

Topics

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(Article by Ron)

Useful Studying Tips from the EEC Teachers

Scott WEBBER: To get better at any activity or skill requires practice and time. Learning the English language is no different. For some of us, time is in short supply. One way to improve your English is to read English books and/or articles in our free time. There are many graded reader books available on the internet. One such online resource is called *ReadTheory.org*. This website has reading material for all levels of ability and it's free. So, if you want to improve your English, one way is to read a lot of English books or articles.



Akira NAKAYAMA: This book, "*Sounding Natural in English*" (by Kathleen Yamane, Hituzi Syobo), is practical, insightful, and immediately useful for Japanese users of English. It's an essential resource for both students and teachers to correct incorrect usages and lexical errors. I am sure that we can brush up our English after reading this book. (Japanese version is also available.)



Julia KAWAMOTO: When I was asked to give some useful tips on studying English, there is one thing that popped out - While watching a YouTube video in English, do some shadowing. You can also use the subtitles/closed caption to see the words on the screen. Of course, it is not a perfect device to capture all the speaker's words, but close enough. There are all kinds of videos and different types of creators that you can enjoy. Not only would it be challenging to do shadowing, but it would also help you to know the current lingo and expressions.



The ones that I like to watch that would be good for you to start is *Fairyland Cottage* (if you are into zero waste, veganism, and sustainable living), *Clean My Space* (her videos are about cleaning and organizing), and *Wolter's World* (he gives advice and tips on traveling). The reason why I chose these channels is that they are very easy to understand for Japanese listeners.

Good luck with your English studying journey.

Simple Things to do for a Better Travel Experience

- by Ron Murphy

I have travelled in 57 countries, and students sometimes ask where the best place to go is. My response? I suggest a best place. But I have suggestions of things to do that will make their visit more memorable, wherever they go. These suggestions are, admittedly, unusual, but all have served me well on my travels as easy and cheap ways to experience the local culture as the locals themselves experience it. Here are my suggestions:

1. Get a haircut. Cut shops in foreign countries are fascinating. Procedures, tools, sequences, and service all are likely to differ from what you are used to. Bright, modern shops might offer an interesting experience, but I recommend shops that seem family-owned, and not in main tourist areas.



Indian haircut

2. Ask directions. When I first came to Japan, my Japanese was enough to ask simple questions. So, every day, I asked a local person downtown, "*Sumimasen, Iyo Ginko doko desu ka?*" Of course, I knew where the bank was! But it created a chance to interact with a local person. Sometimes, we had a short chat. It helped me gain confidence speaking with Japanese people. I also did this in China and South Korea. Some people responded with "No English!" and kept walking. But others were helpful and talkative. Don't be shy!



3. Take a local bus or train one or two stops. Then return to where you started. Observe everything closely! Again, proce-

dures and behaviors are likely different than in Japan. But make sure it is a local bus or train - not an express!

4. Go to a movie theater. These are especially amazing (like many things) in developing countries.

Don't go to watch only the movie. Go to watch the locals watch the movie. Also, check out the snacks, toilets, behaviors, etc.



Pakistan village

In all these cases, it is good to prepare a few words and phrases in the local language. For example, on a bus: "Can I sit?" or "Is the next stop *Gortov*?" At a theater: "Famous movie?" or "That was a good movie." Haircut: "This much off" or "I like this style." These are all conversation-starters that have worked for me in many countries. Be polite, friendly, and natural.

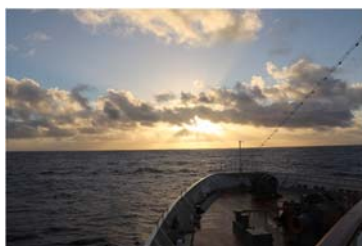
The purpose is to experience the local culture as the locals experience it. Asking questions or doing minor small-talk, politely, are ways to make a connection with a local. The things that happen after your first question or comment in the local language can last 30 seconds, or 30 minutes. In my experience, these encounters have always felt authentic. Tourist spots are interesting, but they are full of tourists. Locals don't often go to such places. Try to do what the locals do - see a movie, get a haircut, take a local train or bus. Be careful, pay attention, and don't be shy.

