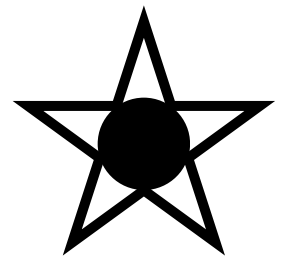


ASAHIKAWA INFO



October 2024 , Volume 335

Upcoming Events

Upcoming events and activities in Asahikawa and around Hokkaido

Events by the Asahikawa International Center



Trick or Treat

Trick or Treat

トリックオトリート



Come grab some free candy at the Asahikawa International Center for Halloween! If your child says "trick or treat", they will get some candy courtesy of the center!

Event Details

Date: 10/20 (Sun)-10/31 (Thurs)

Time: 8:45-17:15 (Mon), 8:45~19:30 (Tue-Fri), 10:00-17:00(Sat-Sun)

Participant Requirements: Elementary school & under

Location: Asahikawa International Center (Feeeeeal 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome)

Note: Only one try per child to pull from the candy box. **Event will conclude once candy inventory is depleted.**

Fun Fridays : (LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS)



Interesting activities such as quizzes, discussions, songs, games, handicrafts and much more, all in English! Come meet new people, relax and relate on Fun Friday! **Free for volunteer leaders fluent in English!** To volunteer for Fun Friday, please contact our center and request for John or Ishibe: **0166-25-7491**

Dates: Oct. 11th & 25th, Nov. 8th & 22nd, Dec. 13th & 27th

Times: 13:00pm-14:00pm ~Afternoon~ 2nd and 4th Friday of the month
18:30-20:30pm ~Evening~ 2nd Friday of the month

Location: Asahikawa International Center, Common Meeting Room (1)
(Feeeel Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome)

Charge: ¥1,500 for 3 months (**Free for volunteer leaders**)



Guide



Events in Asahikawa



Events by Asahikawa International Center

Inside this issue...

- 01 Upcoming Events
- 03 Life in Asahikawa
- 04 A Baby Boomer Learns English
- 08..... AIC Bulletin Board

Check out our website and social media for information regarding the center or any upcoming events!



For further information or to register for events, contact:

Asahikawa International Committee (AIC)(ISHIBE Satoko)
or Coordinator for International Relations (CIR)
(MABILANGAN John)

Address: Asahikawa International Center Feeeel 7F,
1-jo-dori 8-chome, Asahikawa 070-0031

Tel: (0166) 25-7491

Fax: (0166) 23-4924

Email: cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.lg.jp

Website: <http://asahikawaic.jp/en/>



Upcoming Events

Upcoming events and activities in Asahikawa and around Hokkaido

Takasu Marche たかすマルシェ



Have a taste of autumn at the Takasu Marche where you can find several food trucks as well as healthy produce from local vegetable and fruit stands!

Event Details

Date: 10/5 (Sat)

Time: 10:00-13:00

Location: Takasu Community Center Furatto Parking Lot
(Takasu-cho 1-jo 3-chome 2, Kamikawa-gun)



Kamui Gondoride カムイゴンドライド



旭

Experience Asahikawa's fall from high up Kamui Yama. Ride the gondola, enjoy a meal from a food truck, go mountain biking, and many more

Event Details

Date: 10/12 (Sat)- 10/20 (Sun)

Time: 9:00-15:00 (last ride at 14:30)

Admission: ¥1,000 (General), ¥400 (Elementary and younger)

Location: Kamui Ski Links (Kamui-cho Nishioka 11 HG)



Mulch Making Class

落ち葉の腐葉土づくり講習会

Learn how to make mulch from fallen leaves

Event Details

Date: 10/20 (Sun)

Time: 10:00am-11:00am

Location: Kitasaito Garden Center
(Miyamae 2-jo 1-chome)

Registration: 57-0526



Hougechakai: Tea Ceremony

放下茶会

Experience authentic Japanese tea ceremony!

This authentic tea ceremony in Asahioka is a unique 40~50minute experience only for 500 yen!

Event Details

Date: 10/27 (Sun)

Time: 8:50~

Fee: ¥500

Location: Joumyouan (Asahioka 3-5-1, Asahikawa)

Contact for Reservation : 0166-55-7156 (Ogawa)



旭

October 2024 Calendar EVENTS IN ASAHIKAWA

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5 Takasu Marche
6	7	8	9	10	11 FUN FRIDAY Afternoon & Evening	12 Start of Kamui Gondoride
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Start of Trick or Treat Mulch Making Class End of Kamui Gondoride	21	22	23	24	25 FUN FRIDAY Afternoon Only	26
27 Hougecha-kai	28	29	30	31 End of Trick or Treat		

NOTICE: Unless specified otherwise, most events will be conducted in Japanese.

