

# Taiwanese at Work contents

## PART ONE: YUNLIN COUNTY, NEAR TAICHUNG

1. Local Politician.....	5 - 7
2. Journalist.....	8 - 12
3. Slaughterhouse Owner/Entrepreneur.....	13 - 17
4. Farmer.....	18 - 19
5. Pesticide Retailer.....	20 - 23
6. Camera Shop Owner.....	24 - 25
7. Gas Deliverer.....	26 - 27
8. Taxi Driver.....	28 - 29
9. Well Digger.....	30 - 32
10. Acupressurist.....	33 - 35
11. Pharmacist.....	36 - 37
12. Shouyu Factory Owner.....	38 - 39
13. Rice Seller.....	40 - 41
14. Poem Reader.....	42 - 43
15. Gravedigger.....	44 - 45
16. Balloon Shop Owner.....	46 - 48
17. Baptist Priest.....	49 - 51
18. Japanese Teacher.....	52 - 56

## PART TWO: TAINAN

19. Dental Supplies Office Worker.....	58 - 61
--	---------

### PART THREE: TAIPEI

20. Model.....	63 - 65
21. Activist.....	66 - 68
22. Quality Control Specialist.....	69 - 71
23. Consultant.....	72 - 75
24. Convenience Store Clerk.....	76 - 77
25. University Student.....	78 - 80
26. Labor Studies Professor.....	81 - 86

### PART FOUR: BUNUN TRIBE MEMBERS IN TAITUNG

27. Insurance Salesperson.....	88 - 89
28. Aboriginal Dance Teacher.....	90 - 92
29. Civil Servant.....	93 - 94
30. Military Teacher.....	95 - 96
31. Ex-Fisherman/Minister.....	97 - 99

### PART FIVE: BUNUN TRIBE MEMBERS IN LIDAO

32. Weaver.....	101 - 104
33. Village Chief/Hunter.....	105 - 107
34. General Store Shopkeeper.....	108 - 110

*note: Many Taiwanese take English names due to the difficulty non-Taiwanese have pronouncing Chinese language names properly.*

*note: For a rough idea of currency exchange, 1000 NT (new Taiwan dollars) is about US\$35.*

## 4. Liao, Rai-Shen 38

### Farmer



#### What do you do?

I'm a farmer, planting celery mainly, but other vegetables as well. It's not easy to plant the seeds. *The interpreter added, "He invented a machine that distributes the seeds evenly and won a prestigious presidential prize."*

#### Will you sell that invention?

No. Many have advised me to sell, but I have no plan. My motivation was just to improve my method of farming. I don't want to waste time marketing my invention. I often share it with friends.

#### What is your working day like?

I wake up at 5:30 a.m., start work at 6 a.m. and work until dark. I don't have to do so much of the physical work anymore because I've hired 15 workers. Every day we plant and harvest. There's a harvest every three months, but since the planting times are rotated and the maturation rates vary we can harvest every day. Some sections are harvested continually.

#### Any bad points?

The only bad point is the weather. If there is a typhoon, or the weather gets too cold like these days, then that's a problem. Heavy rains and storms are particularly troubling. A few years ago there was a very severe typhoon that wiped out many crops. Weather plays such an important role in a farmer's life. We learn to notice subtle changes in wind or humidity that might indicate a change.

#### Do you use pesticides?

Yes, but less than the national standard. I'm in the process of becoming more organic. It's probably not possible in Taiwan to become completely organic. Because of our climate unwanted insects thrive here. Scientists have to invent pesticides that will do less harm. But I try. For example, I use organic fertilizer, made from rice hulls and grounded seashells. Nature itself provides many possible solutions.

**What other money-making activities are you engaged in?**

I'd like to develop eco-tour restaurants. People could come and see an agricultural area and learn about it before having a nice meal which would be made from healthy, organic ingredients. It would be a way to connect food, people and the environment in a more intimate way. Also, I'd like to show people in the city life in the country.

**Are you satisfied with the amount of money you make?**

Not satisfied with the salary, but I'm satisfied with the year-end bonus. It's my farm so I have to pay workers and pay myself a modest salary every month. It's just enough to get by on. But then, at the end of the year, I receive the profit. Depending on the year that can be very satisfying.

**What's your dream for the future?**

I'd like to do something like what you're doing—travel around the world, talking with people. But language and finding the time would be difficult. I'm very happy with this life.

## **18. Tobe Eriko 32**

### **Japanese Teacher from Japan**



#### **Why did you come to Taiwan?**

I graduated university as an Education major and started looking for a job. I wanted to go anywhere to get a job.

#### **Outside Japan?**

Not necessarily, but working conditions in Japan are more severe for a recent graduate, and I couldn't find any jobs as a teacher in Japan, so I looked abroad and decided on Taiwan—I knew nothing about Taiwan!

#### **How did you find the job?**

I read about it in a magazine. At first I was teaching at the YMCA in Taichung, for one year. Now I'm here teaching at this university.

#### **What was severe about Japan jobs?**

The economic conditions. The main problem is, there just weren't many openings at all. A lot of my friends were also out of work. I would need at least three years teaching experience before finding a job, but ironically couldn't get the first job to get the experience. I want to go back, but the atmosphere here is great, and comfortable. The job is fun, students are cute. Every year I think, 'Next year I'll go back,' but I'm still here. I'm not married yet. I'd like to but it's hard to imagine getting married abroad. I'd like to get married in Japan—and I'd like to get married as soon as possible.

#### **With a Japanese man?**

With an "any-country person man!" But I'd like the wedding to take place in Japan.

### **You haven't found a boyfriend?**

I'm sorry to say... (laughter) Now I'm searching.

### **Good luck! Any painful points about living abroad?**

Not really. Sometimes I'm lonely, but generally no problems. Well, for example, if there's an unpleasant experience at work, and I go home alone, I think about it too much, with no family to share it with.

### **What specifically might happen at work that's painful?**

Maybe I wasn't teaching the class well in some students' eyes. Some classes go smoothly, and others don't. At the YMCA there were only five students per class; here I have 50. The 'Y' classes lasted one month; here they last for one year. These differences make for big challenges. At first I wasn't used to it. Some classes have older students. How to deal with it? I didn't know and didn't perform well. The students went to ask my boss to change teachers. I don't know exactly what their reason was. After my boss called me over to discuss the situation. It turns out that class had other problems with other teachers as well. I asked what their specific complaint was but they wouldn't tell me. After that I'd feel like, "I wanna go home!" or "Oh, why did I come here!" The younger students don't complain like that. They're simpler. Sometimes they don't pay attention, or fool around in the classroom, passing notes or whispering to friends, but that can't be helped. I didn't have experience with the older students however, and didn't know how critical they could be.

### **Have you ever felt discrimination as a Japanese, considering the history?**

Not exactly. No discrimination. Probably some negative feelings, but at that time they probably speak in Taiwanese (the original language on Taiwan, unrelated to Chinese) so I don't know what's being said.

### **Do you ever talk about controversial topics, like Japan's**