

Medical Spanish: Laying a Foundation for Global Health



Katherine O'Rourke, MS2
Andrew Putnam, MS1
Amy Blair, MD
Beth Sonntag, M. Ad. Ed.



- "Ineffective communication between patients and providers can result in misdiagnosis, inappropriate treatment or medication errors. When a provider cannot communicate effectively about a disease or treatment, or when a patient cannot describe their illness, they lack the basic connection needed to result in appropriate care. Appropriate communication is necessary for ensuring quality and safety in health care."

- Amy Wilson-Stronks, project director in the Division of Standards and Survey Methods and principal investigator for *Hospitals, Language and Culture* study at The Joint Commission.

"Improving Patient-Provider Communication" U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights. Available at: <http://www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/HLC/>

The Case for Medical Spanish as part of Medical School

- A Spanish-speaking physician improves medical outcomes among Latinos, yet there is a shortage of Spanish-speaking physicians¹
- 14.8% of the current US population is Hispanic, and that number is expected to grow to 24% by 2050²
- Chicago has a growing number of Latino patients with “Limited English Proficiency.”
- Medical students have an increasing interest for medical Spanish training.
- No formal medical Spanish classes or programs exist at many medical schools.

1. Jacobs E, Sadowski L, Rathouz P. The Impact of an Enhanced Interpreter Service Intervention on Hospital Costs and Patient Satisfaction. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2007; 22(Suppl 2): 306-311. Nov.

2. U.S. Census Bureau, Ethnicity and Ancestry Branch. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006. Available at: (http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/files/Internet_Hispanic_in_US_2006.pdf). Accessed February 21, 2009.

Goals

- Lay the foundation for the lifetime learning of Spanish while developing immediate skills in medical Spanish
- Initiate a Spanish curriculum that layers with current coursework
- Pilot a unique model of Spanish learning for medical students
- Provide language skills for service and/or professional development
- Prepare students to work with Latino populations in an informed and culturally competent way



Program Design

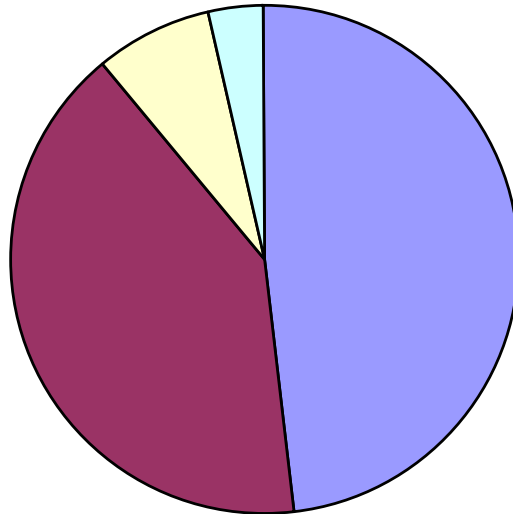
- Student designed, initiated and driven
 - > Curriculum is developed based on continuous student feedback
 - > Content parallels PCM-1 & PCM-2 curriculum
- Peer-led model: In August M1/M2 students interested in teaching were selected through an application process
- Program is administrated by medical students, with support from:
 - > The Teaching & Learning Center
 - > The Center for Service & Global Health
 - > The Clinical Skills Center
- Classes are divided based on Spanish language abilities
 1. Beginner → Essential phrases, basic terminology & relevant questions
 2. Intermediate → Taking a full patient history & conversation skills
 3. Advanced → Patient history, physical exam, & conversation
 4. Advanced-high → PCM 2 topics & advanced clinical scenarios

Current Results

- 2008-2009
 - > 50.4% of the first year class attended at least once and 33.4% attended three or more times
 - > 12 M1 students logged an average of 40 hours in teaching and preparing classes
 - Curriculum was developed and written by the teachers based on learners needs
 - > 30 students participated for the first time in S.P. exercises in Spanish
 - > Many students successfully pursued leadership opportunities working with Latinos



