Scientists’ English

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Tokyo (The Daily Yomiuri)—Fears that nation’s researchers may be overlooked for international awards such as Nobel Prize and that nation may be viewed only as source of funds for research have sparked moves by some of nation’s universities to improve English-language skills of science students.

Koichi Tanaka, 43, who won Nobel Prize last year, said he was poor at English, but future scientists should no longer be able to use this as excuse.

“This should be in past tense, not in present tense,” said English teacher Tom Galley to chemistry doctoral students at Tokyo University. “You should put comma here.”

Galley was explaining mistakes in research papers that future chemists had written in English. He pointed out mistakes involving use of present and pat tenses and showed students how to use modifiers and relative pronouns.

lecture was in preparation for course scheduled to start in April for first-year doctoral students. graduates of doctoral courses are expected to compete with world’s top scientists in future.