

Tokai University Alumni Society of the Communication Department(TASC)

Thai Branch Meeting Special Lecture

The First Pioneer at Tokai University

Feb 13, 2015 at KMITL

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(Former President of KMITL)

Hello everyone, as my part of lecture, I will take you to the campus tour, time is limited. Therefore, I'd like to present my lecture briefly.

We, four Thailanders (1) arrived at Tokyo on Nov 3, 1965 without any Japanese knowledge, that is we couldn't speak Japanese. We spent couple of days in Tokyo and moved to Shonan to learn Japanese at Tokai University.

We graduated Nonthaburi Telecommunication college (2) on March, 1965, however none of universities in Japan accepted our entrance, even though OTCA(predecessor of JICA) had asked it to various universities which had a faculty of engineering.

We couldn't read, write and speak Japanese, however we already completed college course, therefore, our desire was to be accepted as transfer students. Finally, as Mr Araki's book shows (3), President Matsumae had admitted our entrance into Tokai University . After this manner, we came to Tokai University and started to learn Japanese from Nov 1965 to Feb 1966, around 3 months as preparation for university's course and then we entered Tokai University's Telecommunication Engineering as transfer students on Apr 1966. At that time, Dean of faculty engineering was Prof Tanimura and he interviewed us and asked various questions, but I couldn't respond well. Prof Wakabayashi is one of our classmates. Anyway, starting up was a hard time because our Japanese ability is still infant to capture the coursework. Specifically, Japanese text books were too difficult to understand. Only Prof Teramoto's text was English version, so we could understand it but his writing on blackboard was Japanese, therefore we copied them to our note book. After class was over, at all the time, we asked "How to read this Kanji?" "How to pronounce this?" to class mates to understand prof's chalk talk clearly. It was very tough time to overcome Japanese handicap, for example, Japanese pronunciation had multiple way such as Onyomi, Kunyomi, recently computer was helping it tremendously, however at that time, we should consult Toyokanji to Thai dictionary, if it didn't hit at first , then we consulted Japanese to English dictionary, still couldn't find it, we consulted English to Thai dictionary. Thus, to comprehend Japanese was very tough work, however Tokai's professors and class mates were kindly supporting us that brought our graduation. Looking back at our student days , it was a remarkable Japanese customs that Japanese people were gentle and also teaching us in detail. Thus, we could made a lot of good friends. There were two types of class mates, one was enjoying school life, other one is hard worker to study. One person showed us rapid searching manner using thick English Dictionary. To conduce our study in depth, we preferred hard workers as friends and also they were very supportive for us. We reviewed coursework one week bases. As for the home works, we did it as much as earlier to prepare difficult one which we needed time to consult for advises.

In the case of examinations in 3rd grade, we wrote the answer in English and if we couldn't capture the meaning of questions, asked it to examiners. However, in 4th grade, our Japanese ability was brushed up and we didn't face such cases anymore.

In my memory at dormitory "Boseigakujuuku", the first seeing the bath house, all were in the nude, we felt ashamed to show ours, then backing to our room and we talked together to take it earlier time, around 3-4 pm when nobody took the bath in dormitory.

One more story, still Japanese was not understand well, we went to Shinjyuku and in the way to return, I took a seat in middle of compartment and fell asleep. When I waked up, I found myself in the first compartment and the station was Fujisawa. The station staff helped me to take to a train to back Tsurumakionsen. It was dark night and walking back to dormitory made me feeling fear, I couldn't forget it.

After graduation of Tokai University, we returned to Thailand. At that time, Nonthaburi was almost empty of teaching staff, so we became assist prof's and begun to teach students immediately. Three years later, Nongthaburi became university, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL) (4). The thesis is common for the graduation examination, however, we had many experimental practices at Tokai University, so we gave the duty of "Monotsukuri" (5) to all students. That is, students have to invent and produce something to get certification for graduation. The first exhibition for "Monotsukuri" was held at Ladkrabang and King Bhumibol and other many guests visited us. They were so surprised by Ladkrabang's products and said "These products were beyond our expectation as university's student's at Ladkrabang". So, increased reputation of Ladkrabang, we extended 2 days to planned one week and opened from 2 pm to 8 pm. I remembered President Matsumae also visited us and stayed until 8 pm. As the result of this event, candidate to KMITL was increased and also raised difficulty level for entrance rapidly. 2nd time and 3rd time, participants to Ladkrabang's exhibition had been increasing and also many companies paid more attention to Ladkrabang. In Thailand, finding job starts after graduation. At the interviewing for employment, Ladkrabang's students ask "Location of factory" "Products" and "Job which they want", however, other universities students ask condition of office such as office location and air conditioned or not. Ladkrabang's students never ask such as office condition, they will ask job oriented questions that they want to work definitely. As this results, companies came to Ladkrabang and employed graduate students who met their requirement. Therefore, Ladkrabang's employment shows distinguished rate from others. This is our operation of Ladkrabang until now and also hereafter we will continue to support for the progression of Ladkrabang as First Pioneer at Tokai University.

