

1 First Impressions

graduate school - study after the four-year degree, 大学院

M.A., Ph.D. - Master Degree, Doctor Degree, Doctor of Philosophy of _____

major - 専攻、専修科目

to flirt - ぶりっ子

intimidate(d) - make someone afraid, be afraid

looks - appearance

sense of humor - be able to see the funny side

pheromones - chemicals released into the air by our bodies, sense by "smell"

modest - 1: humble 2: deliberately trying not to be too sexy

opposite sex / same sex - men/women / ぎゃく

You don't need to define every word here, just the words that are new for you.

What do you think of Tamara's "strategy"? *Maybe necessary, but kind of sad.*

How important do you think first impressions are? *Important - maybe TOO important?*

What kind of first impression do you think you make on people? Do you actively try to influence those impressions?

Are you usually right or wrong in the first impressions you have of people that you meet?

Tamara thinks men are intimidated by intelligent women. Do you agree?

Besides intelligence, what else might men find intimidating about women?

What things about a man might a woman find intimidating?

Do you believe in "love at first sight"? Explain. *NO WAY!*

Look at the people in your group. You've been talking with them for about 30 minutes now. How have your first impressions of them changed?

When you meet someone for the first time, what are the things you base your impression on?

What are the first things you notice when meeting someone of the opposite sex?

INTERESTING!

For these discussion questions, just short notes are OK. THINKING is more important here than writing.

Other experiences, stories, research...

My Ideas **HERE is where you write about your ideas after reading the textbook, reading the discussion questions, and thinking a bit.**

This story about Tamara was very interesting. I know this is a good university, but yesterday I was listening to some girls talking at the next table in the cafeteria, and they sound so silly. Their conversation sounded like junior high school girls talking.

After reading this story, I think they might be doing the same thing as Tamara.

I suppose it shouldn't be a surprise. Boys these days seem very timid. (A new word!! ʘ < ʘ >) I guess a strong intelligent woman might make them feel even more INSECURE. It's kind of sad that they can't feel comfortable enough to "be themselves." It'll be interesting to hear what others think about this. I think I know of one "Tamara" in our class already!

My research

http://cjonline.com/stories/062501/pro_impressions.shtml

Making an impression | CJOnline.com

Here I have included two articles, but one GOOD article is enough. Try to find something interesting that will help discussion in class as well as something that will help you learn - both language and content.

It's all over in 30 seconds. The job interview may last all day, the party a few hours, the date a seeming lifetime.

But it's in the first 30 seconds that you win the job, make the friend or scuttle the hoped-for romance. It happens that fast. And you have barely uttered a word, a researcher said.

"I couldn't care less what people say," said Frank Bernieri, a University of Toledo psychology professor whose research team found that it is all but over after the handshake. "I'm interested in what takes place instantaneously, reflexively, subconsciously and immediately."

In the 30 seconds when we introduce ourselves, words are of little consequence. What makes the lasting impression are the silent signals, the facial expressions, the cut of the suit and the beauty of the speaker.

Tricia Prickett, one of Bernieri's students, made the case when she showed people video clips of job applicants meeting interviewers. Each clip was between 20 seconds and 32 seconds. Bernieri's research group had completed a study in which interviewers were trained to evaluate job applicants. They conducted 59 20-minute interviews. Each interview was videotaped. After each session, interviewers completed a four-page evaluation of the applicant.

Prickett then edited the tapes to the brief minute of exchanged greetings and seat taking. There was no time for even one question. Twenty untrained evaluators saw the mini-clips and rated the interview subjects on a dozen attributes, such as likability, self-assurance and competence. The surprise: their grades closely followed the ratings given by the trained interviewers who conducted much longer encounters.

"People do judge books by their covers," Bernieri concluded. "First impressions are going to predict final impressions."

People who make a living interviewing don't always buy that.

"Sometimes what you see in the very beginning is not the true person," said Carole Martin, a human-resources professional with a career built around interviewing.

Martin is the interview expert on the Monster.com job-seekers' Web site.

Dr. Frank Bernieri researches nonverbal communication at the University of Toledo in Ohio. Lasting impressions often are reached within 30 seconds, he said.

JEREMY WADSWORTH/The Toledo Blade

And John Adams, owner of a Dale Carnegie franchise, said it is the interviewer who is at fault if the first impression **obscures** the facts.

"I've made many mistakes in my life making quick judgments on people," Adams said. "Once I get to know someone, I think, what's the matter with me? To me, the problem is the interviewer, not the interviewee."

Bernieri said his research results -- and the conclusions of many earlier studies -- throw the whole notion of job interviews up for grabs.

