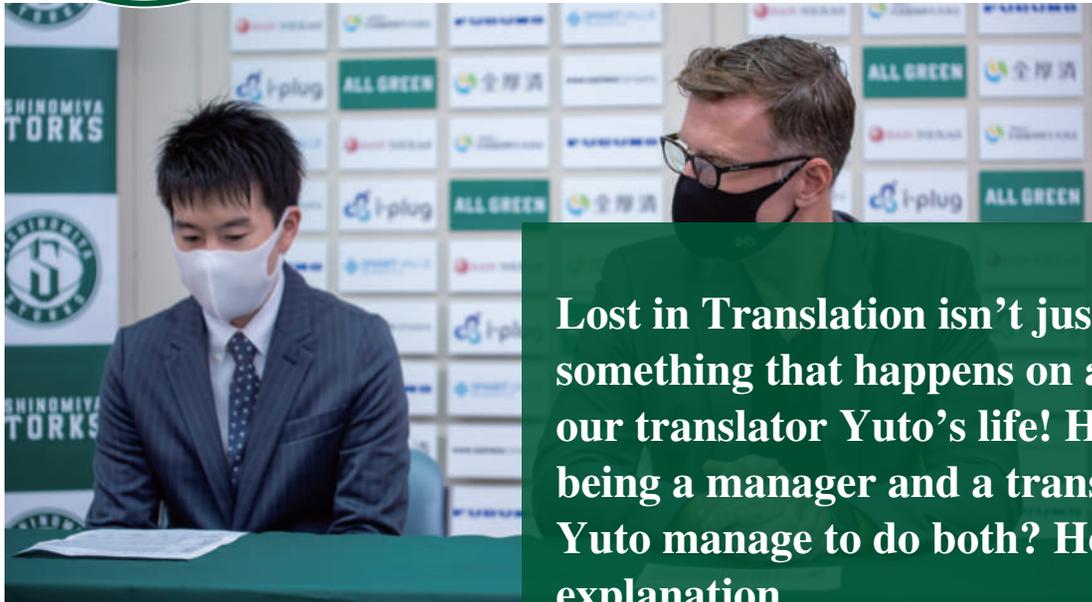




STORKS

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Lost in Translation isn't just a movie, but something that happens on a daily basis in our translator Yuto's life! Hopping between being a manager and a translator, how does Yuto manage to do both? Here's his explanation.

Storks: How did you become a translator and how did you get the opportunity to join Storks?

Yuto: I actually joined Storks as a team manager for 18-19 season. Storks is my 4th team in my career (Brex/D-Rise, Hiroshima, Yokohama, and Storks). In the end of the season with Yokohama, I got an offer from our 3x3 national team as a team manager. I really wanted to join them so I didn't try to look for another job in B.league at the time.

Unfortunately, we didn't reach an agreement for some reason. After that I had to rush myself to find a job for the upcoming season, and the ex-GM Yuta Ikeuchi (GM of Chiba) called me, offering me a chance to join Nishinomiya Storks.

By the time, I wasn't expected to work as a translator and I didn't have any experience as a translator as well. When the club wanted me to work as a translator combined with team manager, I was pretty anxious on/off the court. From my point of view, speaking English and translating are two different things, but overall I am quite satisfied with the job. For me it's a truly great experience.

What is the biggest challenge you've had as a translator?

The biggest challenge is how I can unite many different types of players to work

harmoniously. This might be a job for the head coach, but as a translator, I have my responsibility for it as well because I am part of this team, especially I speak both English and Japanese. For me, one of the important things is to understand the differences. They are different of course, mainly because of their backgrounds, so I'm not trying to talk them into anything, just trying to embrace the differences.

Did you study basketball rules and terms, and was it difficult in the very beginning of your career?

Not really. I played basketball when I was in junior and senior high. Rule wise, I think it is



enough for me to work with professional teams. However, as a translator, I realised I needed deeper basketball knowledge to figure out what the coach or player is talking about. It is one of the difficult parts for me, as I didn't have any experience in professional level of basketball. I'm learning about basketball every day, in practices and games.

