

English for International Students

I would like to make Japanese Free Talk in Aichi University. It must help international students learn Japanese.

Hello, everyone. I'm Haruna Shirai. Today, I will talk about the problem which English causes for international students and suggest making Japanese Free Talk as one of the solutions for the problem.

This year, I enrolled in Aichi University. One of my goals after becoming an university student was to support international students, so I started to help them with their homework in the Global Lounge. Fortunately, I soon became close with many students from America, France and so on.

Then, when it comes to their Japanese abilities, in last semester, the difference between them was big, so it was difficult to communicate smoothly in a group in Japanese. To solve the problem, everyone spoke English as a language which everyone understands, and I thought it was a good way to communicate there, however one comment a student made started to trouble me.

That comment is "I would like to communicate more in Japanese". That day, I was talking with a student and I asked her "Could you improve your Japanese here?" She said, "I could do that, but I wanted to speak Japanese more although I understood English was very important to communicate in a group even in Japan". Probably, this was a feeling she usually thought of while studying abroad because she often spoke English there although she was good at Japanese. The comment made me reflect and realize my selfishness and gave me an opportunity to think about the way to communicate with them because I could not notice her feelings that she wanted to speak Japanese more.

Talking with them in English is a very good opportunity for me because I would like to improve that, but how about them? Of course, Japanese is more important than English because they came to Aichi University not to learn English but Japanese. I think it is a problem that they do not have many opportunities to talk in Japanese outside regular classes.

What causes the situation? I found two reasons.

The first reason is, as previously stated, the difference in Japanese abilities between international students, in other words, English is necessary to communicate well. If they spoke only Japanese, students who are not good at Japanese might struggle to communicate.

The other reason is a mismatch between supply and demand. Many international students are in the Global Lounge after classes. On the other hand, there are many Japanese students who would like to learn English there.

For the above reasons, I will suggest one of the solutions. I think the first reason is inevitable, but the other reason can be solved in some way. For example, making Japanese free talk for international students somewhere organized by Japanese students.

In the free talk, of course, you can talk about a specific topic in Japanese, but I think not only talking but also quiz is good for that. Japanese can help students who cannot catch up with Japanese by using English, so everyone can enjoy it.

In the end, I would like to finish by giving you a quiz as an example of a part of Japanese Free Talk.

Do you know “鳥肌が立つ”? it means getting goosebumps in English. This

expression is used in a wrong way by many Japanese, so can you guess which state is wrong? No.1 is “鳥肌が立つような名演奏だった”. It means that the performance was so touching that I got goosebumps. No2 is ”あまりの不気味さに鳥肌が立った”. It means that I got goosebumps by looking creepy things. Please raise your hands if you think No,1 is a wrong one. Please raise your hands if you think No.2 is a wrong one. Thank you.

The answer is No,1 is a wrong one. In fact, “鳥肌の立つような” is expression for only negative things. Did you know about this? Probably, not all Japanese can know the proper way to use Japanese like this, so Japanese free talk is worth for not only international students, but also Japanese, so why don't you join me?

Thank you for listening.

(730 words)