Life in Asahikawa

Availing the Asahikawa International Center (AIC) Part 1

By John Mabilangan



The Asahikawa International Center is The center serves as a base for promoting multiculturalism in the community and advancing internationalization across the region. As a meeting point of foreign culture, this space offers local citizens, as well as foreign residents and visitors, the opportunity to interact and exchange experiences.

What's in the Center?

The center houses three organizations:

- **Asahikawa International/City Relations Division**
 - The main duty of the International/City Relations Division is to facilitate exchange with the sister cities and friendship cities of Asahikawa.
- **Asahikawa International Committee**
 - The Asahikawa International Committee (AIC) was formed to promote international exchange between Asahikawa residents and foreign residents at a grassroots level.
- **Asahikawa JICE Desk**
 - A Coordinator for International Cooperation from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is posted here. Aside from offering training courses for representatives from developing nations, the officer is involved in recruitment for the overseas senior volunteer program and youth cooperation group, as well as staff development in northern Hokkaido through providing lectures on development education support activities.

These organizations, in their own way, contribute to the internationalization of Asahikawa.

What Is There To Do in the Center?

In addition to providing a free study and cultural exchange space, the center hosts several events throughout the year to promote multiculturalism in Asahikawa. For instance, the Asahikawa International Committee offers many cultural events for both foreigners and local residents to experience, such as multicultural exchanges (friendship parties), English conversation tables (Fun Friday), cooking classes, Japanese culture experience events, and many more! Come check out the center's webpage (see pg 1) for events and experiences by the AIC!



To be continued...

A Baby Boomer Learns English

Episode 6: Findings From My German Learning Experience (1991-1993)

Written by Noriaki Gentsu



With my wife Rumiko at Neuschwanstein Castle, Germany (1994).

(Continued from Episode 5)

Introduction

In the 1990s, I learned and used German while living in Germany. In this reflection, I will share my experiences and findings related to learning German as my second foreign language.

Learning a Second Foreign Language

“Where did you learn German?” was one of the most frequently asked questions from the Germans I spoke with while living there in the 1990s. When asked, I would reply, “I studied it during my student years, but I need to learn it more in my life here.” This is easier said than done. My path was not as straightforward as I thought it would be. I will reflect on how the path looked during those days, along with the insights I carry with me today.

Repeating Limited Number of Scenarios

Firstly, it is about the value of memorizing the most frequently needed key topics. Every time I drove, mainly while driving for 20 minutes each to and from my office, I used to listen to a tape containing basic German expressions for 110 scenarios. For example, consider No.110, the topic would be read in Japanese “When you

borrow a telephone,” followed by the key sentence “Can I borrow your telephone?” in both Japanese and German. Then came a set of dialogues with four or five sentences. After listening to it, say, 100 times, I was able to overlap my speech over the tape, which is now commonly referred to as “shadowing.”

While at home, I would refer to the textbook where extended applications on this scenario were given. After about one year of continuing this study method, I gradually found myself able to express my thoughts easily in German when faced with similar situations I practiced on the tape.

I found ways to put my German to good use. I enjoyed speaking German with Jutta, my friend in my apartment building. I also practiced ordering at restaurants, complementing my partner’s good shots on the golf course in Celle (where I socialized with more locals from various communities), and even shopping for specific cheeses and hams from a variety of options at the nearby supermarket.

I believe this change in me was caused by repeating the frequently used expressions,

which anchored these fundamental phrases in my brain's language network. I believe this network is in different parts of the brain from my native language, Japanese, which remained inactive during this practice. In this sense, I felt like I was thinking in German.

However, this kind of method—whether using a tape or an online platform widely available today—has its limitations because it primarily involves responding to predetermined and limited conditions which doesn't necessarily enhance your ability to create your own statements for communication with others.

Creating Sentences in German

Secondly, it is about how I went beyond the limited expressions covered by the 110 scenarios on my tape. I had to develop my own method for crafting German messages, enabling me to share stories about my childhood, family, things in Japan, and other topics with my German neighbors.

I would first think in English and then substitute each word with its German equivalent. I used to carry a pocket-sized Langenscheidts English-German bilingual dictionary wherever I went in order to find the German equivalent of the English word I had in mind. Over time, I needed it less frequently and was eventually able to speak without going through English once I had memorized the necessary German vocabulary.

Likewise, I encountered instances where Germans spoke English as their second language. For example, my German colleagues in our Peine office often spoke English incorporating German grammar and syntax. When Hendrik (my friend Irmtraud's son) at 10 years old asked me questions in English, he would sometimes switch between English to German or even blend the two.

Such experiences make me believe that the language networks for German and English are more closely related to each other than Japanese. This suggests that disregarding Japanese language network, or skipping any of its translation process, is a key to efficiently creating sentences in English or in other similar languages.

As such, while in Germany, I tried to read all kinds of information materials in German to increase my vocabulary while memorizing their English counterparts. This method has worked well for me.