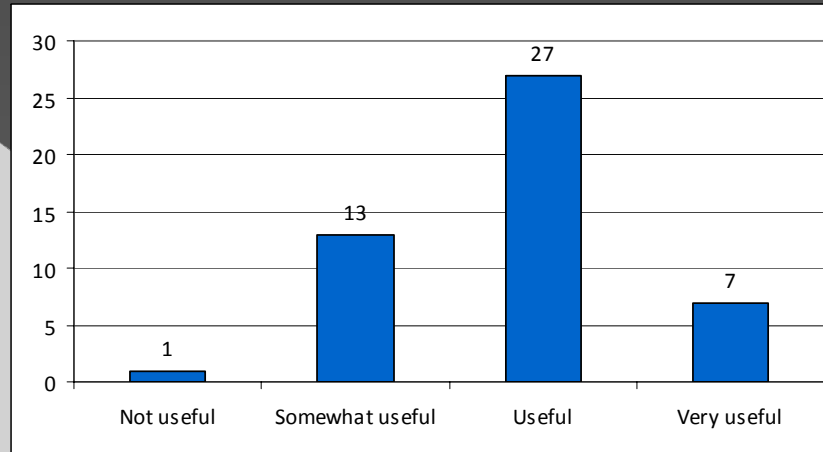
Motivations for Participating



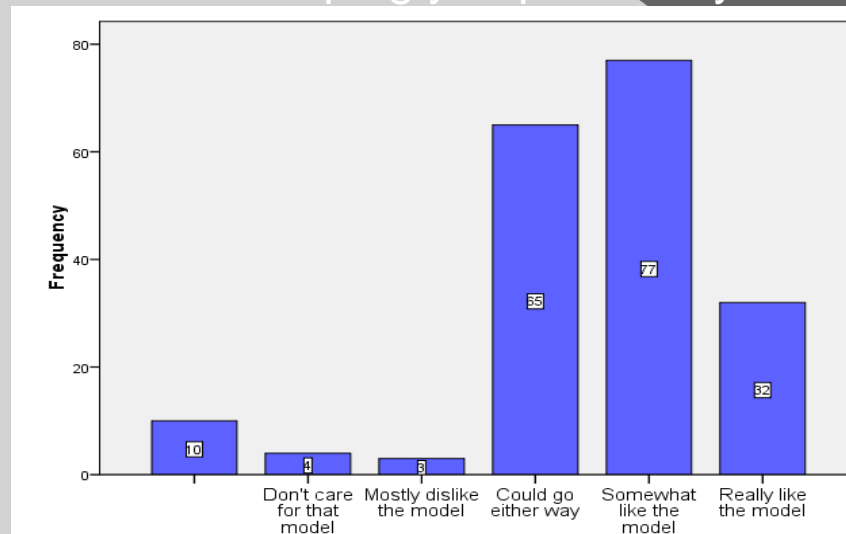
- Plan to work with Latino's in the Future
- Improved language skills (grammar, conversation, vocabulary)
- Summer immersion program
- Did not respond

•67% of students rated the quality of teaching as "good" or "excellent"

Did you find the material that was covered in class useful in personally developing your ability to speak Spanish?



How would you rank the model of peer-led Spanish Language instruction in terms of helping you personally learn Spanish?



Current Results

- ◎ 2009-2010:
 - > 150 students enrolled for Spanish classes in August
 - > 18 peer teachers are enrolled in a Medical Spanish Teaching Elective recently approved by SSOM
 - Curriculum based on texts selected for each level
 - Student teachers continue to develop the lesson plans modeled after the current Medical School curriculum
 - > Several M2's have chosen to work with PCM2 preceptors that serve predominantly Latino populations
 - > 20 students completed an SP exercise in February



M3 Survey Results

- 88% of those surveyed wish they had completed more Spanish training prior to clerkship years
- 71% encounter Spanish speaking patients on at least a weekly basis

M1/M2 Survey Results

64% of those surveyed say their target Spanish speaking ability is to at least be able to ask patients medical questions in Spanish and understand their replies

45% are interested in some kind of accreditation of their medical Spanish speaking abilities

Teaching Elective

- In July, a teaching elective curriculum was designed and approved for peer Spanish teachers
- As of August, 18 teachers are currently enrolled
- Program includes:
 - > 4 didactic courses on teaching theory
 - > Requires 20 hours of teaching over a 2 year period
 - > Receiving feedback from students and fellow teachers
 - > Giving feedback to fellow teachers
 - > Coordinating classes and developing lesson plans for their weekly classes, usually taught with a fellow teacher.



Interpreter Shadowing

- Approximately 20 students have already shadowed Loyola interpreters in either the inpatient or outpatient setting
- The shadowing experience lasts approximately 3 hours
- Goals for students include:
 - › Develop realistic understanding of their own abilities
 - › Learn to work with an interpreter
 - › Understand the challenges of language barriers for the patients
 - › Deepen their culture competency

Volunteer Interpreters



- ⦿ Problem:
 - > Interpreters not always available for satellite clinic
- ⦿ Solution:
 - > Students volunteer to interpret
- ⦿ 12 M1/M2 Advanced Spanish students have taken the Loyola Medical Spanish Interpreter Assessment
- ⦿ Those that passed have begun working as volunteer interpreters on weekly basis for a Loyola Access to Care outpatient clinic

Interpreter Logistics

- ◎ Certification Process
 - › Spanish fluency exam
 - › Medical interpretation exam
- ◎ Scheduling
 - › Two shifts per week
 - › Sign up on Google Calendar



Spanish-Speaking Medical Student Certification

- Verify students' Medical Spanish skills
 - > Patient safety is key!!
 - > Clerkships
 - Internal database
 - > Residency applications
 - Transcript

Exam Possibilities

ALTA exams

- › Qualified Bilingual Staff Assessment
- › Clinician Cultural and Linguistic Assessment
- ⦿ Standardized Patient Exercise
- ⦿ Mini-CEX



Our Plan

- ◉ Qualified Bilingual Staff Assessment
- ◉ Clinician Cultural and Linguistic Assessment
- ◉ Standardized Patient Exercise
 - > Language Assessment
 - > Cultural Competency Assessment

Future Efforts



Creating a Longitudinal Program: Involving M3/M4 Students

- ⦿ Discuss relevant cases/concepts on quarterly basis
 - > Create online resources—in progress
 - > Rotation specific terminology trainings
- ⦿ Identify rotation sites with high need for Spanish speakers
- ⦿ National/International rotation opportunities

Academic recognition

- Official academic recognition would:
 - > Motivate sustained participation
 - > Allow students to demonstrate their involvement on their academic transcript
- Ideas include:
 - > Academic Track
 - > Fourth year elective credit
 - > M1/M2 elective credit
 - > Implement as part of PCM



Honors in Bioethics Projects spanning several areas of the program

- Certifying physicians as bilingual providers: Katherine O'Rourke
- Writing the program description for publication: Jason Howell
- Considering patient preferences regarding bilingual physicians, interpreter use, and quality of care.



¿Preguntas?

