



Shizuoka Health Sciences English Program (SHEP) 2007-2008



Global COE Program - Innovation in Human Health Sciences

University of Shizuoka

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Shizuoka Health Sciences English Program (SHEP)

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Overview

2007 (December 1-21, 2007) --- The stated goal of the SHEP program is to provide University of Shizuoka doctoral students in the health sciences the training and practice needed to participate meaningfully in international conferences conducted in English and to make effective conference presentations in English. All language skills were taught and practiced within the three-week program, but with primary emphasis on listening, speaking, presentation, and discussion skills. To the extent possible, instruction took place within a broad health sciences context. The students' own research was used as the source of presentation topics.

2008 (June 16-July 25, 2008) ---This second offering of the SHEP program was scheduled for the full six weeks, allowing significantly more time for the participants to develop and refine their English skills and to more closely attain the English language mastery they need to participate meaningfully in international conferences conducted in English and to make effective conference presentations in English. In addition, living on campus and having American conversation partners and homestay families provided the participants with substantial opportunities to use English in informal conversational settings and practice the listening and speaking skills taught as part of the formal curriculum.

All language skills were taught and practiced within the six-week program, but with primary emphasis on listening, speaking, presentation, and discussion skills. To the extent possible, instruction took place within a broad health sciences context. The students' own research was used as the source of presentation topics.

Materials

Seal, *Academic Encounters: Human Behavior*
Richek, *The World of Words* (7th edition)
Hagan, *Sound Advice* (2nd edition)
Morley, *Listening Dictation*

Curriculum

Class met for three hours daily, Monday-Friday. In addition, students met with the instructor for an individual tutorial three times in order to review presentations. Class sessions focused on the following activities:

Listening and pronunciation basics – Lessons from Morley's *Listening Dictation* were completed in class, and participants were encouraged to complete additional lessons on their own, using streamed audio files. This activity provided review of basic grammar while at the same time helping students improve their own pronunciation and fluency as well as listening comprehension. Lessons from *Sound Advice* provided practice with

stress and rhythm and the resulting linking and blending phenomena essential to comprehending spoken English.

Listening to extended discourse – Recorded conversations and academic lectures were used in class to develop comprehension of extended discourse. During the final two weeks of the program, three researchers from different areas of the health sciences presented lectures to the class, with follow-up discussion and questions.

- Stephen Rosenstiel, The Ohio State University – The safety of dental amalgam
- Karl Romstedt, Capital University – Cancer
- Margaret Ginn-Pease, Capital University – Enzymes

A tour of the Ohio State medical rehabilitation facility, Dodd Hall, provided further practice in understanding extended discourse.

Speaking accuracy – Emphasis was placed on accurate pronunciation of key words in the participants' fields as used in their individual presentations. In addition, pronunciation of vocabulary from the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000) was practiced.

Speaking fluency – Several times each week, group activities such as strip stories, small group consensus tasks, and impromptu speeches provided students with opportunities to improve their spoken fluency and confidence.

Reading and discussion skills – In order to promote the ability to discuss academic topics, participants read articles from *Academic Encounters* and then discussed them in small groups. Functional phrases helpful in navigating such situations were reviewed: indicating lack of understanding, encouraging others to participate, agreeing and disagreeing, changing the topic/moving to the next point, clarifying and asking for clarification, and stating opinions. Participants acted as both discussion leaders and discussion group members.

Presentation skills – Participants made five presentations: two summaries of articles from the internet; an explanation of a concept from their academic field; a poster presentation on an aspect of their research; and a presentation of their research agenda (for a generalist audience). The basics of good presentation style and strategy were reviewed, followed by more in-depth examination of introductions, extended definitions, adaptation to audience, and explanation of visuals. The first and third presentations were discussed afterwards in tutorial session, and the final presentation was practiced beforehand in tutorial. The final presentation was attended by Professor Mineharu Nakayama of The Ohio State University, the Program Director, and Professor Noriko Yoshimura of University of Shizuoka.

Vocabulary expansion – Material from *The World of Words* was employed for formal vocabulary study and practice. In addition, several of the sublists from the Academic Word List were reviewed for meaning and usage as well as for pronunciation.

