

Simulated Patient Assignment

In our classes on June 1st and June 8th, we will explore the topic of “healthcare, culture, and communication.” To prepare for it watch the excellent NHK World documentary about an innovative program at Juntendo University to teach medical students how to communicate better with foreign patients. Then answer the questions about it (below) in the Small Group “Communicating with Simulated Patients.” Also answer the questions about a related article that appeared in the JAPAN TIMES. Do this no later than May 31st.

[In one of our upcoming classes we will carry out “simulated patient” interviews like the ones you will be watching in the video, pretending to be both doctors and patients.]

**** PART I ****

Access the NHK documentary “How medical students handle culture, religion and sexual orientation” at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo9wcyS0oyc>.

1. At the beginning of the documentary an elderly woman (Professor Emeritus of Medical History, Shizu Sakai) is explaining the typical sort of relationship that Japanese patients used to have with their doctors. Describe that relationship and how it has changed. What reason does the woman give for the change?
2. Look up the definition of “power distance” at this link <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/japan/> and see how “power distance” in Japan compares with the levels of power distance in other countries. How does this concept relate to the ways that doctors and patients communicate to each other in Japan? How about in the US?
3. Prof. Yuko Takeda tells us a few things about what is unique about Juntendo University’s medical school. What are they?
4. We were introduced to Kenta Igami, a 4th year medical student at Juntendo University. What did he give as his motivations for wanting to become a doctor?
5. What is a “medical interview” and why did Prof. Takeda want her students to practice conducting medical interviews in English? 5:09 onwards
6. Explain the concept of “Simulated patients” (SP) and why were they used in medical training at Juntendo?
7. Why do you think that showing empathy in English might be different from showing empathy in Japanese?
8. Prof. Takeda was greatly moved by an experience she had with a blind foreign patient who had a strong accent that she had difficulty understanding. What important lesson did she learn from that experience?
9. Marcellus Nealey is a professor of Academic English at Juntendo University. What did he hope his students would learn through the use of role play in his classes? How did it fall short of his expectations and what innovation did that lead him to introduce?
10. Describe the personal experience that Marcellus Nealey had which influenced his teaching.

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11. Why does Prof. Takeda think that it's important for her students to know that there are increasing numbers of children who are in poverty in Japan? from 13:40
12. What is the main purpose of the medical interview role play in English? 14:40
13. What role might race play when a doctor is examining a patient? 15:36
14. What is the "Geneva Declaration"? What does it have to do with sexual orientation, race, religion, and nationality?
15. Who are the "simulated patients" in the medical interview role plays and what sort of training is involved in preparing them for the experience?
16. Why does Prof. Takeda think that it's important that her students have fun when carrying out the medical interview role plays in English?
17. In one of the simulated medical interviews that was shown, the student doctor automatically used the pronoun "he" after the female patient spoke about her "partner." Why might this have been a problem? How might the student doctor have avoided this potential problem? from 20:20
18. What differences did the students find between practicing the medical interviews with peers and practicing with simulated patients? from 25:25
19. What did the male medical student say that he learned from the simulated medical interview with an SP? from 26:30
20. What role do you think simulations might play in helping to prepare you for your desired profession?

**** PART 2 ****

Also, read the Japan Times article entitled "Simulated patients pitch Japan's medical students cultural curve balls" (at this link: https://aogaku-daku.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/simulated_patient_article_JAPAN_TIMES.pdf) and answer these questions in the SAME posting:

1. What problems in medical education does the program called "Simulated Patients (SP for short)" address?
2. How has the Japanese health care system been praised?
3. In what ways has the health care system in Japan been criticized?
4. What are your personal criticisms (if any) of the health care system here and/or in your home country (if you are an international student)?
5. Do medical students have to go through the "Simulated Patients" program? If not, do you think it should be required? Why or why not?
6. What cultural practices do students notice after studying videotaped SP sessions that make them reconsider how they would like to interact with patients?
7. Why might a word like "waterworks" be problematic when used by patients or doctors during a medical interview?
8. What are the challenges in putting together a team of volunteer SPs? What are the backgrounds of some of the SPs?
9. Did you ever volunteer for anything and might you consider becoming a volunteer in the future? What sort of area might you wish to volunteer in?