Reports from Aidai Students Back from Overseas

My Experience on the SWY

Hello this is Soichiro Hirai from Faculty of Agriculture. I'd like to introduce my experience in a program which is promoted by the Japanese Cabinet Office on the ship Nippon maru.

The program name is "Ship for World Youth" (SWY). There were 120 Japanese participant youths and 120 overseas participant youths who are from 10 countries like Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, France, UK, Kenya, Mexico, Peru, and Sri Lanka. The destination was to Ensenada, Mexico via Hawaii. The route was only for this year. That route changes every year. We can join that program once in our life. So, I felt I was lucky because I have never been to Hawaii and Mexico. What made this more exciting was that it was by ship, not by airplane.



Sun rise view from Nippon maru

Before I could join that program, I took some tests and interviews at Ehime Prefecture Office and at Osaka City University. First of all, I wrote an application to the Japanese Cabinet Office. Then I took a test about each participant countries and wrote an essay. The interview wasn't difficult but because I was so nervous that I made it difficult than it should have been. At last I was interviewed based on my paper that I had submitted. My heart was about to pop out because I have never been interviewed in my life, however I could pass the test luckily.

Arre bhaiyaa aal izz well (All is well)

I was really excited to study and live in India for a long time, so I felt that I should prepare for Indian life. I decided to watch an Indian movie "3 Idiots (邦題: きっと、うまくいく)." This is a bit strange but it worked for me. Then I really became more and more interested in this culture that I soon discovered Punjabi dance. This is an Indian dance.

The night I arrived in India, it was at midnight. It is a bad time because it is not safe at night. Men kept on approaching me, I felt that they would attack or kidnap me. I was really scared that they might have some ulterior motive. However, it was the first and last time I felt this scared.

I went to Jawaharlal Nehru University which is one of the best universities in India. It's in the capital, Delhi, where thousands of students from different part of India and the world come to pursue their dreams. At that time, there was a big protest for three months because of the raise of the tuition. This was problematic because every day was a holiday for me.



At Taj Mahal

I talked about Ehime prefecture to overseas participants using orange jelly and "Botchan" style clothes on the ship. There were three members from Ehime, so it was easy to explain about it.



Painted skull face on Mexican night (me in the center)

We ate lots of gorgeous meals on the ship. I could eat soba, ramen, sushi in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It's particularly more delicious than to have it on land.

I learned about gender, feminism, vegan, Amazon rainforest and environment problem from these seminars on the ship. I haven't thought about gender and feminism because I have never seen it on the news on TV. So, I wanted to learn about it more after getting off the ship. I joined some more seminars and researched it after SWY. And also, I could think about my life like "What am I going to do after SWY", "What do I want to achieve in my life", and "What's my dream". I still have no answers, however, I got one thing, it is: because of SWY, these three letters were significant to me which is, "We will always continually connect with each other."

If you are interested in that program, please let me know. I'd like to talk it more.



SWY official webpage



- by Soichiro Hirai (Faculty of Agriculture)

I joined a cheap tour in Rishikesh which costs 1500 rupees (2200 yen). I met a guy from Assam. I spent a lot of time with him in India. He guided me to many places. He is a really crazy guy in a good way. He always suddenly calls me and takes me all over the place. One day I got a call from him to go to Assam on the next day, which is quite far from Delhi (more than 1500 km away!). It was a long trip but it turned out to be a great experience.



As I mentioned before I became interested in Punjabi dance. I was really surprised that most Indians can dance naturally and rhythmically. I noticed that there is a big difference between the Japanese and Indians. One example is there are many DJ parties in India compared to Japan. I wish there were as many here on campus. People seemed free and happy while dancing. There are many things in India that are great that I wish it was the same in here in Japan. So I encourage you to experience India like I did.



Lunchtime during Rishikesh Tour

- by Tatsuya Nakao (Faculty of Law & Letters)

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