Japanese Culture Now 若者ことば その2 Young People's Language Part 2: I Want to Be Able to Show Everyone My True Self!

In *TJF Newsletter* No. 26, published in September 2002, we took up the topic of young people's language. This second installment introduces more expressions currently in use mainly by high school students in Japan.

Please keep in mind that the expressions introduced in our Young People's Language feature are reserved for use in informal situations and in the context of close relationships, such as between friends. Should you misjudge a situation and use these expressions in the wrong context, you could run the risk of offending someone or even destroying good relations. Many young people in their teens and twenties who pepper their language with expressions such

ゲットする getto suru

Example 「最新型の携帯電話を、もう手にいれました。」) "I've already *snagged* the newest cell phone!" ("I have already got the newest type of mobile phone.")

Explanation:

Word derived from the English word "get," used in Japanese specifically to acquire something desired. It is also used to signify success in one's flirtations with the opposite sex; to "get the girl" or "get the guy."

パニクる panikuru

ample 「ここんとご忙しくて、ちょーパニクってたんだよ。」 (「このところ(最近)忙しくて、すごく混乱してました。」) "I've been so busy lately, *it's a real panic*." ("I've been so busy lately I'm in a total panic.")

Explanation:

Taken from the English word "panic," this is a shortened form of the phrase *panikku ni naru*. It means to become panicked, confused, dismayed, disorganized, or mixed up.

ドタキャン dotakyan

xample 「酢白のデート、彼にドタキャンされちゃった。ちょーブルー。」 (「酢白のデート、道箭になって、彼に来られないって言われて や止になりました。すごく寂しいです。」)

> "My boyfriend *bailed out* on our date yesterday. I was so bummed." ("My date yesterday fell through when my boyfriend called at the last minute to say he couldn't come. I was so disappointed.")

Explanation:

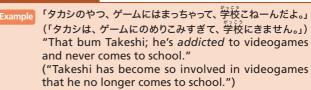
Dota is an abbreviation of dotanba de (at the last minute) and kyan is short for the English word cancel (kyanseru). Dotanba de kyanseru means cancelling at the last moment. When someone else is canceling on the speaker it is dotakyan sareru, but when the speaker is doing the canceling it becomes dotakyan suru.

as these are the target of criticism for having no grasp of conventional ways of talking and for the low level of their speech.

By knowing young people's language, however, you can turn to informal expressions that can convey your desire for closeness with others, and for an open and honest relationship based on expression of true feelings.

In any language, you must consider carefully that the way you talk will affect your image. By providing an introduction to these patterns of speech, we would like you to get a taste for the lively colloquial way young people speak and communicate their thoughts in their everyday lives.

はまる hamaru



Explanation:

Originally, *hamaru* means "to fit exactly into a frame or hole." Here it means "to get caught up in something and be unable to get out," or "to be utterly absorbed in an activity." It is also used to refer to the inability to extricate oneself from a group, like a club or a job; meeting with misfortune; the deterioration of a situation; and so on.

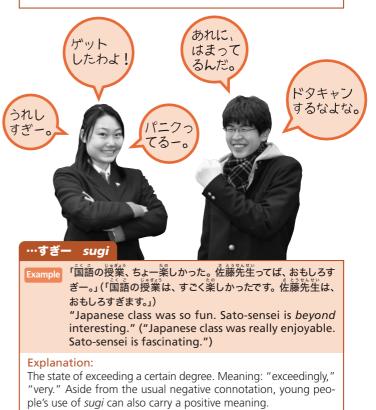


Photo: Hongo Jin