



International Relations SAIJO

Vol.26
March 2020

Contents

SIEA General Term Meeting	1
2020-2021 SIEA Membership Recruitment	1
2020-2021 Project Proposal Submissions	1
International Exchange Café	2
English Language in Saijo (ELIS) Volunteer Association	2
International Exchange Promotion Association	3
My "Love Saijo"	3
Dates with Diana	4
Events & Announcements	4

International Relations Saijo is a newsletter published in Japanese, English, and Vietnamese by the Saijo International Exchange Association (SIEA). We welcome your comments, questions and

~SIEA General Term Meeting Announcement~

◆ When: May 30, 2020 (Saturday) 13:00~

◆ Where: Saijo City Hall Main Building 5F Large Conference Room

Details will be posted on the homepage. We are excited for our members to join us!

<SIEA Projects Completed in 2019-2020>

◆ Public Language Courses (Chinese · Korean · Vietnamese · English)

◆ International Exchange Café (2/ year)

◆ Industry and Culture Festival (4/29)

◆ Hubei University Saijo City Visit (7/22~7/31)

◆ Young Leader Training Program (8/1~8/13)

◆ International Bake Off! (8/27)

◆ Saijo Fan Club Tour (8/30)

◆ International Exchange Month (8/24~9/23)

8/24 An African Day 9/3~9/23 Weapons Art Exhibition

9/8 Discussions on Mozambique Weapons Art

9/16 Niger Film Screening and Homecoming Information Session

◆ International Understanding Lecture: Russia (9/29)

◆ 2019 Halloween Party (10/27) ◆ Saijo Industry Fair 「AFRICAFAE」 (11/9 · 10)



2020-2021 Membership Recruitment

【Annual Membership Fee】

Individual 1,000円, Student (until high school) 500円, Organization 10,000円

【Term】 April 1, 2020~ March 31, 2021

【Enrollment Method】

(Current Members) We will send renewal guidelines in the mail. We look forward to your continued membership!

(New Applicants) Complete membership application form and submit to SIEA office (Saijo City International Affairs Section). (Forms available at city hall, public facilities and for download online)

<<http://www.saijo-iaa.jp/membership/>>

Saijo International Exchange Association membership



2020-2021 SIEA Project Proposal Submissions

This year, we will continue to plan activities promoting international exchange in Saijo. Have you ever thought "I want to do something like this!" or "A non-Japanese person might be troubled by this"? We look forward to your ideas!

◆ Eligibility: SIEA members (organizations · individuals · students)

◆ Contents: Proposals for international exchange projects in Saijo City

◆ Application Method: Submit "Saijo City International Exchange Association Project Proposal" (Please call or email for consultation first)

◆ Deadline: March 31 (Tues.)

◆ Submission Place: SIEA office

◆ Decision: After the board of directors reviews the applications, the SIEA secretarial office will coordinate events.

International Exchange Christmas Cafe

On Dec. 14 (Sat.), this year's 2nd International Exchange Café took place at the Omachi Community Center. Sakura Preschool, one of our organizational members, hosted the café, while CIR Diana and the ALTs Megan and Joshua also participated.



First, the café began with the Sakura Preschool children singing in chorus. Next, they played a few songs on their keyboard harmonicas while performing simple dance moves. They warmed the hearts of everyone present.

Then, Ms. Diana, Ms. Megan, and Mr. Joshua read picture books aloud to the children and played a game. After hearing about the many animals, such as the beautiful donkey, making an appearance in Ms. Diana's Christmas story and about the presents in Ms. Megan's story, everyone was in the Christmas spirit. Mr. Joshua brought three giant presents in Christmas wrapping paper for a game. The children passed around the packages while Christmas music played. When the music stopped, they could take off one layer of wrapping paper and claim one of the many presents hidden inside. Everyone went home with a Christmas present. Lastly, the children ate snacks and drank juice while coloring in pictures!



English Language in Saijo (ELIS) Volunteer Association ~ Activities

Every year, ELIS hosts our well-established event "FUN FUN ENGLISH: Let's Play Using English!" However, this year we had to cancel it as a precaution against further spread of the new coronavirus. Although it is unfortunate, ELIS understands that it is not wise to be negligent in the face of a still unfamiliar virus and that we too must do our utmost to safeguard our lives.

This would have been the 16th time we held the event for the children of Saijo City. With non-Japanese residents, we play various games and try to familiarize the children with English naturally. Our participants are always excited and nervous, and the day is full of smiling faces. As hosts, we feel a sense of accomplishment for deepening exchange.

