

Short Report

Teaching English to Sophomores in the Department of Health and Sports Science

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Abstract

English D is an English course offered exclusively for students in the Department of Health and Sports Science at the Kawasaki University of Medical Welfare. The class was offered for the first time in the Fall of 2004. The class seeks to give students in the Department of Health and Sports Science English skills related to their future employment or graduate research studies. As this mostly involves communication, English D's lesson plans were geared toward using English verbally. Students were encouraged to speak and tasks were given that required students to constantly stand up in front of the class and use English. We feel the class is a unique one and so have decided to publish information on the class itself and the feedback we got from students, our T.A. and the teachers themselves.

Introduction

Starting with the 2004 Fall semester, the Health and Sports Science Department of the Kawasaki University of Medical Welfare initiated an English course for Sophomores, called English D in the school syllabus, specifically designed for the students in our department. The genesis of the course has its roots in our department's desire to give our students English skills that they can take with them after graduation and use in whatever profession, related to health and sports science, they decide to pursue.

This short report seeks to introduce and explain our English D course. This will involve an explanation of the course lessons (Table 1), teacher, teaching assistant (T.A.) and student feedback on the effectiveness of certain lessons, and recommendations on how to improve the class in future.

In keeping with the stated goal of preparing our students to use English in the workplace, course lessons were geared toward different professions in the health and sports science field. For example, many students would like to become physical education (P.E.) teachers. So we came up with a simulated P.E. class using only English. Students took turns being the teacher and got a chance to use English in a P.E. setting. We also played sports using English. We drew up word lists and had the students use the new English vocabulary while playing basketball (Table 2), American football and futsal.

Some students want to work in a sports gym or club. We came up with a class that simulated a sports instructor helping a foreign native English speaker use the many exercise machines in a gym or

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Table 1 English D detailed course outline for 2004

I.	Course Introduction and Grouping Introducing ourselves and course description Divide into groups
II.	Play a Sport Using English (Basketball) We should talk in English during the game.
III.	What Is Your Major Sport? (Explain) The game, match or competition History Equipment Techniques Why do you like the sport?
IV.	Play a Sport Using English (American Football) We should talk in English during the game.
V.	Teach a Foreigner To Use a Training Machine in a Sports Gym Correctly Greeting Health check Explaining how an exercise machine works
VI.	Try to Read Sports Articles from an American Newspaper Select and make a presentation from articles in USA Today, the Washington Post, the New York Times etc. Understanding the content Preparing for the presentation Presentation and discussion
VII.	What Is Sports Medicine? (Choose a theme and introduce it) Rehabilitation Doping Sports injury Conditioning
VIII.	What Is Health Science? (Choose a theme and introduce it) Public health Aging Nutrition Immunity Stress Life style
IX.	What Is Physical Education? (Choose a theme and introduce it) School education Sports history Teaching technique Growth and development
X.	What Is Sports Science? (Choose a theme and introduce it) Coaching sports Sports psychology Exercise physiology Exercise biochemistry Sports biomechanics
XI.	What Is Recreation? (Choose a theme and introduce it) New sports Camping Skiing Marine sports Marathon
XII.	Play a Sport Using English (Futsal) We should talk in English during the game.
XIII.	You Are an NBA, MLB or NFL TV Commentator! Watch an American major sports game. Choose one scene from the game. Present the scene as a commentator.
XIV.	You Are a P.E. Teacher Make a lesson plan for a P.E. class. Teach the P.E. class to us.
XV.	Review of English D Free discussion Summarizing Closing party or Happy hour

Table 2 Samples of new English basketball vocabulary terms in English D

Japanese	English
Doke	Get outta my way!
Kini suruna	Forget about it! (Don't mind !)
Misu suruna	Don't mess up!
Yossya !	Alright! (Yeah !)
Yoku yatta	You did it!
Kocchi ni pasu shite	I'm open! (Over here!)
Acchi ni pasu shiro	He/She's open! (Over there!)
Yattemiro yo	Come on!
Mae ni hashire	Go ahead! (Let's go!)
Modore	Get back!
Chee	Darn!
Moratta ze	I gotcha!
Katta ze	We got'em!
Oshii	Almost



