

Interview

★★★

English as an invitation to a world of positivity

特別編の最後は「2-minute Speech Exercise」(2・4週目号)の筆者、田中亜由美さん。幼いころから英語が好きだったという田中さんは、教える仕事に就いてから、英語という言語に一層魅了されていると話す。田中さんにとって英語の魅力とは――？

Ayumi Tanaka radiates positive energy, and it's hard to imagine her ever getting in a funk. Tanaka attributes a large part of that good vibe to her English prowess.

"I was never the type to aspire to be like everyone else, and English was my passport to being different and individualistic, and to feeling confident about who I am."

Tanaka is a teacher at CEL (Creative English Learning) English Solutions, a school geared toward qualification for Tour-Guide Interpreter, Eiken 1 and improvement of TOEIC scores and overall English proficiency. She has a reputation for taking a clear, simple approach to English learning, with a knack for comprehensive teaching at whatever level her students happen to be. From raw beginners to seasoned learners, Tanaka's students find her classes inspiring and easy to understand.

Tanaka grew up in Yokohama, the famed international port city that has been welcoming foreigners since the mid-19th century.

"Once, when I was a child I was watching an ocean liner at the harbor. A procession of foreign people got out and started walking along the pier and the scene was somehow riveting. I realized that beyond the ocean was a whole other world, one that I had never seen. And suddenly, I wanted to go out there myself."

It helped that Tanaka's grand-

mother ran a boarding house that housed some foreign students. Whenever she went over, "there were people from other countries to talk to and make friends with."

Still, Tanaka didn't study English until her first year of junior high — just like everyone else in the Japanese school system at the time.

"But right away, I wanted to be really good at it," she says. "I started listening to the English conversation programs on NHK Radio every day and never missed a program. In those days, Marsha Krakower was the teacher and I became an ardent fan. I tried to say out loud sentences she spoke."

Later, Tanaka met her idol in person, when she tried out for a "port guide" job sponsored by the city of Yokohama.

"Marsha Krakower was the person interviewing the candidates! I was so thrilled."

Tanaka loves English as a language.

"I love Japanese too, but English enables me to have a different perspective on the world, and to expand my horizons. And the pronunciations of the words are beautiful to listen to. Overall, I remain just as enamored with the language as my first year of studying it," she says, and adds, "My feeling is that English never betrays you. If you keep at it and remain dedicated, I guarantee that it will turn your life around for the better." (Kaori Shoji)

radiates ～を放つ。funk 落ち込み。prowess 優れた能力。geared toward ～～を対象とした。knack 才能。seasoned 熟練の。procession 行列。riveting 心奪われる。ardent 熱心な。enamored 夢中になって。betrays ～を裏切る。

田中 亜由美 (たなか あゆみ)

神奈川県横浜市生まれ。上智大学外国語学部卒業。ペンシルベニア州立テンブル大学大学院教育学修士課程TESOL専攻。企業や大学にて役員秘書、通訳などを経験。1997年より英検、TOEIC、TOEFL、英会話などの指導経験を積む。現在、CEL英語ソリューションズにて、英検1級一次試験対策コース、通訳ガイド一次対策英語コースを担当。著書に『最短合格! 英検®1級リスニング問題完全制覇』(ジャパンタイムズ出版)など。



COURTESY OF AYUMI TANAKA

Words to live by

Happiness is not a goal. It's a by-product of a life well lived.

フランクリン・ルーズベルト大統領の妻で人権活動家のエレノア・ルーズベルトの名言です。幸せは求めるものではなく、心豊かに充実した日々を過ごす中で自然に訪れるもの、そう信じています。

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お問い合わせ:

販売: Tel. 050-3646-9188 Fax. 03-3452-1298

Email: jtsales@japantimes.co.jp

広告: Tel. 050-3646-8421

Email: jtad@japantimes.co.jp

編集: Email: alpha@japantimes.co.jp