

H.K. Cup English Program

‘Creative, high-caliber contest’

Comments by Timothy Wright,
Chief judge and professor of Otsu
Women's University

The competition featured a variety of topics, including many that focused on investment in Hong Kong and promoting tourism through social media.

In particular, I was deeply impressed by the overall abilities of our champion, Takahiro Mouri of the International Christian University. Mr. Mouri had an awesome delivery with near perfect inflection and speech dynamics that seemed almost those of a movie actor.

In addition, we also had the pleasure of hearing Sae Aoki of Waseda University give another beautiful speech, while Tsuyoshi Taniguchi of Keio University gave a brilliant oratorical rendition of his ideas for investment between Japan and Hong Kong.

Last, but not least, Yuma Takizawa gave a delightfully humorous speech, and also participated in by far the best Q-and-A session of this year's event on the subject of bringing udon to Hong Kong. All in all, it was a really creative and high-caliber contest.

If I might offer some earnest advice to future applicants, it would be to make sure that your content is as interesting to listen to and as logical as possible. Avoid giving recycled ideas or topics such as a talk limited to the discussion of dim sum or Hong Kong's "Million Dollar Night View." Why? Because we have already heard these themes hundreds of times before.

A further important piece of advice is this: When you speak, be as dynamic and as forceful as possible. Avoid mumbling your words or speaking in a flat, dull monotone voice.

Lastly, if you are lucky enough to reach the finals, memorize your speech accurately. Remember that you cannot win a speech or presentation contest if you need to read your script, or if you suddenly pause for several seconds to remember your lines.

In closing, my sincere congratulations to all 172 applicants and to our 15 finalists. And to all of you out there reading this, why don't you enter and take your own shot at the next Hong Kong Cup?

Presentation skills useful for youth entering job market

Opening remarks by Sally Wong,
Principal Hong Kong Economic and Trade Representative (Tokyo)

As the official representative office of the Hong Kong government in Japan, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office is most delighted to co-organize with The Japan News this English ambassador program for university students in Japan.

The purpose of the program is to enhance interest in and understanding of Hong Kong among young people in Japan, and to promote closer and deeper ties, friendship and mutual understanding between people of the two places.

Hong Kong and Japan have had a long tradition of exchange, cooperation and partnership. Hong Kong has always been and remains a friendly, welcoming and hospitable place for Japanese people and people from around the world. Hong Kong, a city with seven million people, takes up over 20 percent of the total food and agricultural exports of Japan and has been the largest market for such exports from Japan. Last year, around 820,000 Hong Kong people, or more than 1 in 9 persons in Hong Kong, visited Japan. These figures tell you something about our bilateral relationship.

The previous incarnation of this English program took the shape of a speech contest, which was held almost annually since 2007. This year, we decided to change the format to a presentation contest instead, as we believe that presentation skills may be more useful for young people entering the job market. We are glad to have received 172 entries from universities in

The Japan News

A proposal of a unique trip-organizing system won the Hong Kong Cup All Japan University Student Ambassadors English Program, an annual contest to choose students to serve as a bridge between Hong Kong and Japan.

The event, held earlier this month in Tokyo, changed its format this year from an English speech contest to a presentation contest given in the same language. The top four winners become "student ambassadors" and will be invited on a two-week Hong Kong tour.

International Christian University sophomore Takehiro Mouri won the top prize after fluently and confidently proposing a unique idea of launching an online trip organizing system to connect young people in Hong Kong and Japan.

"When I heard my name called [as the winner] I was happy, but I also wondered if I deserved this because the other finalists were great," Mouri said, referring to the other 14 students who took part in the contest at KDDI Hall



The Yomiuri Shimbun
Finalists,
judges and
representatives
gather for a
photo after the
contest on Jan.
10.

in Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo, on Jan. 10.

He added that he had made it to the final in the previous year's speech contest but had not won any prizes.

"This year, I chose a topic in my fa-

vorite field of business. Also, I repeatedly practiced to improve my gestures and control my speed when I am speaking," he said.

Tsuyoshi Taniguchi, a Keio Univer-

sity junior who placed second, proposed promotion of "urban agriculture" in Hong Kong, utilizing Japan's technology and experts to realize this.

"I guess that the success comes

Prizes awarded for creativity, humor

The Japan News

"As university students, we normally lack three things when we want to travel abroad. We lack the money, we lack the time, and then we lack the people to go traveling with."

So began the presentation titled "Advisa Trip — An Innovative Way to Connect Young People in Hong Kong and Japan" made by this year's winner Takehiro Mouri.

Saying he himself had faced those three obstacles when he wanted to visit Hong Kong, Mouri, a business major at International Christian University, explained his idea for an online trip organizing system during his six-minute presentation.

Under such a system, Mouri said, young Japanese who want to travel to Hong Kong form a small group through a trip organizing company, and the company assigns them an "adviser." The advisers are Hong Kong student interns who propose trip plans and provide local information based on the travelers' wishes, which they discover through frequent communication. In exchange, the advisers earn points they can later use to fund their trips to Japan.

When young people in Hong Kong want to visit Japan, the system works the other way around.

