

■ News

International Exchange Speech Contest

The Okayama University Language Education Center held the sixth biannual international exchange speech contest on 10 July 2013 to improve mutual understanding between Japanese and foreign students, beyond nationalities, languages and cultures.

Ten students—seven foreign students from four countries, including Saudi Arabia and Indonesia, and three Japanese students— took turns to give speeches in Japanese. The foreign students talked about the importance of mutual understanding over and above words, exchanging stories laced with humor about differences in eating styles and gestures between their home countries and Japan.

The students also described how Japanese people pay a lot of attention with reference to when the characters for the word 'ambulance' are reversed to make them easier to read for drivers looking into their rear view mirrors in front of an ambulance, and stories of how people helped them with their shopping, which led to improvements in their ability to communicate.

Members of the audience—100 local residents and other students with an interest in international exchange— listened enthusiastically to the speeches.



A foreign student humorously retelling his experiences



Explaining moving incidents in Japan using photographs