One of Saijo's ALTs, Mr. Westrop, asked us to extend such English language opportunities to more children throughout Saijo City. Since 2005, the year following his request, interested ELIS members have introduced "Mini FUN FUN ENGLISH (Mini FUN)" to each of the primary schools in the original Saijo area. Within the year, we hold "Mini FUN" at 9 primary schools. The children's determination as they join us with smiling faces and boundless enthusiasm always moves us. We are fortunate to have dedicated ELIS volunteers who devote their time to gathering ideas and creating fun games for the children with engaging teaching materials. It isn't only about English language support, as we endeavor to deliver programs that allow for heartfelt communication and holistic experiences. Witnessing the children's proactivity and the wealth of their imaginative and expressive powers, the ELIS staff also learns from these activities, so we too are full of gratitude.

We are open to ideas about further developing our "Mini FUN" activities as we hope that they will cultivate the seed of international exchange in our children. Let's create stronger ties in our community! Let's join in the same passion!



Introducing Our Activities

~International Exchange Promotion Association~

Displays of the Food, Clothing
and Shelter across the World

Worldwide Cultural Experiences



International Cuisine Cooking Class

Japan Overseas Cooperation
Volunteers Homecoming Information
Sessions and Film ScreeningsWorkshops Hosted to Develop
Understanding of Different Cultures

We promote the understanding of different cultures and international issues in the Saijo community through activities that both children and adults can enjoy.



International Exchange Promotion Association



As globalization progresses, the number of non-Japanese residents living in Saijo has also increased. Our members have lived in various countries throughout the world (especially in developing nations), so we launched this organization to increase understanding of different cultures and cultivate a global perspective within the local community.

① Lectures & Homecoming Info Sessions

Experiences Abroad · Vietnamese Culture Introduction



② World Food, Clothing & Shelter Displays

Surprising World Records!



③ World Café

Industry and Culture Festival and Industry Fair (Arabia) and conversation with local non-Japanese residents and international cuisine, snacks, and teas.



④ International Cuisine Cooking Class

Vietnamese Fried Spring Rolls · Chapattis



⑤ Workshops

Square Dancing & Totem Pole Crafts



⑥ Other Activities

Film Screening · SSC Display, etc.



We are currently holding activities at community centers, primary and secondary schools, and nursing homes.

We welcome children & adults!

From Saijo to the World!

Activities throughout the fiscal year

【Collaboration · Support】 Saijo International Exchange Association · JICA Shikoku

We also make guest appearances in your towns and companies.

☆ My 「Love Saijo」 ☆

When I first arrived in Saijo, everything was too quiet. I found nights especially scary, so I had trouble sleeping. Where I grew up in Vietnam, I could even hear the sounds of cars and motorbikes at night. However, in October, Saijo has a makeover. Day and night, the city reverberates with the lively sounds of taiko drums and flutes. What's more, I was able to fall asleep after that. Yet, this liveliness doesn't linger for long. The quiet returns with the end of Saijo Matsuri. These days, I have grown accustomed to the tranquility, and I find large cities like Osaka overwhelming. Now, I take quiet pleasure in enjoying the unhurried lifestyle in Saijo.

I was surprised when my daughter had just arrived in Saijo and said, "Japan and Vietnam are different! There is no noise in Japan, but you can always hear noise in Vietnam!" As we walked through the shopping arcade, I laughed and agreed, "That's certainly true!"

In the shopping arcade that connects the Saijo station area to Konyamachi, it is quiet because few stores are open. However, whenever I pass through it, I feel a sense of nostalgia. I feel this way, for example, when I pass by the bookshop with the Showa atmosphere that I love. After retiring, a former school instructor preserves the family-run bookstore as an exhibition space. Old magazines and manga with simple, but colorful dust jackets line the front entrance. The wooden cart that the owners used to transport books from the station is also by the entrance. If you make your way deeper into the living space, you will find an old-fashioned kitchen. All of these things remind me of the good old days of a former generation. Although I am not an avid reader, somehow my heart feels full when I enter this bookstore. Nearby, there is a mochi shop open every day. It sells mochi for 90¥. Since it is just-made, it is soft and delicious. The mochi attracts the attention of customers from a simple glass case. Every time I pass by the display, I buy mochi. Whenever I eat it, I feel happy. There is an eatery called Sobaya a short distance away from the mochi shop. The curious store has very old food samples on display. I would like to eat there at least once, but I have not had the courage to enter the shop since it is very old-fashioned. That is, there are few seats but many regular customers.

Now that there are supermarkets and shopping malls, running businesses in the shopping arcade has grown difficult, so many shops have closed down. Still, there are vibrant paintings of danjiri on the shutters of many shops that have gone out of business. They represent the liveliness of Saijo Matsuri in the fall. As I recall the bustling matsuri, I can hear the happy singing voices of people in the local karaoke bar full of Showa ambience.

