

[Clare is speaking in front of the camera.]

Ok, so for this video, I finally have a camera stand and I'm going to try to not say "um" a thousand times.

Hello! It's Clare, welcome to LJapan.

Today I'm going to talk about six words that you must know if you're looking to date women in Japan.

So, let's get started.

The first three words I'm going to talk about are to describe your looks and the looks of the partner you are looking for.

And those three words are "femu", "chusei" and "boi".

"Femu" is very similar to the English word "femme", which is not short for "feminine", it's actually from the French word "femme" or "la femme" – I don't speak French – which means "girl".

Then the third word I mentioned "boi" is not the English word for boy, it's actually short for "boisshu" or boyish in English and this would be like the femme and butch spectrum in English.

And then "chusei" is often translated as androgynous but really, it just means in the middle of the femu-boi spectrum.

"Chusei", so not femu, not boi, so I don't know if that would be called androgynous in English, maybe more like the word futch, femme and butch together.

So "femu", "chusei" and "boi" are the three words that you use to describe how you look and the looks of the partner that you are interested in dating.

Then the second set of three words today are "tachi", "riba" and "neko".

"tachi" basically means top or the dominant person in the relationship, more specifically the giver in a sexual relationship.

"Neko", then on the other side means the receiver sexually and also the more submissive person in the relationship.

And then, just like for looks how "chusei" is in the middle of the femu-boi spectrum, "riba" is in the middle of the tachi-neko spectrum.

Basically, it's like "switch" in English.

So "riba" is neither tachi nor neko, they could do both roles either one is fine or they prefer to have a more balanced relationship, it depends on the person.

And "riba" is actually from the English word "ribasu" or reverse.

All six of these terms are very common not just on dating sites, where you have to describe yourself in a self-introduction, but also when you're meeting girls at bars or kind of like lesbian gokon (合コン) type of dating like speed dating.

And what's really interesting is even though lesbians both their friends often times are girls and their romantic sexual partners are obviously also girls, whether you're tachi or neko can determine who your friends are too in your lesbian circle.

Apparently, it's common for the tachi partner to only consider the neko partner as cheating if they're out with other tachi lesbians, but if they're out with other neko lesbians, then it's not cheating, because... [She leaves out the end of the sentence, as she can't find the reason.]

And as I said before in my previous video, I came out in Japan, so I'm not as familiar with the lesbian community in America other than what I've read online, but the tachi/neko system or the social expectations seem to be much more clear-cut in Japan than in other countries.

And to describe yourself, you put them together in the order of looks, and then position.

So, for example, if I am a femu and my position is tachi, then I would say I am a femu-tachi.

If I am a boi and I'm tachi, then I'm boi-tachi.

Or riba, femu-riba, boi-riba.

And then for femme, femu-neko, boi-neko.

And in Japan maybe similar to America: if someone is boishu, they are probably tachi or at least riba.

I have seen maybe only once someone describing themselves as boi-neko.

Femu, on the other hand, seems to be more flexible.

Femu-neko and femu-riba are the most common for femu, but I've also seen femu-tachi a lot of times, and femu-tachi is more like the cool older woman who takes the lead.

And this was very difficult for me at first being a femme attracted to butch or androgynous women, but also wanting to be the dominant person in the relationship, I got really lucky finding my girlfriend.

So, what do you do when you don't exactly fit one of these boxes?

Well, there's a useful term that you can use for your looks, or position or even your sexuality and that's "yori" or "yori no".

[Clare wrote a word on the board.]

This is backwards.

[Clare is back in front of the camera.]

So, for example, if you are a switch or versatile in Japanese, you are riba, but maybe you prefer one or the other.

If you lean more towards the neko side of the spectrum, you can say you are "neko yori riba".

And on the other hand, if you lean more towards the tachi side of the spectrum, you can do either, but you prefer to be the more dominant one, you prefer to be the giving one, then that would be “tachi yori no riba”.

And you can use the same things for your looks too.

I myself usually call myself femu, just because, well, I have long hair and it seems to be determined mostly by the length of your hair in Japan.

But I don't wear makeup, I don't do my nails, I don't like to wear skirts, I don't like to wear high heels, so I don't identify as very feminine, but I wouldn't say I'm androgynous either.

So, if I wanted to describe myself very carefully, I would say “chusei yori no femu”.

And the type that I'm attracted to is “chusei yori no boi” or “boi yori no chusei”.

So, this video is not very long but I hope it was helpful.

If you have any questions or comments, any topics that you want me to cover in the future, please let me know, I'm open for any ideas or suggestions.

And if you liked today's content, please like and subscribe, and my girlfriend and I will continue making videos together and also me separately in English.

Ok, bye.