What is the funniest thing that ever happened to you since you started this job?

To cooperate with players and coaches from overseas is always fun. I can learn about different cultures, rituals, ways of thinking and points of view. Throughout my job I recognised that there are a lot of things that I have never done in Japan, even though I was born and raised here. They get me out of my comfort zone, and this is some very precious experience. I feel that I can develop myself while working with those people.

Translators have to remember everything the coaches/players say and translate immediately. Is it something you had to work hard on, or does it just come out naturally?

It has become more natural for me. The first few months was a huge challenge, and I felt a little bit overwhelmed while working and practising my skills at the same time.

Westerners and Japanese have very different ways of communication. How do you adjust this part while working as a translator?

(Foreigners might use a lot of slang words even when facing officials, while Japanese definitely don't).

I try to watch a lot of interviews, documentaries, and press conferences of any kinds of professional sports. It helped me a lot for getting used to the words or expressions they usually choose while being interviewed by the media, including slang words.

Balance is one of the key words for me to work as a translator and a team manager. I am always in between some people: coaches and players, players with other players, players with the media, teams or fans, teams with organisations, and so on. I'm still trying to figure out the best way.

Have you ever watched the movie « Lost in Translation » with Bill Murray in it? If yes, while this movie is a comedy, do you feel it close to the reality in terms of how different our cultures are and how we express ourselves?

I haven't seen that movie though I feel a little bit sorry for the translator. This is how Japanese who don't speak English treat a translator--not often, but sometimes. I don't

know if she has enough background information about the commercial or the director and Bob. The guy thinks a translator can translate everything, but that's not the case.

Also, what's important is, exactly like what Bob mentioned in the movie, that the length of the sentences means a lot. If someone speaks Japanese for 10sec, I will try to translate that in English for at least 10sec. It doesn't work out sometimes, because English and Japanese have different sentence structures.

In the movie, I think Bob tried to understand what the director is talking about from his emotion, body language, and facial expression, even he didn't understand a word of Japanese. But then translator told him a pretty simple assignment. Of course he would wonder if that was the case. This is one of the difficulties that some translators experienced: a conversation between different languages with only one translator is unusual and stressful, especially for those who aren't used to it. You must give the translator time to translate things in full, even if it's just a one-on-one conversation. Simultaneously, the translator can sense those people's anxiety to wait. I always wonder if I should speed up the conversation with simple words, but with lower precision.

This is one of the difficult parts for me in a game. Basketball is a game of transition. If it takes time to translate, the game is already in the next possession. Making it simple and

quick but precise is really difficult.

Are there any players in the NBA you would dream of having a chance to meet at Storks some day?

Not really. After starting working with the European coach, I have had more interests in Euro league than NBA. Luka Doncic is going to be the player at this moment, or maybe Jason Williams, who is my all time favourite player in NBA history.

