



PhD graduation ceremony at The University of Birmingham, England 2012

# DOING A PhD

**March 4, 2015**

José Cruz: Uh so Greg. Uh nice to uh see you again.

Greg O'Keefe : Nice to see you too, José. It's been a while.

José: You- Yes it has been maybe a couple of years now I think...

Greg: (I think you're right, you're right, it's been a couple of years)

José: ...since the last time we saw each other Um I I- I'm glad to get a chance to talk to you. You're uh, an instructor at **Kyushu** University, yes?

Greg: I'm not an instructor at Kyushu University.

José: You're not an instructor?

Greg: I'm doing my PhD at Kyushu University

José: But I thought you were teaching?

Greg: No, I'm teaching at Seinan...

José: Oh OK, Is that your full-time job?

Greg: Seinan University. No I'm teaching at Seinan part-time. I teach there uh four **koma** four classes. And I teach at Fukuoka Jo Gakuin, and I also run my own school.

José: Jo Gakuin, Jo Gakuin, that's not the one in **Kashii**.

Greg: It's uh where Jack works. (Jack.. oh!) Ijiri, in Ijiri well not quite Ijiri but...

José: Well OK OK. You're working part time there?

Greg: I teach I teach two classes in uh Ijiri and I teach one class in Tenjin now, (OK, OK) uh for them- for that school.

José: What's it like to uh, to-

Greg: I'm also teaching at the dental college.

José: So you're just sort of- you're kind of-

Greg: Well I have to because I'm doing my PhD. My PhD is my main work now. (Right) So working full time would be ideal actually to have an office, but um, it just never seemed to work out that way.

José: Is that what you want to do after you get your PhD done?

Greg: Well yeah, I'll be looking for full time work. Uh I've already applied for some places.

José: And uh what? In Kyushu? I hope you hang around. It's good to have you around here.

Greg: Well I hope so I'd like to be in Kyushu It's so much easier to find work in Tokyo and Osaka

(This is true) But um, You know, Fukuoka's um... Everybody wants to live here, heh.

José: When you're doing your PhD um (Yeah) To what degree is it different doing it in Japan as opposed to doing it in America? I mean you do basically all your work in English, right? You do all your research all your consultation is in English.

Greg: Well actually no, that's not true. I, I do my interviews in English because that's part of my research. Now I can choose to write my **ronbun** write my papers and write my journal articles in Japanese if I wanted to. But this- the problem is when you're working full time. Um, you know, I don't know if you've ever heard this out of Donald Keene, you know Donald Keane, right?

José: Uh no really, I don't. I'm sorry.

Greg: You don't know Donald Keene? Well, Donald Keene's been in Japan for more- like 50 years or something, since the war. He's a famous foreigner here in Japan and he's actually, he speaks perfect Japanese, but he doesn't even write uh books in Japanese. The reason why he gets people to write them for him, he says it just takes too much energy, and too much- he says, it might be satisfy- he might feel satisfied. If he did it...

José: Well it's one more mountain to climb.

Greg: ...but the the the real main goal in life is to write about something. So if he wants to do something in Japanese he has someone to actually write that for him. (I see) See this is

Pointers:

**Kyushu** is the name of the southernmost of Japan's four main islands, and **Kashii**, **Ijiri** and **Tenjin** are all names of places in the city of Fukuoka, Japan.

A **PhD** means "Doctor of Philosophy" an advanced degree in a field of study. People with PhDs have the title "Doctor"

**Koma** is Japanese meaning a class period, and a **ronbun** is an academic paper or a thesis.

Discussion:

Have you ever considered studying for a PhD? Why or why not?

Do you know anyone who went to university in a language that was not their mother tongue?

Do you think you can do well at studying while holding a part-time job?

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<http://bit.ly/1KPrpG>

what I actually plan to do for myself in the future myself. I I have a lot of things that I would like to uh explain to people in Japanese which I can do myself If I do my own uh lectures and things like that which I usually do do. Um but when it comes to writing a book, and to actually have the writing skill to explain something (Ah) at that level. So if you want to explain something in Japanese. Can I do that? Yes. Can I write that? Yes? Will it be interesting? Probably not. Just because the the amount of idioms or the amount of examples that I could use that would really make that point across to Japanese readers isn't there, (I) and for people to say that it's there is difficult. I think I know a few people who can... like I know Chris Szpilman writes in Japanese he actually edits books in Japanese. But he's a different case tho'. He's a very rare case. He's a very intelligent guy, a smart fellow, uh...

José: Uh you're an intelligent guy. You're a very smart guy.

Greg: No I don't know about that. I would never want to put myself in- I mean talking about Donald Keane and Chris Szpilman in the same sentence is not the- I would never want to...

José: Ah but but...

Word count	Time	Words/Min.
819	3:29	235.12

