# 'Frog-ization' top buzzword among Japanese Gen Z: survey

TOKYO -- "Kaeru ka gensho," or "frog-ization," which literally translates to "the phenomenon of turning into a frog," was the top buzzword choice among Generation Z in Japan for the first half of 2023, a research firm announced on June 5.

Zsouken, a think tank studying Generation Z, or those born from the latter half of the 1990s to around the 2010s, conducted an online survey between May 8 and 14 to which 950 people from junior high school age to 26 replied. Most Gen Z are social media natives, and many of their buzzwords also came from social networking platforms.

The term "frog-ization" which topped the latest ranking refers to a phenomenon where a person's romantic feelings for someone cool off as soon as the latter shows signs that they are interested too, and the original pursuer starts having an "ick" feeling for the other person. It derives from "The Frog Prince" in which a frog turns into a prince, but frog-ization means the opposite of the fairy tale. The term struck a chord with the young generation after it was introduced on YouTube and other platforms.

Other buzzwords included everyday phrases such as "kawachii," from the word "kawaii" meaning "cute" taking second place, "uchukushii" from "utsukushii" meaning "beautiful" ranked third, while "cho-e," the shortened version of the phrase "chotto matte," or "wait a minute," coming in 10th place.

"Toyonaga Takuto" in fourth place is actually a person's name -- Takuto Toyonaga, a Japanese man who gained fame after participating in a South Korean idol audition show. Seventh place was taken by the phrase "omae kyo nani shitandayo," which literally translates to "what did you do today?" It has become a buzzword on TikTok and other social media. Coming in eighth place was "Sushiro o sukuitai," meaning "I want to save Sushiro," which spread after footage of nuisance behavior at a restaurant run by major conveyor-belt sushi chain Akindo Sushiro Co. went viral online.

(Japanese original Yuka Kato, Business News Department)

TOKYO -- The phrase "That's just your opinion, right?" as a way to talk back to teachers and parents has topped the buzzword ranking among elementary school children in Japan this year, according to education service provider Benesse Holdings Inc.

Benesse on Dec. 1 announced the list of buzz phrases for 2022. "That's just your opinion, right?" is associated with Hiroyuki Nishimura, founder of popular online bulletin board "2channel" (now "5channel"). Nishimura is nicknamed Japan's "outdebating king" based on the ways he argues against opposing views on his YouTube programs.

According to Benesse, elementary school students said they use the phrase when teachers or friends tell them, "Your test score is bad"; when friends try to make excuses; when they see haters on favorite streaming channels; and when friends ask them, "You like him, don't you?" among other situations.

The second most popular phrase in the ranking was "sorena," which roughly translates to the one-word response "This" used in social media to express agreement, apparently used as a nod among young people. "Gal peace" was the third most favored phrase. It refers to a gesture where one extends their hand making a V sign with the palm up. It was once popular among young people in Japan, and the trend came back after Korean idols used it.

The company also announced children's dream jobs. YouTuber was the most popular occupation for the third year in a row. It was followed by manga artist/illustrator/animator, and entertainer.

The company conducted the survey on third through sixth graders across the country in November, and received responses from 13,816 children.

(Japanese original by Hajime Nakatsugawa, Business News Department)