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(1) Special Series on Community Interpretation**■ Collaborative Project of Municipalities and International Associations for the Promotion of Activities for the Training of Community Interpretations -To Aim for an Osaka where Foreigners can Live at Ease**

In March 2011, Osaka Prefecture came out with the “Osaka Prefectural Internationalization Strategy” to strengthen the global competitiveness of Osaka. Based on this, OFIX and Osaka Prefecture have designed the “Osaka Prefectural Internationalization Strategy Action Program” in October of the same year. The two main pillars of this program are “Training of global human resources” and “Establishing an environment for the admission of foreigners”, which are being undertaken with emphasis.

At OFIX, we are putting emphasis especially on “Establishing an environment for the admission of foreigners” and have endeavored in training and utilizing community interpretation/translation volunteers who could be active in the Osaka Prefecture region.

In 2012, we have implemented projects, in collaboration with municipalities and international associations, that would train and promote interpretation and translation volunteers who could be active in the Osaka Prefecture to strengthen the information dissemination and consultation services of the municipalities and basic local governments.

Specifically, aside from the events directly conducted by OFIX, we have also outsourced, if not collaborated with the international associations and administrative offices of 6 regions in Osaka Prefecture in conducting Community Interpretation and Translation Trainings.

To be able to integrate the needs of each community into the training content, we have discussed and collaborated with each other, and provided a venue where community interpretation volunteers can learn how to conduct oneself and the necessary knowledge for interpretation through interpretation roleplay and actual translation based on the current needs of foreign residents in each community.

As a result of that, not only could OFIX share the multilingual support needs each community, it was able to discover and train new volunteers who will take on the work. In every training, we were able to get good comments from participants such as, “it was very meaningful”, “I would like to continue to be active as a community interpretation and translation volunteer”.

Also, at OFIX, as a related activity, we are holding community interpretation and translation supporter meetings and study groups that would tackle certain fields for those who completed the training program so the volunteers can create a network for themselves. We are also holding interpretation and translation level check (details on page 3) and making a Community Interpretation Volunteer –an Interview Guide-, and promoting complex Community Interpretation and Translation Volunteer Trainings aside from the trainings in the community.

In 2013, we intend to continue to promote projects aimed at the promotion of multilingual support in the whole Osaka region and we hope for your active participation.

【 Community Interpretation and Translation Training Implementation List】

(Training Directly Implemented by OFIX)

- Community Interpretation Trainin 3 days ×2 courses

(Name of Association Training was Outsourced)

- Neyagawa city International Exchange & Friendship Association 8 days
- Tondabayashi Intercultural Communication Center 3 days ×2 courses
- Minoh Association For Global Awareness 2 days

(Name of Municipality who Jointly Sponsored)

- Kanan Board of Education 2 days
- Sakai City 1 day
- Ikeda City 2 days



【Contribution from an Expert】

■ Community Interpretation

Multilingual Community Interpretation Network Joint Representative Minako Iida

Do you know the word Community Interpretation?

Community interpretation is the general term used for interpretation conducted to support foreign residents with difficulties in daily communication because of language barriers. Generally it is bundled with a wide variety of interpretation situations, such as administration of justice, medical treatment, education, welfare, and immigration control. However, the definition differs according to the country and region and as to what the role that community interpretation should bear is still being debated.

There are different situations of Community Interpretation. For example, there is a medical examination at a hospital, a meeting between parents and teachers at school, medical check-up of a baby at a health center, and then there is also the investigation of suspected criminals by the police. The Community Interpreter must not only have the linguistic ability and interpretation skills, but also needs to know the necessary technical terms when interpreting for those various cases. Furthermore, the content of the interpretation may also mean the life of the foreigner client. Just hearing about the sickness that you need to tell the client or the content of a DV or abuse case can be painful. When interpreting for these kinds of situations, the interpreter may also suffer in some cases so self-care and consultation with the interpretation coordinator is very important.

