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Article :

## Britain's Got Talent: How a Japanese Comedian Stole the Spotlight in His Undies

Directions: Read the following article aloud.

In just his underwear, Tonikaku became the first Japanese finalist on Britain's Got Talent. Never [let](#) language barriers [get in the way of](#) your dreams.

Japanese comedian Tonikaku Akarui Yasumura had the Britain's Got Talent judges in stitches with his famous underwear dances. Although he didn't win, he made history as the first-ever Japanese finalist on the show on June 5 (JST). Aside from his [captivating](#) charm, it seems a stroke of luck also played a part in his success.

Yasumura first took the BGT stage on April 22, where he sparked roars of laughter with his iconic [catchphrase](#), "Don't worry, I'm wearing!"

Although he didn't make it past the semifinals, he snagged a wildcard spot in the finals. There, Yasumura wowed the audience by sporting a mustache and channeling the legendary frontman of Queen, Freddie Mercury, resulting in thunderous applause.

According to Tom Renton, the Education Manager of the British Hills program at Kanda Gaigo Group, BGT is a "traditional show where the winner gets to perform for the British royal family." Given this context, Yasumura's achievement of reaching the finals is truly remarkable.

### The Potential of Gesture-Based Comedy

But how did Yasumura manage to win over the British crowd despite the language and cultural barriers? Dr Satoru Kimura, a professor at the International Culture Department of Japan Women's University and author of a book on the "philosophy of laughter," sheds light on the matter. While sumo and public baths are part of everyday life in Japan, Western cultures tend to view nudity in public spaces as taboo.

That's what makes Yasumura's moves so ingenious. By revealing his undies from the get-go, he served up the perfect comedic concoction of surprise, eccentricity, relief (that he didn't actually drop his underwear), and [a touch of](#) Japanese exoticism that captivated his audience.

Meshida, a Japanese stand-up comedian with training experience in the United Kingdom, raises an interesting point. Just as everyone fell in love with Rowan Atkinson's character Mr Bean, non-verbal comedy relying on gestures has great potential in the UK.

Source : Britain's Got Talent: How a Japanese Comedian Stole the Spotlight in His Undies  
[JAPAN Forward](#)

## 1

## Article :

**Britain's Got Talent: How a Japanese Comedian Stole the Spotlight in His Undies**

Directions: Read the following article aloud.

**Don't Let Language Barriers Stop You**

By chance, Yasumura also formed a special bond with the audience through a grammatical error in his catchphrase.

Whenever Yasumura dropped his catchphrase "I'm wearing!" the crowd would respond with a resounding "Pants!" (In British English, "pants" means underwear.)

Since the transitive verb "wearing" requires an object, the audience probably thought he was waiting for them to fill in the rest. Learning from this, Yasumura began asking, "What am I wearing?" and the audience naturally replied, "Pants!" And that's how he [managed to](#) pull the crowd into his comedic dance.

Meshida views this as a fantastic example of an English mistake leading to comedic interactions with the audience. He encourages Japanese people to fearlessly venture abroad without worrying about language insecurities or grammatical mistakes, just like Yasumura did.

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## 2 Key phrases and vocabulary

Directions: First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **let ~ get in the way of ...** ~に...の邪魔をさせる

Don't **let** fear **get in the way of** pursuing your dreams.

2. **captivating** 人の心をとらえる

She has such a **captivating** voice.

3. **catchphrase** うたい文句、決まり文句、標語

He popularized his **catchphrase** that became widely known.

4. **a touch of** 一片の、ちょっとした、~の雰囲気、~の色合い

There is **a touch of** irony in her way of speaking.

5. **managed to ~** なんとか~する、思いがけず~してしまう

I didn't have enough time to study, but fortunately I **managed to** pass the exam.

## 3 Questions

Directions: Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What was his achievement in the "Britain's Got Talent" competition?
2. What English mistake did he make during his performance?
3. Have you ever watched a talent show like "Britain's Got Talent"? If so, what did you find most impressive about the performances?
4. Can you recall a memorable comedic performance that relied on gestures or physical comedy?
5. How do you handle it when you make an English mistake while communicating?

## 4

## 日本語関連記事：英国人気番組で決勝進出 とにかく明るい安村「裸芸」がウケた訳

パンツ一枚の姿で全裸に見えるポーズをとる芸で人気を集めたお笑いタレント、とにかく明るい安村が6月4日（日本時間5日）、英国の人気オーディション番組「ブリテンズ・ゴット・タレント（BGT）」で日本人初の決勝進出を果たした。惜しくも優勝はならなかったが、なぜ安村の「裸芸」は英国でもウケたのか。そこには英国人の嗜好とともに、ある偶然も働いていた。

安村は、まず4月22日放送の番組に出演。おなじみの決めゼリフ「安心してください。はいてますよ」を「Don't worry, I'm wearing!」と英語で表現し、爆笑を誘った。その後、準決勝で敗れたが、ワイルドカード枠で決勝に進出。決勝では口ひげをつけてロックバンド、クイーンのボーカリスト、フレディ・マーキュリーになりきるなどし、喝采を浴びた。

神田外語グループ「ブリティッシュヒルズ」教育部マネジャーの英国人、レントン・トムさんによると、BGTは「優勝者が英国王室にパフォーマンスを披露できる伝統的な番組」という。それだけに「安村さんが決勝に出場したのはすごいことだ」と評価する。

では、安村の芸が言葉と文化の違いを乗り越え、英国でも笑いを誘ったのはなぜだろうか。

「笑いの哲学」などの著書がある日本女子大国際文化学部の木村覚教授によると、相撲や公衆浴場が身近な日本とは違い、欧米では公の場で裸になることをタブー視する傾向が強い。一方で安村は登場時からパンツをはいているのを見せており「驚きとおかしさと安心、そして日本人というエキゾチックなものも含めて、ウケたのではないかと分析する。

英国で修業した経験を持つスタンダップコメディアン、Meshidaさんによると、「Mr. ビーン」で知られる俳優ローワン・アトキンソンが人気を集めたように、もともと英国には身振りで笑いをとるノンバーバル（非言語）のコメディも好きな人が多いという。

また、安村がパフォーマンスを繰り返すうちに、安村の決めゼリフに観客が「Pants!」と応じるのがお決まりとなった。このやりとりについて「安村さんは『I'm wearing!』と言っていましたが、wearは他動詞なので、本来ならその後何をはいているかを言う必要がある」と説明。結果的に安村が「僕がはいているのは？」と問いかけ、観客が「パンツ!」と答えるやりとりが自然発生的に生まれたという。

Meshidaさんは「英語ミスが掛け合いにつながったという素晴らしい例。日本人は安村さんのように、文法ミスなど気にせずに、ガンガン海外に行くべきですね」と語った。