In his presentation, Mouri called this idea "an innovative way" to encourage "communication between young people in Hong Kong and Japan and exploration between different cultures that provides life-changing experiences and chances to gain international work experience" even for young people without money, time and travel companions.

Prof. Timothy Wright of Otsu Women's University, who served as the chief judge, praised his performance, saying it was "dynamic and logical" and the content was "original and creative."

The runner-up was Tsuyoshi Taniguchi, who proposed the promotion of "urban agriculture" in Hong Kong through the establishment of roof gardens on top of buildings, indoor city gardens and other means.

Saying that he carried his chopsticks around during his trip to Hong Kong, which has a rich and attractive gourmet culture, Taniguchi asked



The Yomiuri Shimbun
Takehiro Mouri
gives a presentation
at KDDI Hall in
Tokyo on Jan. 10.

the judges and audience, "Did you know that the food self-sufficiency rate in Hong Kong is only 1 percent?" at the beginning of his presentation titled "The Sun Lighting a Dragon."

"People tend to think it's impossible to do farming in Hong Kong, but why not use the huge developed area?" He went on to explain his idea for promoting urban agriculture.

Taniguchi suggested inviting Japanese experts with knowledge of the required technology as Japan's produce is "highly recognized for its safety" and the country has the capabilities needed to support urban agriculture as seen in past trials.

The audience, including this year's winner, was captivated by his presentation, which was delivered with passion and a smile. "I have learned how effective it is to put some humor in a presentation by watching the vegetable presentation [by Taniguchi] and the udon one [by Fighting Spirit Prize winner Yuma Takizawa]," Mouri recalled after the event.

Second runner-up Sae Aoki also made audience smile when she told an anecdote that captures the warmth of Hong Kongers. She tried to order at a teahouse in Hong Kong by giving the server a handwritten note containing the name of the dishes written in Chinese characters, since she could not pronounce them. At first Aoki thought the server looked angry, but he returned with a note containing a cute drawing of a heart with an arrow. "You will be fascinated by those gaps ... I never got tired of Hong Kong and still want to visit again and discover something new," Aoki said, concluding her presentation.

In his presentation, Takizawa introduced himself as the university's "Udon Club" member and proposed opening inaniwa udon restaurants in Hong Kong, showing data to support his idea. "I wanted to make no boring speech, but an entertaining and funny one," he said.

Ties between H.K., Tokyo transforming Asian culture

Guest Speech by Yusaku Imamura,
Director, Tokyo Wonder Site

I am the founding director of Tokyo Wonder Site, an art center. It was established in 2001 by the Tokyo metropolitan government under the leadership of former Gov. [Shintaro] Ishihara. It is a platform for nurturing emerging artists, international cultural exchange and encouraging experimental projects.

When it was established, it had a completely new concept and many people did not understand how it worked. Everybody

thinks "museums" and "art galleries" are the only places for art.

Upon entering the new millennium, however, many alternative spaces and art centers have been established in Asia. Currently Hong Kong is constructing a new art institution, the biggest art museum in Asia. It is called "M+" and is due to open in 2017. It is like MOMA in New York and Tate Modern in London, but it aims for something more. It tries to redefine visual culture.

Other than M+, Hong Kong is also developing new creative institutions. One is PMQ, former Police Married Quarters, completed last year. It is a "home to 100+ local young creators," a new design hub.

Another is CPS, Central Police Station Revitalization Project. The project aims to transform a unique cluster of historically significant buildings in Hong Kong into a center for heritage, contemporary arts and leisure for the public to enjoy. It is expected to open in 2016.

People would think Asian art is based on Asian history or traditional Asian identity. But how does contemporary art incorporate traditional art? Some very interesting artists are working with new identities and horizons.

Pak Sheung Chuen is now one of the most famous Hong Kong artists with many prestigious prizes. He shows us a slightly skewed vision of our daily life. He rented an apartment in Busan, South Korea, and collected his breath in transparent plastic bags until they filled the entire space. It shows us "unseen" something in our daily life.

Lee Kit paints designs which are usually used for tablecloths or curtains on canvas and actually used in daily life. He says that he is a painter not because he paints beautiful objects, but because of his activity.

Tsang Kin-wah paints moving images of

flowers or arabesques — by using text — on the wall. His work shows that our world is made of two sides — the beautiful and the bitter — if you look carefully.

These three artists deal with ways of thinking, which I think represents an Asian approach, and shows us another possibility and alternative vision of artwork.

As director of Tokyo Wonder Site, I send Japanese artists and curators overseas and invite their Asian counterparts to Japan. Tokyo has started to collaborate with Hong Kong, Seoul, Beijing, Taipei, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh, Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Yangon and more.

Tokyo will host the 2020 Olympic Games. What should be done for 2020? Culture is one of three pillars of the Olympics. They are Sports, Culture and Education. Culture is not decoration or just additive.

The Olympics will give us a great opportunity for collaboration and partnership under the vision of humanity. Collaboration between Hong Kong and Japan is a very important key to developing a new cultural platform in Asia.

I hope you, the next generation, will create new bridges and platforms for 2020 and beyond. Our next collaboration might lead us even to an Asian Union. Our future depends on how we act now. Today is the birthplace of the future.