

Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

Newsletter No.18

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December 2015

Notice of the 3rd meeting held in FY2015

The 3rd council meeting of the FY2015 was held at Kyoto City Hall. The meeting focused on the dissemination of information especially in multiple languages and in “Easy Japanese” in order to develop the theme “Creating a city deeply rooted in multicultural coexistence.” At the meeting, an organization implementing these initiatives reported on their activities to transmit information in easy to understand Japanese, and then various opinions and information were exchanged.



<Time and Date> Thurs. November 12, 2015 (2 to 4pm)

<Place> Kyoto City Hall

<Agenda> Disseminating Information : Initiatives to transmit information in multi-languages and in “Easy Japanese”.

Report — Easy Japanese for Foreigners

Report 1: Easy Japanese for Foreigners

Yasashii Nihongo Yushi no Kai, Masayoshi Hanaoka, Atsuko Sugimoto

● About Yasashii Nihongo Yushi no Kai

- The organization was founded in 2009 by Japanese language teachers in Kyoto Prefecture.
- Yasashii Nihongo Yushi no Kai gives lectures on disaster prevention to Japanese language learners and foreign residents living in Japan. In many places, it also gives workshops on “Easy Japanese” to Japanese residents to learn how to communicate effectively in simple Japanese.



災害用語を外国人に分かりやすい言葉に置き換えて伝える技術を紹介する
杉本事務局長(左から3人目)＝7月、京都市下京区・府国際センター



避難勧告や注意喚起、特別警戒など災害時に旨する言葉は専門用語が多い。日本語が得意ではない外国人が言葉の意味を理解できず、適切な避難に結びつかない恐れもある。そんな苦学用語を分かりやすい日本語に置き換える技術を全国各地で開く講習会や勉強会が盛んである。

「やさしい日本語」有志の会は府内の日本語講座が集まり、2009年に発足した。杉本事務局長(66)は「平易な言葉や図解、イラスト、動画などを活用し、外国人が理解しやすい表現を講義の中で『やさしい日本語』に出会った」と振り返る。

阪神大震災を契機に生まれた「やさしい日本語」は、弘明大(青森県)の研究者が提唱した。例えば「自分の体を守る」と言い換える。「余震」は「後から来る地震」、「避

「後から来る地震」、「避震する」は「逃げ込む」と知らせていく。素早く正確な情報伝達が可能になるといふ。

会は現在、全国の国際交流協会や日本語講師の依頼に応じて講習会を開き、平易な災害用語の普及に力を注ぐ。支援する側だけでなく、災害の経験や知識の少ない外国人を対象に独自の防災冊子や、避難時の持ち出し品を列挙したカードを教材に勉強会を催し、防災教育の向上を目指す。

どこでも避難時の運営などに携わる地域の自治会活動に着目する。地域で暮らす外国人と日本人からコミュニケーションを図りたいといふ。

外国人分かる災害用語に

災害時にうまく対応できないといふ、自治会役員などに講習会参加を呼び掛ける。

花岡正義代表(69)は「京田辺市」は「防災を切り口に地域住民と外国人が互いの文化を学ぶ場が増えれば相手への理解も深まる。やさしい日本語をまわすつもりにも生かしてほしい」と願う。

(富田芳夫)

「やさしい日本語」有志の会(京都市下京区)を拠点とするボランティア団体。市内で日本語教室を取り組むメンバーは5人から中心となって各地で研修会や勉強会を開く。問い合わせは花岡代表の携帯電話080-8330-0087。

● About “Easy Japanese”

- After the Great Hanshin Earthquake, Professor Kazuyuki Sato and the sociolinguistics laboratory (Faculty of Humanities, Hiroshima University) devised “Easy Japanese” in order to promptly, accurately and precisely transmit information to foreign disaster victims and to guide foreign disaster victims to shelters.

- “Easy Japanese” uses Level N4 (formerly Level 3) of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test as its base. At this level a person can ride a bus by themselves, go shopping, can read and write basic sentences, and understand kanji and grammar presented in the 2nd year of elementary school.

- The framework for “Easy English” involves some of the following rules, such as using simple vocabulary, shortening sentences, and not using romaji or katakana etc. (See the next page.)

● Through Activities

- At lectures on disaster prevention for foreign residents, participants are taught in an interactive and communicative way with illustrations, movies and actual evacuation goods etc. These lectures are not one-sided but are used to promote discussion.

- At workshops for Japanese native speakers, participants learn which ways of speaking are easy to understand and which ways of speaking are difficult to understand. Many participants believe initially that if they cannot speak English then they cannot communicate. However, they discover the fact that they can communicate effectively by using “Easy Japanese” even if they cannot speak English.

- In the event of disaster, it is said that “the language barrier”, “the system barrier” and “the mind barrier” become larger, but “Easy Japanese”

makes communication possible and breaks down these barriers. It also seems that cities and communities that have good communication with foreign residents have fewer miscommunications in the event of a disaster.

