

在這次交換計劃，我前往了新潟大學進行為期半年的交換。新潟大學是一所位於日本新潟縣新潟市的國立大學，其前身為新潟醫科大學等七校，於1949年改制而成。2004年成為國立大學法人。學校擁有三個校區，我所前往的校區正是五十嵐校區，位於新潟市西區。

當中，我曾經修讀了不同的交換生課程，這些課程的主要對象是來自不同國家的交換生，當然也有本地生一同參與。除了基礎的語言學習課程之外，也有一些本科課程，又或者是增加本地生和交換生的交流課程。基本上在學校的選科網站就能輕易找到。除此之外，我也有參加只有本地生會選的科程。由於我對日文一竅不通，所以選擇非常有限，全靠我的導師有幫忙搜尋才有找到一些適合我的課程。其中我最喜歡的就是基礎地學實習。除了最基礎的地質學知識之外，我們也有進行實地考察。在距離新潟市大約兩小時車程的糸魚川市，當中有一條名為糸魚川靜岡構造線的地理現象。也造就了翡翠在該地方大量出現的現象，本次實地考察就是為了研究該現象而進行，途中也有去中央大地溝博物館。整個實地考察留下令人深刻的印象。

在生活方面，由於大學本身距離我的住處不遠，jr車站又再大學附近，所以實際上要到其他地方還算方便。但是這也是算我第一次一個人到日本，有很多東西都要自己去學，尤其是要去處理居留程序的部分，幸好學校有為交流生去預約一同陪同處理，另外基本上每個月也會有當地區公所郵件提示要去怎麼做，所以整個流程也不算太麻煩。

整個交換計劃對於我獲益良多，對於我來說，作為一個可以說完全不會說日文的人來說，在這裡不要說生活，甚至上課是一個十分困難的事情，也幸好我的語言天賦不算差，在很多情況下也能勉強應付。所以我能說這次的交換讓我在不同的環境下適應生存。

在海外生活固然會遇上一些難題，除了語言不通之外，最難受就是沒有什麼機會與當地人聊天，這令我在分組報告部分遇上不少的問題，你當然不能期待他們的英文水平與你相當，這甚至在台灣也無法做到，但你始終要跟他們說話。幸好我與上了不少會日文和英文的外國人，他們令我更快學習到日常的基本交流，再加上翻譯軟件，我也能大概知道當前的話題。我只能說出外還是要靠朋友，多認識點人還是很有幫助。

對我來說，日本可以說是我遇過當中最整潔的國家，特別是與香港和台灣甚至中國大陸比較。但也突出了他們的自主性有多厲害，這一點我真心無法一直做到。很多的細節也令他們成為在海外當中最受人喜歡的人群，例如隨時隨地都會準備應付不同情況的道具，除了普通的紙巾此外，我是沒有想到幾乎每人都會隨身帶著止汗劑。相反地，沒有帶著的你就是奇怪的人，完全無法適應。

說真的，對我來說，我最大的成長就是學會對不同的人用不同的方法聊天，這是日本朋友教導我的，他們對於「讀空氣」這件事很著重。我作為一個來自台灣的香港人，每個人看著我都像是看珍禽異獸一樣，外國人和日本人只會覺得我是來自中國，某些會知道台灣。對台灣人來說，我就是中文口音很重的中國人。對中國人來說，我就是不知道為什麼會有台灣腔的香港人。當然沒有人因此而歧視我，這一點還是比較好的，但孤獨感也會隨之而來，所以克服這種感覺也是我其中一個最大的成長。

如果你要到新潟大學交換，你又不會日文的話，我還是建議好好考慮一下，這裡不但英文課程不算太多，你在學校當中說外文的機會不會算很多，但你日文不錯，又或者不太介意的話，其實新潟是一個很清幽平靜的地方，值得大家來這邊體驗安定的生活。

英文心得

For half a year, I had the incredible opportunity to exchange at Niigata University in Niigata City, Japan. Founded in 1949, this prestigious national university boasts three campuses, with my home being the Igarashi Campus.

My courses were primarily designed for international exchange students, but I also had the chance to take classes with local Japanese students. While the basic language courses were a given, I was particularly interested in specialized courses like geology field studies. Our fieldwork took us to Itoigawa City, famous for its jade deposits due to the Itoigawa-Shizuoka tectonic line. The Central Great Rift Valley Museum visit was a highlight, providing invaluable insights into the region's geological wonders.

Living in Niigata was convenient with the university and JR station nearby. However, navigating the bureaucracy as a foreigner, especially the residency procedures, was a new experience. Thankfully, the university provided guidance and support throughout the process.

One of the biggest challenges was the language barrier. As someone who started with little to no Japanese, I had to adapt quickly to a completely new environment. While I managed to survive, the lack of opportunities to converse with native speakers, especially during group projects, was frustrating. However, I made friends with other international students who could speak both Japanese and English, which helped me immensely.

Japan, in my experience, is exceptionally clean and orderly. The people are incredibly self-sufficient, a trait I found both admirable and challenging to emulate. Adapting to their customs, like carrying around deodorant as a daily necessity, was a small but significant adjustment.

Perhaps the most significant personal growth I experienced was learning to communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds. The Japanese concept of "reading the air" or understanding unspoken social cues was a valuable lesson. As a Taiwanese-Hong Konger, I often felt like a cultural curiosity, being mistaken for everything from mainland Chinese to a Chinese-speaking foreigner. While I was never treated with disrespect, the feeling of isolation was sometimes overwhelming.

If you're considering an exchange at Niigata University and your Japanese language skills are limited, I recommend carefully weighing your options. While the university offers some English-taught courses, opportunities for English-speaking interactions are relatively limited. However, if you're open to immersing yourself in Japanese culture and appreciate a peaceful environment, Niigata is a wonderful place to experience.