

Conversation Leaders: Jon, Libby

Students: Young hye, Hyun ju & Marie (Korean) Yoko, Yuka (Japanese), Jing sun, and Rainbow (new)(Chinese)

Rainbow filled out one of our new-student forms and made herself a name placard. I didn't find any blank GPLC forms but we will sort that out later.

Something New:

1. Jon distributed a set of papers showing the stress Americans use in speech to emphasize the important words. In Korea, the same thing is done so those students were aware of the practice. Yoko said after class that in Japan, every word is spoken with the same emphasis so she thinks that by listening for the stressed words as people speak, she may be better able to grasp what is being said.
2. We quickly ran through several irregular plurals, such as sheep, deer, children, women, mice, etc. and found the students were all familiar with the correct usage.

Discussion:

Using a list of questions about "appearances," we discussed the things we notice about people and those which matter to us. Young hye told us about her semi-permanent eyebrows which was a revelation to most of us. Hyun ju related how in her college years it was popular for Korean young women to use very dark makeup and brown lipstick, with shadows/lines on their faces to make them look less round. We talked a bit about how fashion changes. Tattoos are not popular in Korea or China at all. Men with tattoos cannot perform their required military service and there are penalties for not serving. Only gang members and Mafia have tattoos. In China, Rainbow told us, young girls sometimes have small tattoos on the back of the hand. Fashionable clothing is much less expensive in America than in their countries.

We discussed airlines and the discomfort of being seated beside someone who overflows their seat and what airlines could do about it. In Korea, we were told, it is common for people to greet someone they know with what to us would be an insult, such as, "You look so fat! Are you off your diet?" This did not seem to be the case in China or Japan.

Notes:

I was able to bring Yuka into the discussion twice by calling on her by name and asking a question. She told me after class she didn't understand most of what was being said. I told her that her answers were very good and that it was my fault for speaking too fast...as usual.

The students helped to clean up the coffee cups and put the tables and chairs back in place before saying good-bye and leaving.

Reflection: Usually I send the students the topic of discussion several days ahead of class with some questions they can think about in planning their discussion points. Since I hadn't done so this time, they were not really prepared for the topic, which was a bit confusing. Not my best attempt, I admit.

If we have enough volunteers and enough students, it would be best to have two discussion groups, as we'd agreed upon.

NEW: Yoko, Marie, Jing sun and Rainbow all expressed an interest in evening classes. I told them anyone could attend any or all classes and promised we would notify them when we had a date and time for evening classes.