs. In this way, the curriculum is designed so that students can learn English at all grade levels. One of the challenges is to cultivate and nurture the students' ability to continue to learn, as class time alone is not sufficient to master general English and medical English. So, students are expected to take advantage of opportunities for self-study, such as the English Community Lounge, and develop an active learning attitude that will lead to the acquisition of communicative English to build rapport with patients and their families.

Evaluation for further challenges

Ihara, (Eds) (2021) states that “since even medical English is the English language itself, it should also have cultural and academic backgrounds or aspects with it.”¹⁰⁾ In this way, English at medical universities should be related to other subjects in order to globalize medicine in the future. Of course, ESP itself is not a new teaching method. “It was not until the 1960s that ESP was clearly recognized”¹¹⁾. However, the importance of ESP is now widely recognized, both within and outside of educational institutions. Since the number of English classes has been limited, this method is more spread in higher education institutions such as medical universities.

Both universities aim to provide the highest quality of education and construct the very best research environment. For those purposes, hope to continuously undergo initiatives in the field of Medical and Dental in Kanto region (inc. Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama, Gunma, Tochigi, Ibaraki and Chiba prefectures). Further education system related to English learning method will

allow both universities to progress with the research environment.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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