

The Story of a Great Writer

【Yi-feng Lu, Tamsui Campus Report】 In step with Tamkang University' s 66th Anniversary, the Department of Japanese invited last year' s winner of the Naoki Literary Award, Akira Higashiyama, to give a lecture on Mar. 29 themed, "Before Becoming an Author." Akira Higashiyama is a Taiwanese born, Japanese descendant who has written 23 books, including a novel based on the renowned comic, "Naruto."

The success of his story "Flow" made him the third Taiwanese born citizen to be awarded the Naoki Literary Award. The content of this book follows the history of Taiwan, discussing the Civil War and other important historical events. Event organizer and Associate Professor of the Department of Japanese, Chun-young Perng, expressed, "This book received great praise in Japan even though many readers are not familiar with the history of Taiwan. Readers felt it was extremely well written and inciteful. It' s quite a treat to be able to have such an honored guest speaker."

Akira Higashiyama grew up loving sports, movies and music. While he was attending university, he loved to travel so he ended up reading many different types of literature. After graduating in 1991, he worked at an aviation company in Tokyo for a year. Because of the pressure of the job, he was recommended by a friend to return to school and get his masters. He received his masters at the nearby Southwest University. He then went to Ji Lin University in China to get his Phd.

In the year 2000 his first son was born before he had completed his studies. He worked part time at a restaurant and also as a part time translator. Even with so much pressure, he said that when he began writing novels, he felt very peaceful. He stated that after his son became more independent, he started writing professionally. He then decided that writing was the path most necessary, for it helped him grabbed onto the reader' s soul and really make a difference in life.