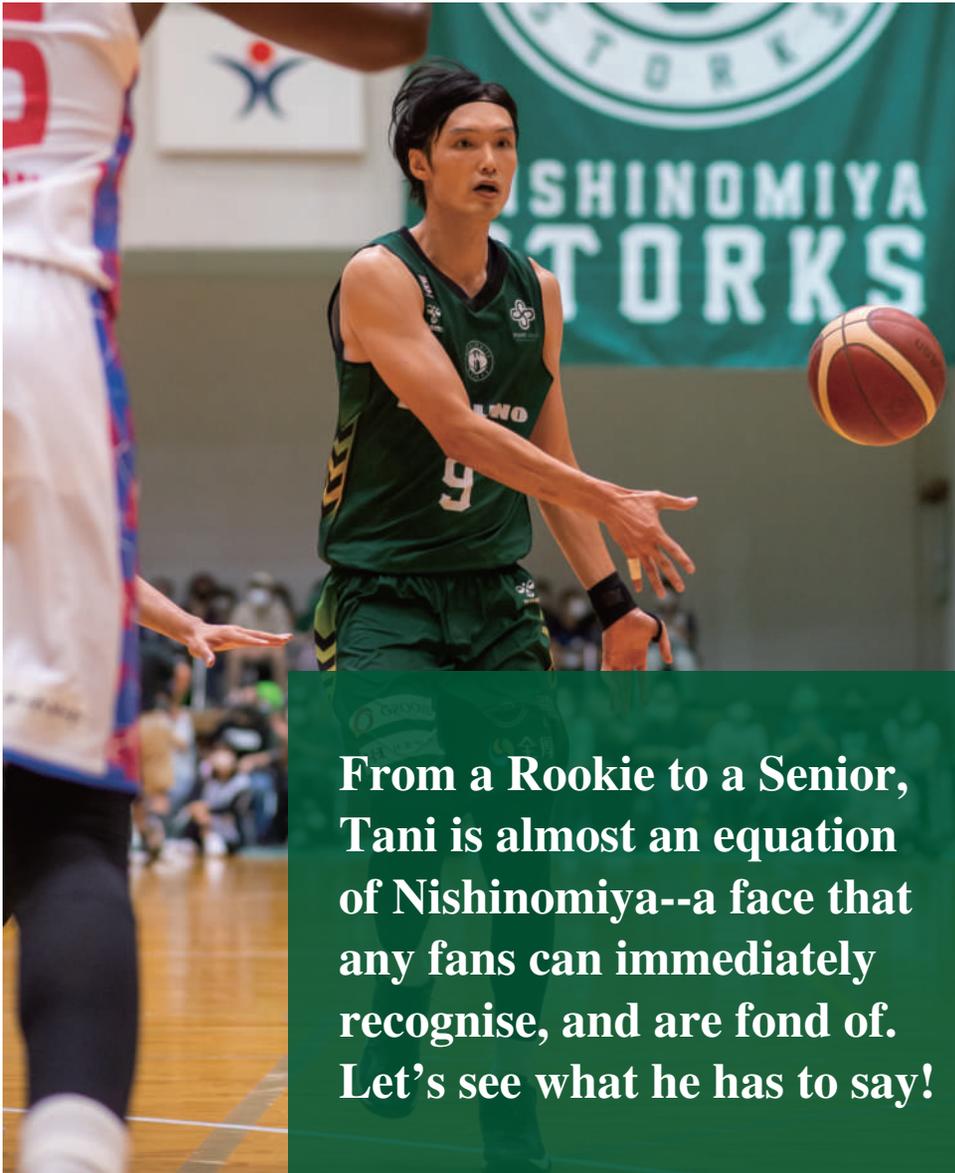
Is it more difficult to translate from English to Japanese or Japanese to English?

Japanese to English is more difficult for me. I have to rebuild the sentences and find the best words to use from my English vocabulary, which has less words in it. English to Japanese is much easier, as obviously I have more words to choose and more ways to express.

With Dohara, you're the player who's been at Storks the longest. Is the club like a second family for you?

Yes, it is like my family, and more feel like my home. Every time I play for a home game, it





From a Rookie to a Senior, Tani is almost an equation of Nishinomiya--a face that any fans can immediately recognise, and are fond of. Let's see what he has to say!

makes me feel special and I definitely want to win the game for everyone.

It's very rare nowadays to see a player playing his entire career for just one club. Is it something you always wanted to do?

Actually, I always have some kind of conflict within my mind. However, playing for my home town club is a great honour, and I am more than happy to keep playing for this club.

Who is the best player you have encountered?

Daiki Tanaka from Alvark Tokyo. He is definitely in top level for both ends, offensively and defensively.

If you could choose any players from the NBA to play with, who would it be?

Klay Thompson is my favourite player. If I could choose anyone to play with, it would be someone who is good at assisting and passing

the ball, like Chris Paul.

Do you watch NBA? If yes, which team do you follow and why?

I don't really watch NBA, but there are still a lot of great shooters in the league that I always try to learn something from, especially the off-ball movement.

