

## **SILENCE IS NOT GOLDEN--DEPT. OF JAPANESE WINS COLLIGATE DEBATE CONTEST**

Japan, a country that is known for its treasure of silence, is not known for its debating skills. It's a culture that also values consensus decision making, so open debates are rare in corporations and public arenas. Nonetheless, one can imagine that debating in Japanese might have taken on a different form as well as rhetoric from those that are practiced in the West which are well-rooted in Greek/European tradition. And for language learning, to debate in Japanese certainly helps. No matter what that form of debate is in Japanese, TKU Japanese team must have mastered it pretty well as they won the second place in group competition, winning them NT\$ 20,000 prize money in the Fourth Colligate Japanese Debate Contest, that was organized by I-shou University on May 3 and 4.

This contest attracted over 100 students from 15 different colleges and universities all over Taiwan to debate on a topic over whether the government should stop allowing migrant workers working in Taiwan. After one day of fierce first-round competition, 8 teams were left to compete at the finals on the second day. The final show down was between Tung Hai University and TKU with TKU for pro while TH for con. In the end, according to Zheng Hui-xin, a senior and the captain of TKU team, TKU lost through inexperience and poor time management caused by nervousness. Zheng stated that it was not easy for TKU to defend the "pro" position as the issue was very controversial and highly topical in the media. To come up with refreshing perspectives and be quick as well as precise in a foreign language was indeed a challenge, Zheng conceded. For some of them, it was even a nerve-racking experience as their hands literally shook when debating. Nonetheless, TKU team pledges to work on their weaknesses so as to become a better team for next year. In the end, Zheng thanked everyone involved, including their instructor, who stayed up late occasionally to help them practice.

Lee Yi-yi, another senior on the team won the Outstanding Debater for her individual performance, winning her NT\$ 1,800 prize money. It is not a lot of money, Lee said, but the recognition she received from winning this award was immense. She was particularly happy that her team won the second place, and pleased with the fact that six months of hard work prior to the contest did pay off. ( ~Ying-hsueh Hu )

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