Also, the targets of Community Interpretation are people who have problems and need to communicate with professionals to solve their problems. Living in a foreign country alone can make you feel uneasy, what more if you have problems with living. There are many things that professionals do not notice, such as the special problems of foreigners, the background of their life, and important matters (religion, values, etc.) and may see the demands of foreigners as selfishness. In those situations, in order for the interpreter to promote understanding, there are times he or she has to give background information. However, if this is overdone, the interpreter may rule over the communication of the professional and the client and there is the danger of the interpreter unconsciously manipulating the communication.

Interpretation requires accurately interpreting the content of what is being said, but

the interpreter also takes a role of a mediator between the two parties. This does not happen in all community interpretation situations, but this is an interpreter technique peculiar to personal assistance situations, such as medical treatment,



welfare, and education. In a personal assistance situation, while the support specialist and client communicate to solve a problem while building trust with each other. The community interpreter must not only accurately interpret and aid in the communication, but must also aid in the building of trust between the professional and the client. Because by building trust between the professional and the client will create a willingness for both the professional and the client to work on solving problem and thus find the best solution for the problem.

A situation opposite to that is legal interpretation or situation where both parties are opposing each other. In this situation, the opinion of both parties are opposing and a third party judges or arbitrates. Interpretation in this kind of situation the greatest goal is to interpret information as accurately as possible so accuracy is strictly called for. Moreover, since both opinions are opposed to each other, neutrality is also required. It is also necessary to have a moderator so that the interpreter can concentrate on interpretation only. In this way, there are various situations of community interpretation and the role and interpretation skills needed are different. An interpreter must learn the knowledge and skills suitable for those situations.

■ Community Interpretation and Translation Volunteer Level Check

The Volunteer system of OFIX is divided into several classifications depending on the activity it covers. One them id the Language Volunteer, of which we have numerous requests throughout the year.

We receive a wide variety of requests from events and tourism to administration interpretation. The need for “Community Interpretation and Translation”, which includes administration interpretation, is especially growing every year.

The range of activities of Language Volunteers is expanding. It is not limited to international exchanges, but also includes institutions providing consultations to women and children, schools, municipal offices, etc.

Based on this condition, OFIX has aimed for the training of Community Interpretation and Translation Volunteers from 2011 and conducted Community Interpretation and Translation Training together with the municipalities and international associations of each region.

Also as a result of the training, foreign residents of Osaka Prefecture and many language volunteers, who have realized how a Community Interpretation and Translation Volunteer should act and its role, now wish to take part in Community Interpretation and Translation activities.

However, at the same time, some volunteers also doubt whether they could be of any help with the current language ability.

Given that background, OFIX holds a "Community Interpretation and translation Volunteer Level Check" so that language volunteers would know which activities they can take part in given their language capability.

The Level Check consists of 4 parts:

interpretation, translation, technical knowledge and interview. This is not to check only the language capability, but also to guide the language volunteers as to what activities they would be able to participate in based on their knowledge and experience on community interpretation and translation and preferred activities.

On the day of the check, there are probably some volunteers who could not perform as well as they usually do, or some who get problems from fields that are not their specialty, but the Level Check is only for personal reference with regards to one's activities as a community interpreter/translator and we would be happy if the community volunteers would continue to walk together with OFIX in further learning and understanding about community interpretation and translation activities.

【2012 Community Interpretation and translation Level Check】

Date: March 1, 2013 (Friday)

Morning Session 10:00-12:00

Afternoon Session 14:00-16:00

Venue: My Dome Osaka Meeting Rooms 3-6

(2) Activity Report

■ Philippine Consulate-sponsored Japanese Civil Law Seminar for Filipinos

A Japanese Civil Law Seminar and Consultation event sponsored by the Philippine Consulate General and co-sponsored by OFIX was held at the Sacra Famiglia Catholic Church in Umeda.

The first seminar was held on February 17 (Sun.) with Mr. Manabe of the Gyosei-Shoshi Lawyers Association giving a lecture on the topic Marriage, divorce, inheritance, naturalization, adoption, etc., also including the viewpoint of residential status. After the lecture a Q&A portion was held.