Fig. 1 Playing American Football

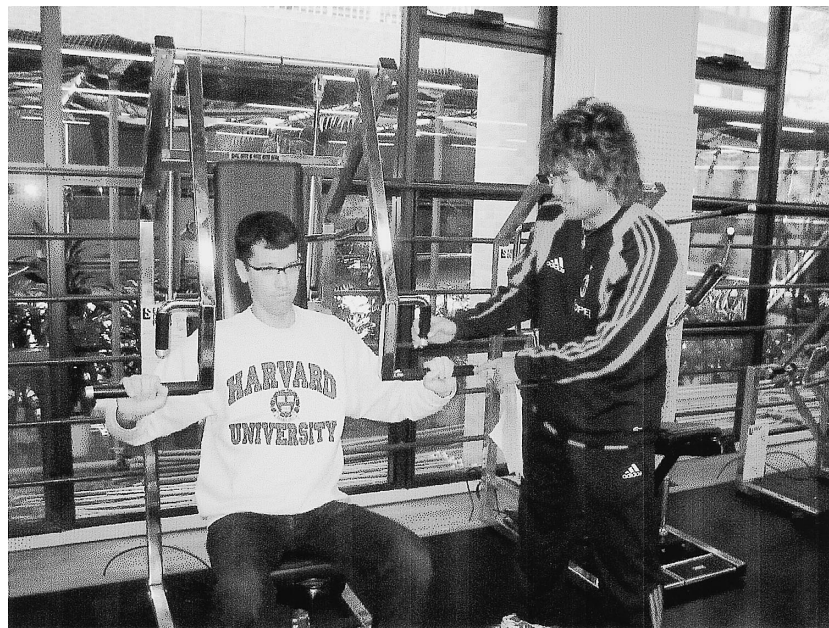


Fig. 2 Teaching a native English speaker to use exercise machines

club. Students practiced greetings, how to ask about a person's physical condition and explained and demonstrated how to use the machines.

Students also go on to graduate work in Masters and Ph.D. programs. Most fields of research in Health and Sports Science publish their findings in English. If a student goes to an international conference he must also present his/her findings in English. So in our class we had the students introduce, using English, various fields of study within the Health and Sports Science Department. This exercise gave the students a taste of what it will be like to use English from a specific field of study. It was a big challenge for the

students to use technical English in the various fields presented: Sports medicine, health science, physical education, sports science and recreation.

Other lessons were also attempted. We had students summarize a sports article from an English language newspaper, watched and discussed a sports documentary and had the students introduce the history and rules of their favorite sports.

Successes and Failures

Some of the individual classes were more successful than others. Some of the successful classes were “What Is Your Major Sport?”, “Playing Sports Using English-Basketball” and “You Are a P.E. Teacher”. The “What Is Your Major Sport” class was successful because students enjoyed talking about themselves. The class opened with our T.A. introducing her major sport. Then the teachers and the T.A. spent the rest of the class helping the students prepare their own reports. When the students gave their own reports we encouraged them to use props and many students wore their team uniforms and brought their equipment to their presentations. Because the lesson was about something that involved them directly the students were eager to learn the English necessary for giving a good presentation.

The “Playing Sports Using English-Basketball” class was popular because the English used was specific to a popular P.E. game and the students were extremely interested in this kind of English. All students want to learn how to use English in a sports setting and the words used for basketball are actually quite simple. Sentences were short and students were encouraged to yell the words because the language was being used during the game. We found that the English used in this class remained with the students throughout the semester. This was the only class where this occurred. Interestingly however, one aspect of this class was unpopular for the students. In choosing teams for the basketball game we used the American method of selecting two captains who then proceeded to choose members one by one in alternating order until all players were selected. This meant that one person would be chosen last. This made the students very uncomfortable and they wanted to use the “paper, rock, scissors” method or “jan ken” in Japanese. But it was important for the students to experience the American way of team selection and we think the experience will stay with the students for a long time.

In the “You Are a P.E. Teacher” class the students again were really interested in using this kind of English. The situations practiced included roll call, stretching, warming up and playing soccer. The students were totally involved in the class.

Individual classes that we determined to be failures were the “Try to Read Sports Articles from an American Newspaper” class and the “You Are an NBA, MLB or NFL TV Commentator” class.

In the “Try to Read Sports Articles from an American Newspaper” class we overestimated the students’ English vocabulary competency. The students, in small groups, were supposed to choose a sports article from an English language newspaper and summarize the article in English for the class. Students, however, were unable to understand the articles they chose and thus were unable to summarize their contents and present them to the class. Next year we will have the students choose sports articles in Japanese and summarize them in English for the class.

We changed the topic of the class “You Are an NBA, MLB or NFL TV Commentator” to “Talking about a Sports Documentary” because we realized as the class progressed that the English speaking levels of the students were too low for the announcer class. However, the sports documentary chosen, 1960 Tokyo Olympics, was boring for the students. Many fell asleep and so discussion was difficult. We will choose a more interesting documentary for the class next year.

Table 3 Samples of new English vocabulary as a sports instructor

Teach a foreigner to use a training machine in a sports gym correctly
I. Greeting

こんにちは、ようこそ〇〇さん。
Konnichiwa youkoso 〇〇san.
Hello! Welcome Mr. 〇〇.

調子はどうですか。
Choushi wa dou desuka.
How are you today?

わかりました。じゃあ、運動がんばりましょうね。
Wakarimashita. Jya, ganbarimashoune.
O.K. Let's have a good workout.

II. Health Check

運動の目的は何ですか。
Undou no mokuteki wa nandesuka.
What do you want to do with your workout?

現在、医者にかかっていますか。運動の制限はありますか。
Genzai, isha ni kakatteimasuka. Undou no seigen wa arimasuka.
Have you seen a doctor recently?
Do you have any exercise restrictions?

薬を服用していますか。
Kusuri o fukuyou shiteimasuka.
Are you taking any medication?