The quiet of Saijo isn't that of silence, but rather the glimmer of a ray of hope. I hope that the shopping arcade's former prosperity will one day return. (Nguyen Bui Anh Thy—Coordinator for International Relations)

Saijo International Exchange Association 164 Akeyashiki, Saijo City, Ehime Prefecture 〒793-8601
TEL(0897)52-1206 FAX(0897)52-1230 E-mail: kokusai@saijo-city.jp URL: <http://www.saijo-iea.jp/>



Words

Since I am not a native speaker of Japanese, I am often asked, "What is your favorite Japanese word?" I am not particularly familiar with proverbs or famous quotations, so I usually answer "natsukashii" or "setsunai." Even though there are similar expressions in the English language, spoken English does not use these words in the same way. So, when I learned "natsukashii" and "setsunai", it was refreshing to be able to convey a feeling in the language of another country when I had not been able to express the same feeling with a single word in my mother tongue.

However, when I give this answer, I have sometimes been told that since such words are absent from the English language, people who use English as their mother tongue perhaps have not felt the same emotion. This opinion surprised me, as I don't think that the inability to express something with a single word in a particular language is an indication of the lack of that emotion on the part of the speaker. With that concept in mind, I recall the musings of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche had inquired, "Is language the adequate expression of all realities?" I think this means that, as human beings have created language itself, its capacity to demonstrate reality and truth is fundamentally limited.

Whether I am speaking in English or in Japanese, sometimes I am at a loss for words and can't convey my thoughts effectively. Words certainly have power, but they also have limitations, and oftentimes we need to make use of other methods of expression. Nevertheless, words are tools that give us a deeper understand-

ing of culture. Depending on the language, our capacity to express different emotions or ideas changes, so learning a different language is valuable and thought provoking. Even if such an expression doesn't exist in your mother tongue, I believe that, as human beings, we still have the ability to understand the feelings behind the words.

As it is difficult to express the complexity of human emotion and conceptions through words, I am sure that many books have been written on this topic, but I would like to introduce one that the whole family can enjoy. In *Lost in Translation* (2014), Ella Frances Sanders explains untranslatable words from various different languages. Here, I will introduce 4 of them.

- ① **Meraki (adj.):** "Pouring yourself wholeheartedly into something, such as cooking, and doing so with soul, creativity, and love" (Sanders, 19).
- ② **Ubuntu (noun):** "Essentially meaning 'I find my worth in you, and you find your worth in me.' Can be (very) roughly translated as human kindness" (49).
- ③ **Szimpatikus (adj.):** "When meeting someone for the first time, and your intuition tells you that they are a good person, you can refer to them as 'szimpatikus'" (83).
- ④ **Saudade (noun):** "A vague, constant desire for something that does not and probably cannot exist, a nostalgic longing for someone or something loved and then lost" (101).

Although *Lost in Translation* doesn't include the etymology of each word, it has simple explanations of their meanings, so it is still engaging. I love studying languages, so I recommend it for your enjoyment!

*Sanders, Ella Frances. *Lost in Translation*, Ten Speed Press, 2014.

Events & Announcements

2020-2021 Public Language Courses

- ◆ Korean (Saturdays · 20 classes per level)
 - Beginner 13:00~14:30
 - Intermediate 15:00~16:30
- Course Term: June 2020~ March 2021
- Application Period: April 20 (Mon.) ~ April 30 (Thurs.)
- Capacity: Beginner : 15 people · Intermediate 20 people (first come first served)

- ◆ Chinese (20 classes per level)
 - Beginner Mondays 19:00~20:30
 - Intermediate Wednesdays 19:00~20:30
- Course Term: July 2020~ April 2021
- Application Period: May 18 (Mon.) ~ May 27 (Wed.)
- Capacity: 20 people per level (first come first served)
- Eligibility: Able to attend over 70% of the course, falling under these stipulations:
 - ① Residing or commuting to the city
 - ② Member of SIEA

- Location: Saijo Sogo Fukushi Center
- Course Fee: 7,000円 (SIEA Members: 5,000円)
- ※ **Courses are not taught by specialists.**
- ※ **The day of the week and time for both courses have changed.**
- Applications & Inquiries: SIEA Office

Editor Notes

We owe a great debt to all our members over this past fiscal year. In 2019, SIEA celebrated its 5th anniversary. We took on new challenges, such as the Young Leader Training Program. We hope to push forward with international exchange activities with the help of all of our members during the next fiscal year.

International Exchange Association NEWS Staff

Kosugi Maiko (小)
Diana Marie Linton (タ)
(English Translation)
Nguyen Bui Anh Thy (ア)

Read in full
color !