"Probably the best way to conduct a job interview is not to conduct a job interview. You go by resume and past experience and references," he said. "If anything, the interview is going to make you attend to **irrelevant criteria** or **potentially irrelevant criteria**."

The effect of those first impressions compounds over time.

"You hire the **warm fuzzy person** who's doing a horrible job," Bernieri said. "But what's the consequence of that? You still like that person. So you're happy with the hire even though they're ineffective. You're confident you've made the right decision even though your revenues are going down."

Sound unlikely? Research shows we are pretty stubborn about giving up our snap judgments.

"In social psychology, there is an amazing amount of literature and research that show that once we have any expectation, once we have any working theory, any working **hypothesis**, we are biased in the way we process information," he said. "We go out of our way to seek confirming **evidence**. However, in our minds, we think we're being **analytical** and processing the whole time. So by the time we finish, we think our **judgments** are based on the data."

So what is it we are focusing on in these crucial but fleeting meetings?

First in all of our evaluations is beauty, Bernieri said. Research shows good-looking people fare best. So prevalent is this outlook, social scientists even have a name for it. They call it the "What is Beautiful is Good" phenomena.

"Pretty people are seen as more intelligent, as having better personalities," he said. "They're seen as more trustworthy. On almost every possible dimension, a pretty person is seen as better."

Second, we like expressive people.

"People whose faces are **animated**, whose vocal patterns vary," Bernieri said. "If you are an easy read, if someone looks at you and thinks that they're seeing right into you, then they tend to like you. If you have a poker face, if you're reserved, then you're a more difficult read. Then people seem not to like that."

Finally, a very subtle dance takes place with every conversation. Whether we subconsciously catch its rhythm adds greatly to the impression we make. It is a particular focus of Bernieri's research, and it is called "interaction synchrony."

He turns on a videotape. Each scene shows two strangers talking. When the people in the tape have similar postures and gestures or move in a sort of unconscious **choreography**, they later told evaluators that they had wonderful conversations. People who failed to mirror postures or subtly coordinate movements reported the conversations as dull or unsatisfactory.

Today, Prickett, the undergraduate who developed the first-impression study, works in human resources. Although she hasn't done many interviews, her research has caused her to be cautious in those she has conducted.

"A lot can be told in 15 seconds," she said. "And (first impressions) can also make the employer look bad."

<http://www.vagabondish.com/female-foreign-japan/>

No Sex in the City: What It's Like to Be Female and Foreign in Japan

"We usually have a tough time keeping female teachers here," my boss informed me on my first day of work as an English teacher in Tokyo. "They usually don't last more than six months." I looked up from studying the roster list of teachers (30 – all male), in surprise.

"You mean at this school?"

"No, I mean ... in Japan." He shrugged. "Tokyo's a tough city to be single ... If you're, you know ... a western woman."

I stole a quick glance at the photos that were mounted on the wall behind him. Four middle-aged White Dudes. All of them were bearded and balding. All of them resembled the aging, stringy-haired members of the band *Metallica*. And all of them were pressed up against the model-thin bodies of a heavily made-up Japanese Beauty Queen.

I don't think I'll have a problem, I thought.

It wasn't that I was beauty queen **gorgeous**. Far from it. Slim, medium-height, with hazel eyes and **freckles**, I was at best 'cute' and at worst, average. But I had something that the competition didn't: long, naturally curly, blond hair. Furthermore, I was bilingual, well-traveled and college-educated.

But as I realized a few weeks into my stay in Japan, I was also mysteriously, **frustratingly** invisible.

Cute **baristas** at Starbucks wouldn't look at me, business men on bicycles ran over me and college students hurriedly backed away from me with **mumbled** apologies whenever I tried to strike up a

conversation about the weather or ask for directions. They wouldn't even give me the time of day. **Literally.**

"You've got to be **assertive**," my Japanese girlfriends advised. "Japanese guys are shy so you have to make the first move." So I smiled **invitingly** at men in bars and on busses. I asked for help reading restaurant menus and subway signs.

"Do you have any book / drink recommendations?" was my usual line as I stood near them in bookstores or sat next to them on barstools. But the **'come hither' stare** or conversation starter doesn't work if the other person refuses to look at you. If they met my gaze at me at all, it was just to shoot me this panicked look, like I'd just asked them to father my unborn children. My boss had been right. It was hard to be a single, western woman in Japan. But why?

I turned to the Internet for advice and was surprised to learn that **the Dateless Western Woman** was a familiar character in the expat world, at least judging from the score of postings on expat forums by lonely, single females.

But as **wide-spread** as the problem seemed to be, it was one that many women **avoided** talking about. Understandably it was a tough subject to discuss without grossly **overgeneralizing** fifty percent of a country's population or worse, sounding like a racist or a man-hating, snob.