Writing skills – Participants wrote summaries of their presentations, which were corrected for vocabulary and grammar. Writing skills were not a major focus of the curriculum, and so time spent on instruction and practice was limited.

SHEP 2007

SHEP 2007 at OSU

Kenta Yamada

Graduate School of Nutritional and Environmental Sciences

In this report, I would like to briefly introduce the classes I attended in the Shizuoka Health Sciences English Program (SHEP) at The Ohio State University (OSU) in 2007. In the program, we attended classes to improve our discussion and presentation skills in English. Our instructor was a specialist in English education, and his classes were interesting and fun. In the classes, we chiefly studied idioms and correct pronunciation, and the instructor dictated short sentences to us everyday. I thought that dictation was a particularly effective way to improve my aural comprehension of English sentences. In addition, we had discussions about topics such as science and American culture, and each of us gave an oral presentation on our research theme. When we worked on our presentations, the instructor kindly coached us in proper pronunciation, grammar, and slide design in the tutorial. Furthermore, we attended classes given by OSU professors. The topics in those classes were nutritional, food, pharmaceutical, and environmental sciences. We had a good experience. Overall, I could understand the classes at OSU relatively well, and I could improve my English discussion and presentation skills.

My Way of Studying English

Motohiro Ohshima

Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Until I went to OSU, the way I studied English was by reading English research papers. However, when I went to Ohio, I realized that understanding English in conversation is very different from reading it.

Even if you can understand something when it is written, you may not understand it when it is spoken. For me, the most important thing was learning to understand English as English, and not to translate it into Japanese.

To improve my English conversation ability, I made an effort to listen often to English conversations on my iPod. As a result, I was able to understand conversational English to some degree before I returned to Japan.

We do not have so many chances to participate in conversational English in Japan. So now I try to listen to English conversation on my iPod for 30 minutes or an hour every day.

The Importance of Communication Skill

Kentaro Hatanaka

Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

What I learned from my three weeks in the Shizuoka Health Sciences English Program (SHEP) was the importance of improving my English communication skills.

In the first half of the program, I became more confident in speaking English when asking and answering questions in discussions, and in gathering data for my presentation. In the second half of the program, I applied these skills in discussion with professors and graduate students at The Ohio State University, exchanging information with them about our research. This chance was a precious experience for me. During the program, there were times when I could not communicate as clearly as I wanted to, but by using gestures and the presentation materials that I had made, I could make myself understood. In addition, one of my greatest rewards was recognizing my own overall English level, and understanding the importance of being able to speak well enough to make the listener understand my ideas. These opportunities to exchange information, to discuss life at the university, and to study with the professors and graduate students also made me realize the importance of having a global perspective.

This is a source of encouragement in my current English studies. I would like to thank the professors and staff of The University of Shizuoka and The Ohio State University for providing me with such wonderful opportunities.

Visit in Medical Dietetics at OSU

Keiko Miyamoto

Graduate School of Nutritional and Environmental Sciences

During our stay in the U.S., our group of registered dietitians (RD) visited the Medical Dietetics in the School of Allied Medical Professions at the OSU Medical Center. The division has undergraduate, graduate, and dietetic internship programs. We met Dr. Kay Wolf and Dr. Katherine L. Mulligan. Dr. Wolf directs the division. They explained to us their education programs for RDs, and the role of RDs in the U.S.

Dietitians are registered with the Commission on Dietetic Registration (the certifying agency of the American Dietetic Association). In addition to their academic education, registered dietitians must complete a dietetic internship of at least 1200 hours which lasts up to a year through an accredited program before they can sit for the registration examination. (In contrast, a Japanese dietetic internship requires only 4 weeks.)

We thought that the American dietetic internship program for RDs would contribute to an improvement in the degree of professionalism among RDs.

Thanks to SHEP, we learned a great deal about education for RDs in the U.S., and we also had an excellent opportunity to look back on our own education. We would like to express our gratitude to Dr. Wolf, Dr. Mulligan, and the SHEP staff.

