

What's New?

Niihama City

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3



Conveying Meaning without Words:

My Experiences in Japanese Communication

By Kegan Buchanan

Moving to Japan can seem very daunting, especially for those of us who decide to do so knowing little, if any, of the Japanese language. The culture shock of being in a foreign place which doesn't use the same alphabet can make anyone a little nervous, confused and, let's face it, lost in translation. The following are some excerpts from my first experiences overcoming these barriers in Japan, my earliest attempts to convey meaning without words.

My first trip within Japan was a train ride from Tokyo to Kyoto. At one of the first stops, an old man sat down next to me and asked if he could speak to me and practice his English. What I didn't realize when I said yes was that, as our destinations were close to one another, I would ride the train and converse with this man for the next six hours.

Talking to anyone for six hours straight can be a stretch, but somehow we did our best to make it work and pass the time. At this point I was constantly carrying around a little notepad that suddenly became really handy. When one of us could not find a way to accurately get across the gist of what we were trying to say, more often than not, drawing a picture would get the message across. We covered a wide variety of topics throughout our journey ranging from traveling and sports to religion and philosophy; and when it was time for us to part ways he offered me his business card and a place to stay at his home if I was ever in the area.

On my first night in Kyoto I came across a group of Japanese guys who, once they found out I was traveling alone, asked if I would like to join them for the night. Having no other plans I readily agreed and soon found myself in an izakaya. Though the guys intended on practising their English with me, they quickly ran out of things they knew how to say. One of them had a voice translator app which made things easier for a while, but the free version he had only allowed for about twenty sayings to be translated. Undaunted, we left the izakaya and went up to a small bar on the 8th floor of a nondescript building that I never would have found myself. Upon entering, the bartender exchanged some harsh words with my new friends, the topic of which I believe was the fact that they don't allow

foreigners in their bar. Somehow the guys found a way to convince the bartender to admit me and we had a great time drinking and communicating through actions, pictures and body language. After several drinks we headed out for karaoke where they sang mainly anime openers and I serenaded them with some good ol' rock and roll

Now it seems like everywhere I go, if I don't let a lack knowledge of the Japanese language faze me, it seems I always find a way to get by. I take kendo lessons from a Japanese sensei, I try to order food on menus without pictures, and I smile and bow to most everyone I pass. I am also working on my ability to speak Japanese, and in this I owe a large debt of gratitude to my excellent Japanese teacher Tasaka-sensei, and the program offered through the Ishizuchi Japanese club.

The moral of my story is not to be afraid to try and communicate even if you don't know the language. By all means use what little you know as most people will not only appreciate your attempts, but will also be very encouraging of your efforts. Failing that, be creative. Try drawing, acting or even speaking in your own language and seeing if people can understand you just from body language and tonality.

One thing I am sure to take home from my time in Japan is a deeper understanding of what it truly means to communicate.

Kegan Buchanan was born in Port Hope, Canada. He is 29 years old and currently teaches English in a variety of applications and proficiency levels; from private lessons in business and conversational language to beginner's lessons for kindergarten children and adults. He and his wife Maya currently reside in Saijo.

The 24th Niihama Global Party

"Just One World"

Niihama's 24th Global Party was held at Women's Plaza on February 9 with the theme of "Just One World." About 300 guests and organizers from 21 countries took part.

The party started with a Japanese drum performance and attendees sampled various countries' sweets. Everyone enjoyed talking with people from many cultures.

On stage there was a variety of performances such as singing, Asian and Brazilian traditional dances, and an exciting African drum performance.

Many participants enjoyed wearing yukata and other costumes from various countries. Around the room were several booths, where participating countries displayed pictures of their history and products, and served sweets.

Everyone had a great "global" afternoon.

The Number of Participants

Nationality	Male	Female	Total
Australia	2		2
Cambodia	1		1
Canada	1	1	2
China	10	5	15
Cuba	1		1
Ecuador	1		1
France		1	1
Honduras	1	1	2
India	1	1	2
Indonesia	10	13	23
Jamaica	1	2	3
Korea		1	1
Malaysia	1	3	4
New Zealand	1	1	2
Peru	2		2
The Philippines		2	2
Russia	1	3	4
Trinidad and Tobago		1	1
USA	7	4	11
Yemen		1	1
Total	41	40	81
Japan	224		224
Total			305

Vaccination against Yellow Fever

If you go see Soccer World Cup in Brazil
(from Ehime Shimbun January 15, 2014)

The Soccer World Cup will be held in Brazil this June and many people seem to go there to watch it. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare appealed to take the vaccination of yellow fever to the supporters who plan to go there.