Ladkrabang was grown up and became mature by getting support from JICA and Tokai University. Without Tokai, we can't see today's our figure. Transfer to 3rd grade is the biggest reason, because we, college graduate, never accept to back to initial stage. We launched Ladkrabang with 2nd pioneers, Apinan sensei(6) group and other Tokai graduates. However still we needed more excellent teaching staff, so we asked Tokai's support to President Matsumae, and he decided to make an academic agreement between Tokai and Ladkrabang (7). Thus, prof's from Tokai will teach students at Ladkrabang and from Ladkrabang 's will study at Tokai. We did many sensei's exchange program and established excellent teaching formation. I kicked off exchange students program when I was president of Ladkrabang, My idea was that Tokai students work with Ladkrabang students for poor local communities that will be established school or library by getting sponsorship.

For example, all places in Japan, library exists, however in our some local area, people wants to read books but no library exists. Tokai students learn such Thailand situation, In the future, their experience will be a big value to work in Thailand because they will enter Thailand society smoothly. I know the case which he found job and got married in Thailand. I believe this work study program will be success in the future too.

In the last part of my lecture, I'd like to recommend to read Mr Araki's book, because it gave me a comprehensive understanding of Japanese government program for us.

One time, two gentlemen from JICA and National University of Laos visited us and told us their desire which brought up University of Laos to the level of Ladkrabang. Dean of Faculty Engineering at University of Laos said, most of teaching staff are college graduate, even though there are some who learned in Russia, China and Viet Nam, but most of them can't teach university students in depth.

I responded Ladkrabang will take a responsibility to provide academic assistance.(8)

That is, Ladkrabang provide it to University of Laos as same as Tokai University does for us. Then, Dean of University of Laos, asked me why do you provide this academic assistance for us? I responded immediately, I don't get any money to assist you, I will perform Japanese way to you. Because, thanks to Japan and Tokai Univ', we became mature now, so we'd like to repay obligations from Japan and Toaki Univ'. Still, our returning to the obligation is small, however we will continue it in the future too. Hereafter, Ladkrabang with Tokai University will work together to contribute to the bright future of Japan and Thailand.

Note:

1. Dr Prakrit Tangtisanon, Mr Narong Hammakorg, Mr Manoon Sokkasem and Mr Tawil Kingthong were graduated Tokai Telecom' Eng' in 1968.
2. In 1961 Nonthaburi Telecommunication training center was established.
Nonthaburi is located in north city of Bangkok
3. Journalist, Mr Mitsuya Araki wrote the book "One success story of Japan International Assistance". It's based on KMITL's success case.
3. KMITL was established as "King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang" in 1971. Location is 30km east from Bangkok
5. Student can invent something which has been used in their everyday life,
Such as robot, incubator, radio TV, receiver. First exhibition was held in 1967.
6. Mr Apinan Manyanon, Dr Sompong Gorasawist, Dr Panlop Laochlong, and Mr Pradit Washaraviboon were graduated Tokai Telecom' Eng' in 1970
7. In 1977, Tokai University and KMITL agreed Academic Assistance Program
8. In 2003, JICA, University of Laos and KMITL started Project program.

Impression from this lecture

At the beginning of the lecture, Dr Prakit sensei said “ I forgot Japanese because I had learned it 50 years ago” However he worked out the lecture with Japanese entirely.

My first impression was their sense of responsibility as First Pioneers, that came from “ High level education to Thai students by Thai professors” This strong sense of responsibility was the main factor to beat the critical Japanese handicap. Learning in class room and reviewing in dormitory, I can imagine their fighting with Japanese by consulting three dictionaries, “Japanese to Thai”, “Japanese to English” and “English to Thai”. To my asking “ How did you keep your good friend ship ?” He responded “ Almost every night, we played cards for stress relieving and also public bath which puzzled at first made us relaxation.

The idea of “Monotsukuri”, this is exactly selling KMITL to companies and societies. I was very impressed by this practical idea as like a business strategy.

From following facts, I felt matured Ladkrabang with respect mind.

*KMITL’s facility and laboratory instruments are enriched and the researchers from Tokai University are visiting to study in KMITL.

*Students from KDDI and NTT graduated KMITL.

*KMITL is performing academic joint project with JICA and University of Laos.

As my personal aspect from Tokai Alumni’s point of view , I hope Tokai ‘s community through KMITL will expand to Laos and other ASEAN country in the future.

This excellent lecture brought me a bright future’s picture for KMITL and Tokai University’s Alumni.

In closing, thank you so much Dr Prakit sensei and other Pioneers, Manoon sensei, Narong sansei, Apinan sensei, also, Dr Wisut sensei(Tokai Alumni Thailand).

Special thanks to my Telecom Alumni partner, Dr Pitak sensei, he prepared this valuable opportunity.

Thank you again.

Tokai Alumni Society of the Communication Department(TASC)

Chair Man Takao Nakanishi

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