Developing "English Ears" and Getting a Rhythmic Sense of English

Yoshinori Uekusa

Graduate School of Nutritional and Environmental Sciences

Science graduate students often sense the importance of English communication skills because we need English in our studies, such as in writing scientific papers, giving presentations at international conferences, and exchanging ideas face-to-face with researchers from other countries. I have had some frustrating experiences at international conferences where I could not understand presentations by foreign speakers, and could not ask questions due to my poor English skills and my hesitancy. In December 2007, I decided to participate in the Shizuoka Health Sciences English Program (SHEP) which is part of the Global COE Program at the University of Shizuoka. I thought SHEP would be a valuable opportunity to improve my oral communication skills in English. I went to The Ohio State University (OSU) highly motivated to study English because I had participated in some international conferences just before leaving Japan.

After the long flight from Narita airport via Chicago, we arrived at Ohio State's capital city, Columbus. OSU is located within the city, and its huge campus overwhelmed us. After an orientation at the hotel, we walked around the campus. Of course, the voices we heard on the streets and inside shops were only English, and this daily spoken language was quite different from the scientific English we were familiar with. While still recovering from jet lag, I felt anxious about whether it would be possible for me to get through my three weeks there.

The English program syllabus was substantial, and our teacher Bill gave us interesting and carefully-planned classes. We learned not only daily conversation skills but also practical scientific English by being trained with dictation tests, giving scientific presentations, and receiving special lectures by OSU professors. We used our time efficiently and tried to study English as much as possible during the three weeks: doing homework, preparing our presentations, and doing self-study using the audio materials at the library every afternoon. It was difficult to adapt to the change in the environment in the first week, but as time passed we got used to things, and speaking English became more natural for us.

During the program, I concentrated on improving my listening and speaking skills, and I noticed a few important things about my English development while doing so. First, I felt that I was developing “English ears” in that English-filled environment. I gradually began to be able to catch more of the conversations I heard, and to understand their content. Secondly, I thought that it was important for me to work on correct pronunciation and accent if I wanted to develop my English ears further. I realized that I had previously memorized the pronunciation of certain words incorrectly. Because of this, when I spoke with native speakers, I was often unable to recognize words that I actually already knew, and so lost track of the conversation. Being taught the systems of ellipsis and reduction, such as “want to = wanna,” was also very useful for developing my English ears. Furthermore, I think that I could partly feel the unique English rhythm used by native speakers.

Unfortunately, we had very few chances to speak to OSU students because the conversation partner system had not yet been set up, and because we were there during winter vacation. However, we treasured the time we had for conversation with Ken, an OSU student who helped us with our daily lives while we were there. During our stay, we were reminded that American and Japanese culture and lifestyle are quite different, especially in personal qualities such as autonomy and activeness: if we do not first try to do something ourselves, the people around us will not do anything to help us. Similarly, having the chance to discuss science with the OSU professors who were doing research related to mine was a very good experience. I have distinct memories of attending laboratory seminars in which students actively debated each other.

Just as we were getting used to seeing the OSU squirrels running around the campus, our three-week study period came to an end. I felt a little regret, and wanted to stay longer because I felt like my “English ears” and “English brain” were just getting started. However, the whole stay was a good experience for me, and the most important thing was that I gained confidence in my English abilities. Since returning to Japan, I have continued studying English by using my iPod for listening practice and by actively participating in seminars given by foreign speakers at the university. Perhaps the biggest effect of my stay in Ohio has been on my relationships with people from other countries: I am now much more confident in approaching and talking to them.

Finally, we would like to sincerely express our gratitude to all of the faculty and staff at OSU and in the Global COE Program at University of Shizuoka for the chance to study abroad with SHEP.



SHEP 2008

Many Thanks to the People I Met at OSU!

Tomoko Inamori

Graduate School of Nutritional and Environmental Sciences

The thing that moved me the most during my stay in the U.S. was meeting such an interesting variety of people. My encounters with the American Language Program staff, with OSU students, with my conversation partners, with my homestay family, and with the staff at the OSU sports club— all were so special to me.

I was most impressed by a characteristic that all of the people I met had in common: They had a profound knowledge of their own culture, and they also wanted to understand other cultures as well.

For example, my conversation partner Rei had extensive knowledge of classical literature. She had very interesting insights into the difference between Japanese classical literature (such as *The Tale of Genji*) and Western classical literature.

In addition, even if the other people I met did not know much about Japanese culture, they still had interesting ideas to share about their own culture. My host mother told me about the American outlook on religion, and the sports club staff told me about the importance of exercise in the U.S. Furthermore, they were very interested in whether aspects of culture such as religion are regarded as important in Japan.