The **pervading** theory though, among expats and Japanese alike, was that Japanese men were in fact **attracted** to western women but were just too **intimidated** to do anything about it. Western women in Asia were like the Jennifer Anistons of the **expat** world. Strong, independent, **assertive** and **outspoken**, they were interesting to admire from afar, but no man would ever dream of **striking up** a conversation with one. Western women were so different, so foreign, they were **virtually un-datable**.

Not true for their Y-chromosome-carrying expat buddies though. While the female expats spent Saturday nights alone, crying into their Ramen bowls, their male counterparts drank freely from the dating pool like they owned it. Which in a way, they did.

If you've ever visited Asia, you've likely seen the pale, rail-thin, greasy-haired white boy walking hand-in hand with a perfectly made-up, mini-skirt wearing Asian chick. This would never happen anywhere else in the world. Because everywhere else, Barbie ends up with Ken, not his underemployed, socially-awkward, samurai-sword-collecting neighbor, Kevin. But in Asia, dating rules defy all logic or evolutionary law. In Asia, the nerd is king.

Not that I wished it otherwise. For the most part, I was happy for them. These men wouldn't have been able to score a date at home if they'd been a calendar but in Asia they'd **nabbed the prom queen**. They were true success stories. Who could blame them for taking advantage of a magical **loophole** that allowed them to date women **out of their league**? If such a nirvana existed for Western woman, I'm sure I'd have moved there too.

But although the occasional coupling sparked the "Is she really going out with him?" question, it was easy to understand why Japanese woman saw Western men – even the nerdy ones – as attractive dating prospects. They were straight-forward and open-minded, for one thing. And through their Western, wire-rimmed eyes, they viewed relationships as an equal partnership, which was something the more traditional, close-minded of Japanese men still struggled to do. I figured that so long as they treated their girlfriends well and both partners were happy with the

arrangement, what did it matter if their peculiar quirks and bizarre comments got lost in translation a little? Even the socially awkward deserved to love and be loved.

But it was hard not to feel jealous. Especially as I spent weekend after weekend, bravely facing the club's dance floor alone while my **dorky** expat brothers expertly flirted for phone numbers and first dates. They were like kids in a candy store. The Japanese women were gourmet truffles, while the western women were the three-year-old tootsie rolls melted to the bottom of the barrel. The Japanese men might have been frightened of us but the other expat men just flat-out ignored us.

But as I often reminded myself, I hadn't come to Asia for a boyfriend. I'd come because I wanted to master Japanese and explore a culture drastically different from my own. But I just hadn't expected that moving my life to Japan would mean leaving my love life at home. As much as I'd enjoyed my life in Tokyo, it just didn't seem like a fair trade.

Not that the female dating situation in Japan wasn't without the occasional success story. I knew of a few women who'd come to Japan and left with husbands or fiancées in tow. But they were the minority. Most western women came to Japan single and stayed that way.

I was walking from work one Friday evening when it dawned on me that I'd been in Japan for nine months. I inwardly congratulated myself for having **beaten the odds**. I'd proven my boss wrong. But as I trudged home to face another evening of reruns of *The Office* and left-over sushi from 7-11, I wondered at what cost. Most days I felt unattractive, unwanted and worst of all, unfemale. When not even a short skirt or slinky top attracted more than a passing glance and even construction workers, who could usually be counted on for a leer, regarded me with bored, blank expressions, I felt like a Martian. And very, very alone. Perhaps I'd been wrong not to leave when the last shipload of foreign women sailed away to brighter horizons and better dating odds.

Because the truth is that Tokyo's a tough city to be single ... if you're, you know, a Western woman.

My Thoughts about my research

Sometimes you'll have a lot to say, sometimes not. You can add notes later to help you prepare for the exam.

These two articles were very interesting. The first talks about how important first impressions are. I knew people made their minds up very quickly about people when they first meet, but I can't believe it happens in SECONDS! The article was a bit difficult, though - so many new words.

The second article was even more interesting. It made me think a lot about male-female interaction and how big a factor culture can be. The story is about a foreign woman living in Tokyo and how hard it is for her to find a boyfriend. She says it's easy for foreign men to find Japanese girlfriends, though. I wonder why? I guess the guys really are INTIMIDATED by her. She seemed really lonely. There were lots of difficult words here, too, though. I'll need to ask Tony about some of these expressions: the nerd is king, out of their league, nabbed the prom queen. がんばりましょう。

New Words

There are a LOT of new words in these articles - you'll probably make notes on the article page itself to help you read. You may want to make an additional note for words you found interesting and want to remember.