

JOEL CHALLENGER - Interpreter and Consultant

Bio: Born in 1979, I am a UK national and father of two with dual UK/Japanese nationality. I hold a degree in Japanese from SOAS, University of London, and have 20+ years of experience in Japan. Specializing in interpreting, translation, and research, I focus on conference interpreting and remote RSI (80% of my work). I work with direct clients and interpreting agents, also translating academic books, investment reports, press releases, legal contracts and various other materials.

CeMI (Crisis and Environment Management Policy Institute – Tokyo) | May 2013 – Present

I provide simultaneous/consecutive interpreting, research, and international coordination for CeMI. In addition to organizing government surveys on hurricane recovery in the U.S., I accompany Japanese researchers to annual disaster management conferences to gather information, build relationships, and write intelligence reports in Japanese and English on best practices in disaster management, with a focus on wide-area evacuation protocols during hurricanes.

2021~ 2024 Retained by TBWA\HAKUHODO. Simultaneous and consecutive interpreter, J-E, E-J. Management meetings, results reporting, fee negotiation, budget tracking meetings, programmatic marketing meetings, employee interviews, branding/creative presentations, technical/credentials briefings. (multinational clients in companies including consumer goods, automotive, pharmaceutical, apparel.)

2024 - Notable Assignments

- Consecutive interpreting for patent infringement negotiations between U.S. and Japanese automakers.
- Coordinated and interpreted crisis management research in Jacksonville, Florida, visiting hospitals, city response HQ, and agencies with Japanese researchers.
- Consecutive interpretation for U.S. FDA inspections of Japanese medical equipment manufacturers.
- Simultaneous interpretation for weekly academic and administrative meetings at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.
- Consecutive interpretation for military logistics planning meetings between U.S. Navy/Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and U.S. aerospace manufacturers
- Simultaneous and consecutive interpretation for the 2024 National Hurricane Conference in Orlando (academic and government teams from Japan).
- Simultaneous interpretation for Global Head and Neck Aluminox Therapy Conference (Photoimmunotherapy).
- Simultaneous interpretation for GPPAC (Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict) International Steering Group House of Representatives Policy Roundtable in Tokyo.
- Interpretation for international conference on food security, hosted by Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
- Simultaneous interpretation for board meetings, management summits, and DE&I conferences for a leading Japanese medical equipment manufacturer.
- Consecutive interpretation for chemical engineers at a Japanese pharma company developing breast cancer treatments.
- Simultaneous interpretation for safety seminar/workshop for branch managers of an automotive parts manufacturer.
- IR-related interpreting for conference calls and visits between investment managers (U.S., Canada, Europe) and Japanese listed companies' CEOs/CFOs.

2020~ 2023 - Notable Assignments

- Interpreting for ASEAN Cold Chain Logistics Meetings on COVID-19 vaccine transportation (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport).
- Interpreting for the 14th Expert Group Meeting on Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, ITU, Geneva).
- Simultaneous interpretation for U.S. Medical Device Manufacturer Board Meeting.
- Consecutive interpreting for UK audio equipment manufacturer for Japanese cinema installations.
- Consecutive interpreting for Japanese audio equipment manufacturer's sales negotiations with overseas

clients.

- Consecutive interpreter for the G7 G-Science Academies' Meeting 2023, Science Council of Japan.
- Interpreting for Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) Disaster Prevention Seminar for international students.
- Consecutive interpreting for Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan press conferences: "Prosecutors Force Retrial on Iwao Hakamada," "Jingu Gaien Redevelopment Controversy," and "Kazuo Shii, Japanese Communist Party Chairman."
- IR-related interpreting for conference calls/visits between investment managers (U.S., Canada, Europe) and Japanese listed companies' CEOs/CFOs.
- Private equity investor pitches by foreign managers to Japanese investors.
- Regular interpreter for executive, academic office, and student welfare meetings at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.
- Translation and narration for Supreme Court of Japan's International Symposium on Intellectual Property Justice (JSIP) Case Study.
- M&A interpreting for Japanese travel company's acquisition of a foreign-owned destination management consultancy.

2018 ~2019 Consultant, Freelance Interpreter/Translator, Researcher

- Interpreter for ASEAN-Japan Aviation Security Experts Meeting (Tokyo).
- Interpreter for internal media planning meetings (Hakuhodo/Audi).
- On-site interpreter for U.S. Aerospace Company/DoCoMo satellite installation (Japan).
- Interpreter for U.S. Department of Justice compliance audit at Japanese car factories (India/Thailand).
- Simultaneous interpreter at CeMI National Hurricane Conference (New Orleans).
- Simultaneous interpreter at PGA AGM (Tokyo).
- Interpreter for World Rugby Organizing Committee Board Meetings & TV Award Ceremony (Tokyo).
- Interpreter for DHL/ChildFund "Pass it Back" Rugby Tournament (Tokyo).
- Simultaneous interpreter at SPARX Asset Management Co., Ltd's Mirai Creation Fund Investor Seminar.
- Interpreter for factory tours and sales negotiations (pipe manufacturing, Ibaraki Prefecture).

National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Resilience (Japan) | 2016- 2018

I worked in the Strategic Planning Department at the National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Resilience. I organized and interpreted at disaster risk reduction conferences, coordinated U.S. hurricane research with Japanese agencies, and interpreted for NATO's CBRN desktop exercises. I also translated disaster-related materials and interpreted for construction ministers from various countries.

Specially Appointed Researcher, Kyoto University Disaster Prevention Research Institute (2013 – 2015)

Under Professor Haruo Hayashi, I translated academic books on Japan's disaster preparedness into English and collaborated with the Cabinet Office to produce bilingual disaster preparedness education resources.

Tour Leader/Trainer – Walk Japan | Mar 2011 – May 2013

In-house Translator – Mizuho Corporate Bank (Tokyo) | Sept 2009 – Aug 2010

In-house Translator – Link Corporate Communications Inc. (Tokyo) | Jan 2008 – Jan 2009

Coordinator, Interpreting Team – Peace Boat | Sept 2003 – Apr 2006

Researcher/Production Assistant/Interpreter – Don Productions Co., Ltd (London) | Sept 2002 – Sept 2003

Education:

School of Oriental and African Studies, Uni. of London, Hokkaido University of Education

BA Japanese and Linguistics (1998 – 2002) Grade 2:1

St.Edmund's School, Canterbury, Kent (1988-1997) (full music and choral scholarship)