When I talked with them, I felt that they wanted to understand other cultures very well. However, when talking with them, I also realized that I didn't know enough about my own country and culture. This is something that I've reflected on a lot since then.

For people from different cultures to understand each other, first we need detailed knowledge about own culture that we can use as a basis for understanding. Second, we have to decide what we want to know about the other person's culture. Finally, the most important thing is to polish our linguistic abilities so that we can introduce our culture clearly.

It was all of the people at OSU, together with the SHEP staff, who gave me the chance to have this valuable insight. My heart is full of feelings of thanks to you!

My Experience at SHEP 2008

Shingen Misaka

Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

By participating in SHEP 2008, I had a great opportunity not only to learn English at an excellent school, but also to get to know how laboratories at American universities are run, especially in the field of pharmaceutical research, which is my area of specialization. I visited the laboratory of Professor Daren L. Knoell, who does research on respiratory physiology in the College of Pharmacy at The Ohio State University. His lab is located in the Davis Heart and Lung Research Institute, which is affiliated with the university's medical school. In the institute, a number of faculty members of the College of Pharmacy that are involved in cardiovascular or respiratory research have laboratories based at the medical school. The laboratories' staff and students have a lot of chances to exchange ideas and do research together across faculties and departments. I was very impressed with the lively academic atmosphere at the institute, and it provided a great stimulus to my own research.

Before I went to Professor Knoell's laboratory, I was really nervous. I was worried about visiting it alone and having to communicate in English only. But I found that it was not a serious problem at all because Professor Knoell and the other staff members were very friendly and treated me very kindly. Though I was not very fluent, I could communicate with them in English. This gave me a lot more confidence in speaking English. Throughout the SHEP program, I felt strongly that my many different experiences in U.S. society, as well as the university's English classes, significantly contributed to the improvement of my English skills.

Life in the Dormitory

Hiroyuki Koide

Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

We stayed in a dormitory during the training course at The Ohio State University. I went to the university feeling uneasy because I had never stayed in a dormitory that houses a lot of people whom I had never met. However, the dormitory had a lot of students who came from other countries and from other states in the U.S. It was a very lively place. It didn't take me too long to become friends with the other students because they also seemed to feel the same way. After I made friends with my dormitory mates, I had a lot of chances to speak in and listen to English, so my

fear of English quickly disappeared. Furthermore, because I wanted to be able to communicate in English like I can in Japanese, each day I studied very hard to be able to express what I had not been able to the previous day. I also had a lot of chances to dine out. At first, I could not understand what the waiter said because my listening skills weren't good enough. But I gradually got accustomed to it, and became able to answer without any difficulties, no matter what the staff said. Everything about American life was a good experience for me, so it was a good experience studying English there. I also learned that everything depended on me: If I spoke English actively with my friends, I improved more quickly. Living in the dormitory, I had a good chance to speak English everyday, one that I could not have had in Japan. I really appreciate having such a great chance.

Participation in SHEP

Kyoko Tashiro

Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

When I was studying for my Master's Degree, I began to study English by myself. I felt that I needed more English skills for various aspects of my scientific career, such as reading articles, writing articles, and attending overseas meetings. I practiced using NHK radio programs and some texts which I could get at bookstores. And I often took the TOEIC examination to check my English skills. However, it was difficult to brush up my listening and speaking skills by myself. I wanted to acquire English skills useful to me as a researcher. At that time, I found out about the SHEP program. I applied, and then took the TOFEL test and the English interview for the program. Fortunately, I was accepted to participate. I wanted to acquire presentation, listening, and speaking skills in English.

The center of our life in the United States was the program's classes. They were held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. every day. In the first half of the class, we studied English pronunciation and dictation using texts and CDs. My training in the U.S. was more difficult than in Japan, so I had a hard time. In the latter half of the class, we discussed various topics and performed impromptu speeches which we improvised for three minutes. There was lots of variation in the content of the classes, and all of it was interesting. Additionally, we had three extra classes in which professors from The Ohio State University gave. They talked mainly about medical science. The lecturers knew that we were studying English, so they talked in a way that we could easily understand.

Moreover, we had five presentation assignments – one almost every week.