Article on Yasashii Nihongo Yushi no Kai
Nov. 11, 2015 the Kyoto Shimbun

- We do not want Kyoto residents from abroad to suffer in Japan. In the event of a disaster, we want foreign residents to experience kindness and to be glad of their decision to come to Japan. Yasashii Nihongo Yushi no Kai wants foreign residents to be able to receive the same service and information as Japanese residents. This is what the group is working towards.

Comments from Committee Members (Extract)

- Actually I have participated in a disaster prevention workshop, It was very easy to understand and extremely informative. Among the participants, there were some that normally would have needed an interpreter, but the explanation was so easy to understand that an interpreter wasn't necessary at all.
- I hope "Easy Japanese" is used nationally.
- We are calling this "Easy Japanese" and we are hearing from Hirosaki University Department of Humanities Sociolinguistics Laboratory, but I think similar things must exist under different names. I think it would be good to have one universal standard (dictionary) for the whole country.
- As we haven't studied multiple languages, I think it is very important to be aware of using "Easy Japanese" as one instead of multiple languages. I feel that "Easy Japanese" could be the common language (Lingua Franca) for foreigners living in Japan.
- A few days ago I participated in a disaster prevention drill where "Easy Japanese" was not used. I think starting with disaster prevention is good, but day-to-day applications would be better.
- I think "Easy Japanese" is most relevant for everyday communication. It is of the utmost importance to transmit information during a disaster or emergency, but "Easy Japanese" can also serve a purpose in creating ties with in the community through conversations with foreign residents.
- I would like foreign exchange students who have just arrived in Japan to participate in this disaster prevention workshop. I think this would be very important for life in Japan and to gain knowledge on disaster prevention. I think after coming to Japan and participating in the lectures, students will understand the potential dangers of different disasters.
- "Easy Japanese" as a common language is I think not just important for disaster education but also for everyday exchanges.

The 12 principles behind Easy Japanese

(Taken from the Hirosaki University Sociolinguistics Laboratory Website)

- 1.) Avoid difficult words, use simple language.
- 2.) Shorten the sentences, and use simple constructions for sentences.
- 3.) In the event of a disaster, use wording for disaster prevention as is.
- 4.) As much as possible do not use katakana or foreign loan words.
- 5.) Do not use romaji.
- 6.) Do not use phonomime words or onomatopoeias.
- 7.) Please be careful of the kanji you use and the number of kanji. Make sure there is furigana for each kanji.
- 8.) Make sure to use a date and time notation that can be easily understood by foreigners.
- 9.) Nominalized verbs are difficult to understand, please use sentences with verbs.
- 10.) Avoid using vague expressions.
- 11.) Avoid using sentences with a double negative construction.
- 12.) Please make sure the endings of sentences are uniform.

Reference <http://human.cc.hirosaki-u.ac.jp/kokugo/EJ1a.htm>

Contact Information

Information about the Social Security and Tax Number System in Various Languages

On May 31, 2013 the Act on the Use of Numbers to Identify a Specific Individual in the Administrative Procedure was announced. From October 2015 onward, each person living in Japan will receive notification of their individual number (My Number).

In order to make the Social Security and Tax Number System common knowledge, the Japanese government (Government Cabinet) has set up a website and call center which is available in 6 languages (Japanese, English, Chinese (Simplified, Traditional), Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese). In addition, on the homepage there are overviews posted to the website in 25 languages.

(Please visit the Cabinet Secretariat’s Social Security and Tax Number System website

<http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/bangoseido/index.html>)

A dictionary was created in multiple languages for the Earthquake Early Warnings/Tsunami warning:

In October of 2015, a cellular telephone transmission service started being offered by carriers for multilingual earthquake early warnings/tsunami warnings and for this the Japanese Meteorological Agency, Cabinet Office, and Japan Tourism Agency collected translations of expressions to form a multilingual dictionary.

This multilingual dictionary is in “Easy Japanese”, English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish used in an application for your cell phone/smartphone which offers emergency alert mail and emergency information.

Earthquake Early Warning Multilingual Dictionary, “Easy Japanese”

C. Actions to take based on information received.

| | Regular Expressions | Easy Japanese | English |
|---------------|----------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Basic Actions | 落ち着いてください | びっくりしないでください | Stay Calm. Don't Panic |
| | 揺れがおさまるまで身を守ってください | 地震が止まるまで頭を守ってください | Be prepared for strong tremors |
| | しっかりと頭を守ってください | 頭を守ってください | Protect your head |
| | 上から落ちてくるものに気をつけてください | 上から物が落ちます 頭を守ってください | Watch out for falling objects |
| | 倒れてくるものに気をつけてください | 物が倒れます 気をつけてください | Watch out for falling objects |
| | 危険な場所から離れてください | 物が落ちるところから離れてください 物が倒れるところから離れてください | Keep away from hazardous areas |

(Taken from the Japanese Meteorological Agency Earthquake Early Warning/ Tsunami Warning Multilingual Dictionary website)

Notice from the Secretariat:

If you have any opinion regarding the newsletters or the council, please contact us at the following address. Anyone can attend the meetings as an observer. For back numbers of the newsletter in English, please contact us below.

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