

Medical Anthropology (1)

Health is affected by cultural factors: It's largely varying over the world.

Approaches to understand culture have been developed in the cultural anthropology studies.

Medical Anthropology is a relatively new discipline among the cultural anthropology.

Bases of medical anthropology:

Folk medicine, ethnomedicine - related with cosmology, how the people perceive the world

Traditional medicine - related with ethnology, ethology, how the people have behaved

Cultural relativism:

Comparison among societies

between traditional vs modern

between developing and developed

between local and global

Standard textbooks ever published (already translated to Japanese except Helman's book):

1. Foster G, Anderson B (1978) Medical Anthropology. Alfred Knopf., NY: Focused on "pros and cons" of non-Western medicine. Comparing Western with Non-Western worlds. Effective framework in the past, insufficient now, because of increasing importance of cultural mixture.
2. McElroy A, Townsend PK (1985) Medical Anthropology in Ecological Perspective. Westview Press, Boulder: Paying special attention to modification and adjustment for individuals or population to survive under any specific environment, and "adaptation"
3. Helman C (1994) Culture, Health and Illness: An Introduction for Health Professionals, 3rd Ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford: Based on enormous episodes and case reports from worldwide societies
4. Strathern A, Stewart PJ (1999) Curing and Healing - Medical Anthropology in Global Perspective. Carolina Academic Press: Concise and well-organized textbook.

Debates to deeply understand topics without any clear answer by achieving

1. to have a range of good arguments and rebuttals
2. to develop these in clear, detailed and analytical way
3. to deliver them persuasively

There are many ways for debates

For example, in "Mace Format",

1. Involving two teams with two speakers on each side.
2. First proposition speaker delivers a 7-minute speech
3. First opposition speaker delivers a 7-minute speech
4. Second proposition speaker delivers a 7-minute speech
5. Second opposition speaker delivers a 7-minute speech
6. Floor debate: Members of the audience make brief points
7. Opposition summary speaker delivers a 4-minute summary speech
8. Proposition summary speaker delivers a 4-minute summary speech

Theme and basic information are given the class of previous week.

And the participants are assigned either of two team, preparing the speech.

After conducting debates, theme and basic information will be given for next week.

* Theme for 16 April is "Is medical anthropology necessary for the current medical practice in Japan?"

[Prop side] Necessary (When conflicts between science and culture occur, we cannot know which should win)

[Opp side] Not necessary (At least when conflicts between science and culture occur, science should win)