

# IEICE Global Plaza no.20

— Monthly community plaza in English for students, faculties and engineers —

## Voice of Foreign Researchers in Japan

### Impression of Japanese society



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It is my great pleasure to have the opportunity to talk about my experience studying and working in Japan. I hope that I may (1) answer some questions from those who would like to come to Japan to study or do research, and (2) may further improve the understanding and communications among international researchers in Japan.

I had many reasons for coming to Japan, and they dated back almost twenty years. The first was the highly developed economy in Japan. It has been regarded as a miracle in international economic development. I wanted to understand how they were able to do it (something that was beyond of my knowledge). Of course, as a researcher, the most important reason was that I was attracted by the first-rate researchers and the advanced research environment in Japan. Actually, when I studied in a university in China in the 1990s, I had listened to several talks and attended seminars given by Japanese professors. My impression was that those researchers were amiable and modest, as well as knowledgeable. Later, after I dove into researching speech recognition, I came to know the frontiers of my research field. A lot of the original technologies were developed by Japanese researchers and some of the more famous ones were even mentioned in text books. From that time, I came to think that I might go to Japan to learn, not only technology, but how they did things as well.

With the recommendation of one of my friends who had worked in Japan, I came to Japan in 2003 as an assistant professor at a university. There were a lot of foreign students and staff at the university. Academia and research were almost always international. With well-educated students and professors, I could communicate easily with them even if I could only speak English. Many courses were taught in English, particularly the doctoral-level courses. The languages used in seminars and laboratory meetings were both Japanese and English. The final thesis could be written in either English or Japanese, depending on preference. For students (master or doctoral students) to obtain their graduation certificate, they must go through a systematic training for many aspects before their final defense, such as course studies, research topic selection, academic paper reading, presentation, academic papers writing, and middle examination. I really appreciate this rigorous training system. Thanks to this kind of intensive training, students can quickly learn how to solve problems on their own.

For researchers, there is a big advantage in being able to start their own research work not from zero by being in Japan. Besides working at a university in Japan, I have worked at a research institute with strong research activities in speech technologies.

Since they have been researching this field for more than twenty years, they know exactly what the problems and difficulties in the research field are. Therefore, when I chose my own research topics, I could get a better grasp on the essences of the problem from a higher level rather than repeating work from the very beginning. In addition, since the researchers around me are from different universities or countries, I can share their knowledge and experience in solving the problems which may give me a short cut in my own research. Another advantage for research work is the intensive communications and collaborations between researchers in Japan. Besides many regular monthly workshops for each research field, there are many exchanges, invited presentations and talks. Most of the researchers are generous in sharing their knowledge, and are modest enough to discuss their research interests. Therefore, I can discuss the topics where I am interested and make new friends, in the workshops or seminars which may enhance my research work.

It is far better for you to experience this yourself, rather than just to hear about the advantages of studying or doing research in Japan secondhand from others. I believe that you will be proud to experience living in Japan.

### Useful Remarks

#### What academic issues are discussed in MVE Technical Committee?



*Yuichi Nakamura, Prof., Dr., Kyoto University  
Ex-Chairman, Technical Committee on  
Multimedia Virtual Environment  
IEICE Human Communications Group*

The Technical Committee on Multimedia Virtual Environment (briefly, MVE) has conducted academic activities based on the key technologies of virtual reality (VR)/ augmented reality (AR)/ mixed reality (MR), human interface and multimedia. Since most of them have mutually independent communities, respectively, MVE takes the initiative in harmonizing the communities with each other as a common salon. Therefore, MVE has provided a forum to share ideas concerned with different special fields to the communities or to discuss novel systems from different viewpoints with sufficient time allocation, so far.

Generally speaking, special fields or topics of primary concern change with the progress of research activities and transition of social needs in any Technical Committee. MVE thinks about the role and vision to be explored. The Session entitled "Past, Present and Beyond of Research on Human Communications ~ from Studies in MVE" was provided in HCG Symposium held in March, 2009. In the Session, Prof. Makoto Sato, Tokyo Institute of Technology who worked as Chairman of IEICE Human Communications Group (HCG) in FY2008 gave a speech on the track of research activities in HCG, the background of MVE establishment was reviewed, and the visions of MVE from the standpoint of the other Technical Committees were discussed so that they could have a better understanding of the future perspectives of MVE or HCG. It was expected there that MVE

would have a role of forum on new ideas or system implementation by specialists of theories or technologies. Special committees of MVE follow the results of discussions to lead a roadmap of MVE evolution. MVE will have further studies including the sophisticated title revision of the Technical Committee in coming fiscal years.

