

## AN AFTERNOON WITH JAPAN'S SENIORS

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On a Saturday afternoon in September, I had the pleasure of interviewing students from the Blueberry English Club. All of the students were life-long learners of English. Speaking with these elders, I saw before the untapped energy and resources of the so-called “aging” society of Japan.

The participants were very energetic and eager to communicate. They all had well-prepared speeches on a wide variety of topics. It impressed me that these people were so dedicated to their hobbies addition to learning English. During the free conversation time, many of the students were able to communicate naturally in English, and even those with low proficiency did their best to communicate their ideas.

I was very impressed with the variety of interests and adventures that these life-long learners had! Knowing the benefits bilingualism has on cognitive competence, I hope that more retirees continue to develop their foreign language abilities and use them in their own adventures and to help the younger generations in Japan.