

LESSON NOTES

# Yojijukugo #17

## The Outrageous Truth Behind Popular Japanese Expressions

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2 Grammar

# 17

# GRAMMAR

Today's Yojijukugo (四字熟語)(1)	言語道断
Kana	ごんごどうだん
Romaji	gongodōdan
Meaning	outrageous

	1st Kanji	2nd Kanji	3rd Kanji	4th Kanji
四字熟語	言	語	道	断
Kana	ごん	ご	どう	だん
Rōmaji	Gon	Go	Dō	Dan
Meaning	Say	Word	Roadway	Severance

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History, Definition, Similar Expressions, etc.  
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「言語」: It means "to say something."

「道断」: It means "to have a way cut off."

「言語道断」: It means that "something is too terrible to put into words."

This expression originated from the Buddhist word meaning that "the truth of Buddhism is too profound to explain in words."

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Usage  
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When someone did something terrible, you can say  
--- *wa gongodōdan da* or --- *nante gongodōdan da*.

Also, it can be used to modify a noun with the particle *no* or *na*, as in [*gongodōdan no*] + [noun] or [*gongodōdan na*] + [noun]. In this case, the noun is usually generic and indicates an action, such as *kōi* (行為), which means "act" or *hanzai* (犯罪), which means "crime."

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## Sample Sentences

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カンニングは言語道断だ。

*Kanningu wa gongodōdan da.*

Cheating on an exam is outrageous.

就職の面接に遅刻するなんて、言語道断だ。

*Shūshoku no mensetsu ni chikoku suru nante, gongodōdan da.*

Being late for a job interview is outrageous.

飲酒運転は、言語道断の犯罪だ。

*Inshu unten wa, gongodōdan no hanzai da.*

Drunk driving is an outrageous crime.

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**Today's Yojjukugo (四字熟語)(2)**

**試行錯誤**

Kana

しこうさくご

Romaji

shikō sakugo

Meaning

trial and error

1st Kanji

2nd Kanji

3rd Kanji

4th Kanji

四字熟語

試

行

錯

誤

Kana

し

こう

さく

ご

Rōmaji

Shi

Kō

Saku

Go

Meaning

Try

Going

onfused

Error

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History, definition, similar expression, etc.

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「試行」: It means "to try."

「錯誤」: It means "to make mistakes."

「試行錯誤」: It means "to approach success after learning from a lot of failures" or "to find out a solution by trial and error."

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### Usage

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It can be used as the *suru* compound verb, *shikōsakugo suru* (試行錯誤する), which means "to learn by mistake." When someone is successful after trial and error, you can say, "[someone] *wa shikōsakugo shi nagara* [something] *o shita*" or "[someone] *wa shikōsakugo shite* [something] *o shita*."

It can also be used as a noun. You will often see expressions such as *shikōsakugo ni yotte* (試行錯誤によって) and *shikōsakugo no kekka* (試行錯誤の結果), which mean "by trial and error."

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### Sample Sentences

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彼女は、試行錯誤しながら、新しいメニューを作った。  
*Kanojo wa, shikōsakugo shi nagara, atarashii menū o tsukutta.*  
She developed a new menu by trial and error.

私は、試行錯誤の結果、自分にあったダイエット法を見つけた。  
*Watashi wa, shikōsakugo no kekka, jibun ni atta daietto hō o mitsuketa.*  
I finally found a dieting method that works for me by trial and error.

子育ては試行錯誤の連続だ。  
*Kosodate wa shikōsakugo no renzoku da.*  
Raising kids is a continuous process of trial and error.