The 2nd seminar was held on March 10 (Sun.). The 1st portion was a lecture by Prof. Sakai of Morinomiya University of Medical Sciences on the topic of Social Welfare. The second portion was a lecture Rengo-Osaka Heartful Union Chief Secretary

Sakai on the topic of labor problems. Both lectures were very lively and ended in the middle of Q&A.

The third seminar was a Consultation Session where different booths with consultants for specific problems were set up. Ms. Kitada, the Chief Consultant of OFIX was in charge of consultations regarding daily living, Rengo-Osaka Heartful Union Chief Secretary Sakai was in charge of labor problems, Atty. Koshio and Atty. Hirokawa of Osaka Lawyers' Association were in charge of general matters concerning civil law, Mr. Manabe, Mr. Sugano and Mr. Okada of the Gyosei-Shoshi Lawyers Association handled residential status related problems. Many Filipinos came for consultation making the event a success.



(3) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

■ Interpreting

There are times when foreigners who cannot communicate well in Japanese must somehow get

their thoughts across especially when they go to City Hall or administrative offices. They cannot

always depend on their friends or family who know Japanese to come along with them. In those situations, you can avail of the telephone interpretation service of the Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents. The service is free. The service uses a Trio-phone system, which allows the foreigner, the OIS staff and the interpreter to speak on the phone with each other. Since interpretation is being done by phone, advance and technical interpretation may be difficult, but interpretation of communication with daily transactions is possible. Languages available are English, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese, Filipino, and Japanese. Service hours are from Monday to Friday, from 9

am to 5:30 pm. At OIS, aside from providing information and giving consultations, we also provide interpretation to help foreigners live at ease in Osaka.

©Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents (Mon-Fri, not open on weekends and national holidays) (Hours 9:00-17:30)
Tel (direct line) 06-6941-2297
E-mail: jouhou-c@ofix.or.jp
Languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese

(4) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

■ **“Philippine English”**

Hello, everyone!! This is your OFIX International Coordinator, Alvin. Is everyone doing well? Just a little more and it would be Spring already. I hope it soon gets warm. In this issue, I would be talking about an interesting topic, “Philippine English”.

In the Philippines, English is used as a second language.



Many people from Asian countries come to the Philippines to study English. However, in the Philippines, we have “Philippine English”. I suppose everyone would ask, “what is Philippine English?” If you don’t know

British or American English very well, you would not be able to tell the difference. So what can you call Philippine English? Let me give some examples.

First, on a lexical level, there are words that are used only in the Philippines, like “Comfort Room” or CR for short. This is the toilet in the Philippines. If you are looking for a toilet in the Philippines, people usually ask, “Where is the CR?” There are many original words like this in the Philippines. For example, there are the words “carnapper” (car thief) and “calling

card” (business card). There are also words that have a different meaning from the original meaning. “Salvage” is one of them. This word means “to save”, but in the Philippines, it means the opposite, “to (kidnap and) kill”.

Not only words are different. Take this sentence as an example. “Please open/close the light”. In British or American English, you say “Please turn on/off the light”. The reason for this difference is because it was translated directly from Filipino.

If you would analyze the English of the Filipino, you will also find a difference in the accent and grammar as compared with British or American English. The reason why I’m writing about this is not to look down on Philippine English or say bad things about it. I would just like everyone to understand that language is living and that they change as the people who speak it change. The Japanese language is not an exception. For example, the deletion of “ra” from verbs of possibility (taberareru→tabereru) is considered grammatically incorrect, but it is being used daily.

There is also “Japanese English”. It is now known as “poorly pronounced broken English”. The English ability of the Japanese people is low as compared with its Asian counterparts. So the Japanese government is putting effort in changing English language education in Japan. And whatever anyone says, language will change. It won’t come soon, but someday a “New Japanese English” will be born.

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