過去に、大きな病気をしたことがありますか。
糖尿病などの病気はありませんか。
Kako ni, ookina byouki o sitakoto ga arimasuka.
Tounyoubyou nadono byouki wa arimasenka.
Have you had a serious illness in the past?
Do you have any problems now? Diabetes, for example.

コレステロールの値はどうか。
Koresuteroru no atai wa doudesuka.
How is your cholesterol level?

普段運動をしていますか。どんな運動ですか。
Fudan undou o shiteimasuka. Donna undou desuka.
Do you exercise?
What kind of exercise?

タバコは吸いますか。一日どのくらいですか。
Tabako wa suimasuka. Ichinichi dono kurai desuka.
Do you smoke?
How many packs per day?

お酒は飲みますか。週にどのくらいですか。
Osake wa nomimasuka. Shu ni dono kurai desuka.
Do you drink alcohol?
How many times per week?

これまでにケガ(捻挫、脱臼、骨折)の経験がありますか。
Kore made ni kega (nenza, dakkyu, kossetsu) no keiken ga arimasuka.
Have you been injured before? Sprain? Dislocation? Broken bone?

けがはどうされたのですか、今の状態はどうですか。
Kega wa dou sareta nodesuka. Ima no joutai wa dou desuka.
How were you hurt? How is it now?

体に痛みはありますか。どこですか、どんなときに痛いですか。
Karada ni itami wa arimasuka. Doko desuka, donna toki ni itai desuka.
Do you have any body pain?
If so, where? When do you feel it?

The role of the Teaching Assistant (T.A.) in English D

1. Modeling a presentation for the students/ "What is your favorite sport?"

One of the classes in English D is called "What Is Your Major Sport?" As a T.A. I must model a presentation for the students using my own sport triathlon as an example (Fig. 3). First, I introduced my sport. For example its history, the equipment used, the rules and what is interesting about it. Then each student group presented their own sport in the following class. Students came up with some good ideas about their sports, they wore uniforms, brought the balls they use and used these as props to better explain their sports. A T.A. is not a teacher and not a specialist but the T.A. can talk in English about his/her sport. The students can see that a person who is not good at English can make a presentation. It makes the students relax.

2. Helping students with preparation for their presentation

In English D, one topic is taken up over two classes. In the first class, students are divided into groups, and then they get ready for their presentation. The T.A. can help them to prepare the presentation, such as give advice for the arrangement, how to use the black board and paper, teaching English composition and useful American jokes. Sometimes students are supported by the T.A. instead of teachers when they are having trouble preparing their presentations for the next class.

3. Making class materials

Sometimes the T.A. gets ready for the class by making brief summaries. For example, before the class, "Teach a Foreigner to Use a Training Machine in a Sports Gym Correctly" technical terms and

My Favorite Sport is the Triathlon.

The Triathlon is called the 'Iron Man Race'.

The word Triathlon was made recently.

'TRI' means three in Latin.

'ATHLON' means game in Greek.

The two words were put together and the word TRIATHLON was made.

So it means three sports, swimming, riding a bicycle (racing a bike) and running.

The History of Triathlon.

Triathlon came into being in 1974
at San Diego, California in America.

During Happy Hour the people of a local
running club talked about starting a new race:

A 3.84 kilometer swim at Waikiki beach.

A 179.2 kilometer cycling race on Oahu island.

And a 42.195 marathon in Honolulu.

"Which one of these would be the
hardest race?"

One of the members, Mr. John Collins, who
was in the American navy, said it as a joke!

"So, let's try 3 races at the same time!

The winner is the world's best athlete!"



Fig. 3 The T.A. explains her favorite sport

some simple phrases were translated into English from Japanese. After that the teachers edited them and during the class students received the paper, which was written by the T.A. as a sample text, and were able to study the English expressions. After the end of the class, the T.A. makes some final revisions with the teachers, and then students take it and use it in the next class.

4. The role of the T.A. during class

To be effective the T.A. does not to have experience studying abroad. The most important thing is to not be shy and to speak with a big voice. I think these are the most important points for being a T.A. in English D.

Conclusion and Future Thoughts

English D was designed for the students in our department. And the goal of this class is for students to be able to use English without hesitation as a specialist of health and sports science. Indeed we think that cultivating "P.E. teachers and/or sports instructors with English abilities" is an important issue for the future of our students and for the further development of our department. Students in our department need to especially focus on speaking and listening for communication.

It is also necessary to increase the motivation of students for learning English in this class. So we tried the following:

- students play sports among themselves in the class
- do not use textbooks and dictionaries
- give students many chances to present their ideas in English
- invite a special guest, who can talk about experiences in a foreign country

Furthermore, in order to cultivate communication abilities in English, teachers should not request students to speak perfect English. For the purpose of fostering communication abilities in English, an appropriate evaluation of communication abilities must be conducted. To do a paper test as a final examination might be unfit to achieve the goal of our class.

This class will contribute to English education in the Health and Sports Science department. Furthermore, in setting up many opportunities to use English outside this class, it is important for all of the teachers in our department and/or university to employ approaches that are enjoyable for students and provide a sense of achievement in the use of English.

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