Anticipating Information Flow

Finally, it is about how I managed crucial information that needed to be instantly understood in German, bypassing my usual English-to-German mental translation process I used in creating German messages.

This information includes traffic updates and weather forecasts from my car radio, as well as train station announcements. I've observed that it becomes easier once I grasp the fixed rules governing the order of the information I hear.

Consider this example: When receiving traffic updates, it typically starts with the highway number, followed by the location and direction of the traffic jam, and finally, the duration of the jam in kilometers. Similarly, when there's a platform change for my train from the originally assigned platform, I only need to anticipate my train number and the new platform. I don't need to hear all the details.

In other words, the word order in both German and English is significant. When we read and listen in these languages, we anticipate words in a specific syntactical order (subject, verb, object, etc.). I believe that excluding Japanese language patterns may be beneficial when reading and listening in English and German because Japanese word order can be flexible and potentially disruptive to your intended communication.

Thinking in English

As mentioned above, you will notice that my three findings all suggest the importance of "thinking in English" or disregarding Japanese language patterns while practicing English or German. I believe this is because the language networks for German and English are more closely related to each other than either is to Japanese, and that disregarding the Japanese

language is key to efficiently creating sentences in English or other similar languages. That leaves the issue of what to do when we live in Japan and have fewer opportunities to use these languages.

Maintaining Languages from Home

So, what can we do while living in Japan? Contrary to popular belief, it may not always require living in a foreign country where your target language is spoken. Personally, I utilize numerous internet resources to maintain and improve my foreign language abilities.

For instance, I watch YouTube news programs where I'm already familiar with the background story, allowing me to anticipate the upcoming discussions. Interestingly, during this process, there's no mental room for thinking in Japanese; my thoughts are solely in English or German, the languages used in those programs.

From my experience, I can tell two things in regard to maintaining my language skills:

Firstly, when I was residing in Germany, I frequently noticed a significant decline in my English and German proficiency every time I traveled to Japan for business.

During my time in Japan, I wouldn't use English or German. It's remarkable how even a brief absence from practicing a foreign language can have an impact.

Secondly, after decades of retirement in my isolated village, I was disappointed to find myself unable to communicate smoothly with one of my former colleagues in Peine, Germany, when he called to greet me for the New Year.

So, I contacted the Asahikawa International Center to enlist as a member and started attending the Fun Fridays program they offer there. Connecting with fellow English learners and coordinators, I have maintained my motivation for learning English and my "thinking in English" skill. Lately, I've also begun an online German course provided by Deutsche Welle, a German broadcaster like NHK in Japan.

Learning foreign languages is my lifetime challenge to widen my perspective and see the world through different lenses. My cross-cultural journey still goes on.

To be continued in the December issue.



The grammar book, handy Langenscheidts dictionary and conversation textbook for my German learning.



In my office at the Audio Video Technology Centre, Peine (1991).



A party with my colleagues at a local restaurant near Peine (1991).



Joining a drinking contest for “Schnaps”, a German alcoholic spirit (1991).



The seven-floor apartment where I resided. The street in Lehrte looks unchanged after three decades .
(Source Google Maps)

AIC BULLETIN BOARD



Need Assistance?

If you ever find yourself in need of assistance, know that the Hokkaido Foreign Resident Support Center is there for you! They are able to provide you with consultation services in various languages (Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Russian, Indonesian, Thai, Nepalese, Burmese) on residence procedures, employment, medical care, welfare, childbirth, childcare, education, and more for FREE! Call them at **0116-200-9595** or go to: www.hiecc.or.jp/soudan

Come to the Asahikawa International Lounge! We have...

a free cultural exchange lounge and study space



library with book and DVD rentals



The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has free Wi-Fi available for public use. If you reside in Asahikawa, registration for a user card is required. Please feel free to come by anytime, as well as check out some of the other services and activities available at the Asahikawa International Center!

Spread the Word!

Contribute to the AIC newsletter and share any interesting information you may have with other readers. You may write on any topic including: items to buy/shell, offers for culture/language exchange, or write an essay about your life in Asahikawa or your hometown. The article should not be profit-related! Please send your submissions to us at the AIC.

The AIC offers many services to make your life in Asahikawa more enjoyable. Here are just a few:

Volunteer Guide: Volunteers are registered to help translate and interpret.

Event Volunteer: The AIC plans many exciting events throughout the year, such as Friendship Parties.

Homestay: Families are registered to welcome you into their homes for an overnight stay or just an afternoon visit.

Why not become a volunteer and help plan these events?



Asahikawa International Committee
 Asahikawa International Center Feeeal Asahikawa 7F, 1-jo-dori 8-chome, Asahikawa 070-0031
 TEL: (0166)25-7491 FAX: (0166)23-4924
 E-mail: cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp

Follow us on social media for latest updates and upcoming events!

X (formerly twitter)



Facebook



Instagram



The opinions expressed in the essays are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the AIC or the City of Asahikawa.