You participated in numerous matches in your career. Is there this one game in particular that you felt you were unbeatable and were at your best status? Or were there any points that you scored brought you the most sense of achievement?

5 years ago during our home game against Kagawa Five Arrows. I made a comeback 3P and brought victory to the team. That was one very emotional moment for me.

Where do you see yourself after your career as a player has come to an end, and what do you

plan to do after that?

I can not really imagine anything like that yet, but I may take a long break to spend some relaxing time in Awaji Island.

Do you think Storks will become more popular than it is now after moving to Kobe, and how do you see the future of the club?

Yes, I truly believe Storks will become more popular. However, there are a lot of things to develop as a club and a lot of factors to improve as a team before we move to Kobe city. We have to be more attractive in order to be supported by more people locally. We have to be more effective and favourable to our community that everyone around us can be proud of being a fan of.

What do you do outside basketball court during your free time?

Watching a movie, shopping, and chilling in my home. I like to sit back and relax.

was still something I wanted to do though, even if it was painful for me. I wanted to learn a lot of things from other staff, as what we were doing is the base and foundation of pure



How do you imagine Storks without these beautiful, charming Storks ladies, who bring incredible stamina to literally every single game of Storks, and passionately dedicate their energy and time to endless training and practices? What's life like behind the scene as a Storks' cheerleader? Well, Risa will give us a peep into a world where her passion lays.



What made you like cheer leading, and how did you start?

Actually, I started cheer-dancing from the first lesson of Storks' cheerleader training. During the lesson, I was astonished to see all the members who became Storks' cheerleaders before me. The director showed me what being a true cheerleader means to everyone. That experience made me dive into to cheer-dancing.

Cheer leading for a pro team means you have to spend a lot of time practising and performing. How do you manage your life hopping among work, cheer leading and private matters?

Of course we have to spend a lot of time practising, but I really love dancing. When I'm not dancing I still think about it all the time. I can't part myself from it; nor can I think of anything without sparing a thought on it. This is my life now.

Every cheer-leading group has its own style, for example, Hannaryz uses a lot of Japanese instruments/music, what about Storks?

I think Storks' cheer-leading style is doing classic cheer dance. Our cheer-leading director also has rhythmic gymnastics background. Sometimes you can see some rhythmic gymnastics merged into our performance, like the Opening Dance we had for last season.

Do you go to some away games to cheer for Storks?

Yes! Privately, my cheer-leading mates and I go to away games to cheer for our players from time to time.

How much time does it take to choreograph a new dance, and how much time do you need to be able to perform it live?

Basically, we get our choreography done in just one or two lessons. Sometimes we just record a dance video and practise by ourselves between two rehearsals. It depends on the situation: when we have abundant time, we can prepare for 2 months. When we don't, we just practise once together, and practise by ourselves at home.

If you could create your own style of cheer dance, what song would you choose to use?

The half time song that we use for board of sponsors!

What is your thought for clubs to have a group of cheerleaders?

I think it's really important for clubs to have their own cheerleaders. Of course cheering for the team is every fan's job, but not all fans in every single game are all in good spirits or feeling the need to scream and shout. It is cheerleaders' job to help heat the vibe up and create the atmosphere. We bring positive energy to the audience, and positive energy is very vital for winning a game.

You spent some time in the US. Are the cheerleaders there very different from the cheerleaders here in Japan?

I learned dancing when I was a student, in Australia and the US. I didn't do cheer-dancing in the US though. That being said, I really enjoy cheer-dancing in Japan now. Life is unpredictable and full of adventures. No one knows what's going to happen next. If you love dancing, you do it and face all types of challenges that are coming towards you, regardless of who and where you are.

Home Game Schedule 2022
STORKS in KOBE!



Apr.2sat 3pm
Apr.3sun 2pm
vs Sendai
@Kobe Green Arena



Apr.16sat 3pm
Apr.17sun 2pm
vs Kumamoto
@Kobe Chuo Gym

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