The first and second presentations were introducing scientific articles which we had found on the Internet. The third one was about our research background. The fourth one was a poster presentation, and the final presentation was a more detailed description of our research. It was difficult for us to present scientific topics to audiences of non-scientists, but it was a very good experience. Our teacher, Bill was very kind, and he always encouraged us.

I also had a chance to visit a laboratory at OSU. I visited the laboratory of Professor Ching-Shih Chen in Department of Pharmacology. I saw students' poster presentations, participated in seminars, and observed experiments. Those were very valuable experiences.

After our final presentations, the OSU staff kindly gave us a farewell party. At the party, we got diplomas for completing the six-week course. When I first arrived in Ohio, I felt that six weeks would be a long time. But once the program had ended, I was overcome with deep emotion. Time had passed so quickly, and I wanted to continue working hard at my English in the future to make the most of my great experience at OSU.

Finally, I would like to thank deeply Professor Mineharu Nakayama, Mr. Louis W. (Bill) Holschuh, and Mr. Gary Whitby.

Learning from Study at OSU

Miho Ohsumi

Graduate School of Nutritional and Environmental Sciences

The experience of participating in the English training program at The Ohio State University was a wonderful experience. At first I was nervous about speaking English because until then I had only used English when reading academic articles. All of the teachers spoke English slowly, but I couldn't understand at all, so I couldn't have a conversation smoothly. As time went on, I got used to speaking and listening in English while participating in class. The classes were very interesting, especially joining in discussion and thinking about my ideas in English. The presentation class that we had every Friday helped me explain my research to an audience.

Thanks to our teacher Bill, I got used to using English and living in a foreign country. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of staff and for giving me such a great opportunity.

Learning through English Conversation with Overseas Colleagues

Taiki Mori

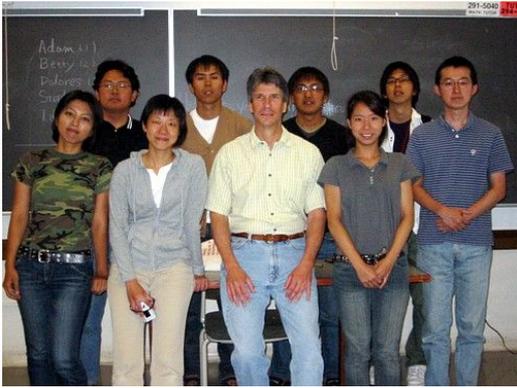
Graduate School of Nutritional and Environmental Sciences

Scientific researchers need to have advanced English reading and writing ability in order to carry out their research. The ability to listen and speak in discussions with overseas colleagues in English is also essential for informing others about one's research. Reading and writing ability can be improved in Japan through reading papers and writing articles. However, as we Japanese scientists have few chances to engage in English conversation, our listening and speaking abilities are not very well developed. This is why I decided to join the Shizuoka Health Sciences English Program (SHEP).

SHEP2008 differed from SHEP2007 in two ways. The first way was that each participant had a conversation partner who was an Ohio State University student. Each conversation partner had a car, and they kindly took us to various places. For example, my conversation partner took me to the biggest shopping mall near the university, to discount clothing shops, and to Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, and Thai restaurants. Because I traveled many places with my conversation partner, I could talk with him a lot. This was very useful for improving my English skills. Through spending time with my conversation partner, I rediscovered that English is essential for communication with foreign people. The second way SHEP2008 differed from SHEP2007 was that we stayed in a dormitory, not in a hotel. There was a common kitchen and ping-pong table in the dormitory. When we played ping-pong, foreign students in the same dormitory asked us "Can we play with you?," so we played together. In this way, I had a chance to meet other students through sports. Because my new foreign friends spoke more quickly and with less hesitation than my conversation partner did, I think my English skills improved more quickly.

The six-week SHEP2008 stay in Ohio gave me a lot of motivation and opportunities to improve my English skills. Now, I am continuing to learn English by joining the English classes at my university, and in the future I plan to continue working on the English skills that SHEP2008 helped me build.

Finally, I am very grateful to the staffs both at OSU and in the Global COE Program at the University of Shizuoka who were involved in the planning of SHEP2008.



Global COE Program – Innovation in Human Health Sciences

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