Yellow fever is the disease peculiar to some parts of Africa and South and Central America. If yellow fever mosquito carrying the virus bites you, you would be infected with yellow fever. If infected, you will suffer high fever, headache and sickness and you could die in the case of the serious condition. Brazil is the first place of the World Soccer Games' venues where WHO recommends to get vaccinated for yellow fever. Five cities out of 12 held soccer matches are the threatened districts. The popular tourist spots such as Iguazu Falls and some parts along the Amazon are threatened, too.

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare has appealed for the vaccination to the Soccer World Cup for the first time. The vaccination costs about ¥10000 and it is available at 25 quarantines and medical institutions. Yellow fever mosquitoes do not inhabit in Japan and no case of this disease has been reported. So few people understand how dangerous yellow fever is. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare issued a leaflet last December to show the dangerous places where the soccer matches are held. You can see it on the website of the Quarantines and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare advises you to take vaccination as soon as possible because more people want vaccination from March to May.

Information in English & Chinese on the web

***What's New?**

***How to sort Garbage and trash**

***Information on living in Niihama**

Click  <http://www.city.niihama.lg.jp/english/>

Clair: *Multilingual Living Information

<http://www.clair.or.jp/tagengorev/en/index.html>

*The editors for this month are M. Okada & T. Kashimoto

March Event

● 3 / 17(Sun) **Sunday Market**

Time :7:30 ~12:00

Place: Niihama Central Park(next to 文化センター)

About the Charge for Plastic Shopping Bags from March

For the first time in Ehime all Niihama's major super markets (25 stores) charge for plastic shopping bags to reduce the consumption of plastic trying to make Niihama more eco-friendly.

From this March 1st all the major supermarkets in Niihama will start to charge for plastic shopping bags.

In 2009, 6 major supermarkets exchanged contracts with the city government and the citizens' groups and began to charge for plastic bags. 27 representatives from the supermarkets and the citizens' group participated in the meeting and made an agreement to charge for plastic bags. The other supermarkets (4 stores of Marunaka, 2 of Maruyoshi Center, 5 of Mamai, and 1 of HALOWS which opened in February) complied with the agreement.

The Mayor of Niihama, Katsuyuki Ishikawa says, "Taking advantage of this trial, we want to make Niihama more eco-friendly." (from Ehime Shimbun January 9, 2014)

MOVIE

TOHO CINEMAS Niihama (AEON Shopping Center)

January 31 ~	AMERICAN HUSTLE	2D English
January 31 ~	THE WOLF OF WALL STREET	2D English
February 1 ~	Thor: The Dark World	2D English
February 7 ~	RUSH (PG12)	2D English / Dubbed
February 15 ~	Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit	2D English
February 22 ~	Kick-Ass 2 (R15+)	2D English
February 28 ~	THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG	2D English / 3D Dubbed
March 13 ~	FROZEN	2D English / 3D Dubbed
March 19 ~	The Secret Life of Walter Mitty	2D English

Information Service

Internet: <http://niihama-aeonmall.com>

Tape (24 hrs): 050-6868-5019(in Japanese)

Movies might be changed without notice. Please check.

ONE POINT JAPANESE

いろいろな“あります”

(カレンダーを見ながら) (Looking at the calendar)

A : 今月は 3連休が ありますね。

Kongetsu wa san renkyū ga arimasu ne.

(There's a three-day-holiday this month.)

B : あー、ホントだ。どこか 遊びに 行きませんか。

Aa, honto da. Doko ka asobi ni ikimasen ka.

(Ah, that's right! Shall we go somewhere?)

C : いいですね。Dさんも 一緒に どうですか。

Ii desu ne. D-san mo issho ni dō desu ka.

(That sounds good. Why don't you come with us too, B?)

D : 残念! その日は、松山で テニスの試合が あるんです。

Zannen! Sono hi wa, Matsuyama de tenisu no shiai ga arun desu.

(Too bad! That day I have a tennis match in Matsuyama.)

C : そうですか。Eさんは?

Sodesu ka. E-san wa?

(Really? How about you, E?)

E : 特に 予定は ありませんが、給料日前で、お金が・・・。

Tokuni yotei wa arimasen ga, kyūryōbi mae de, okane ga...

(I don't really have any plans, but it's before payday, so I don't have any money...)

A : 大丈夫! 安くて いい 所が あるから。

Daijōbu! Yasukute ii tokoro ga aru kara.

(That's all right! I know an inexpensive and good place.)

A : 先生、今 少し お時間が ありますか。

Sensei, ima sukoshi ojikan ga arimasu ka.

(Ms. B, do you have a minute now?)

B : ええ、大丈夫ですよ。

Ee, daijōbu desu yo!

(Yes, no problem!)

A : 実は、将来の 進路について、ご相談が あるんですが・・・。

Jitsuwa, shōrai no shinro ni tsuite, gosōdan ga arun desu ga...

(Actually, I'd like to talk with you about my future direction in life...)

< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

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