## Hot Topics

### APSITT2010 successfully held at Kuching, Sarawak, East Malaysia



*Hikaru Suzuki,  
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The 8th Asia-Pacific Symposium on Information and Telecommunication Technologies (APSITT2010) was successfully held with the sponsorship of IEICE and technical sponsorship of IEEE Communications Society at Kuching, the Capital City of Sarawak State, Malaysia on June 15~18, 2010. The conference venue, Damai Beach Resort is located at Kampung Budaya Sarawak facing the beautiful South China Sea where it takes one hour by car from the center of Kuching. The participants could enjoy the outdoor events planned for them in comfortable environment due to the dry season.

APSITT was set up to provide a forum of mutual better understanding and discussion for researchers or leading people of ICT in Asia Pacific region in 1993 and it has been held every few years. The 8-th conference was cooperatively organized by the Local Arrangement Committee (LAC) in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS, Kuching) and Organizing Committee at the initiatives of IEICE Technical Committees of Network Systems (NS) and Information Networks (IN).

In the opening session, Opening Address was given by Dr.George Kimura, Organizing Committee Co-Chair (Chair, NS /Executive Dir., NTT West) and Welcome Speech was given by Prof.Peter Songan, Deputy Vice Chancellor of UNIMAS. The invited guest, YB Datuk Haji Talib Zulpilip, Assistant Minister of Tourism, Sarawak gave a speech on the national plan of education toward the future knowledge based society and expectations for collaborations with ICT-developed countries through APSITT, referring to his experience over the long years from the era of main frame in 1970's to the current national project "Multi-media Super Corridor" (Fig.1, Fig.2). It came out with 3 local newspapers next



Fig.1 Opening Session



Fig.2 APSITT conference guests

morning. Prof.Hiroyuki Morikawa, TPC Co-Chair (Ex-Chair, IN / University of Tokyo) reported that 100 papers from 7 countries were strictly selected out of 116 applications from 13 countries and overviewed 26 Sessions in the conference.

Mr.Aisharuddin Nuruddin, Dir., Resource Assignment and Management, Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) gave the first Keynote Speech entitled "Regulatory Challenges in Managing Communications Industry" and overviewed the history and current plan of administrations on communications and broadcasting in Malaysia. Dr.Yuji Inoue, Chairman, Telecommunications Technology Committee, Japan gave another Keynote Speech entitled "Challenge in Climate

Change; Carbon Initiative based on Sensing Technology in Tropical Peat and Forest" with Prof.Mitsuru Osaki, the co-author and introduced the huge amount of carbon dioxide due to Borneo Fire studied by Prof.Osaki over 10 years and expectations to ICT based solutions. Prof.Tomonori Aoyama, Ex-Chairman, IEICE gave a guest speech entitled "ICT Paradigm Shift in 2010's".

General papers were presented and discussed in 3 rooms in parallel, covering topics of Green-ICT, Home Network, Ubiquitous, Contents Delivery, Traffic Engineering, QoS, Routing, Virtual Private Network, Wireless Network, AdHoc Network and Security (Fig.3). Many UNIMAS students joined the Sessions and every room was filled up with the participants. They looked satisfactory. More than 150 participants joined the banquet with greetings by Dr.Wan Azlan, Chair, LAC and Dr.Kou Miyake, APSITT-IAB member (VP, NTT) and listened to their speeches. The closing session was conducted by Prof.Miki Yamamoto, another TPC Co-Chair (Kansai University).

The excursion was set up to visit UNIMAS on the last day of the conference. The participants had the campus tour to Labs for robotics, electric car and EMC room. Above all, they were impressed at Centre of Excellence for Rural Informatics and eBario (See IEICE Global Plaza no.12 archived at [http://www.ieice.org/eng/global\\_plaza](http://www.ieice.org/eng/global_plaza)) as a solution of Digital Divide, with the excellent hospitality of UNIMAS staff.

### Let's join 2010 IEICE Society Conference with English Session, at Osaka Prefecture University on September 14-17

The 2010 IEICE Society Conference will be held at Osaka Prefecture University, Sakai City, Osaka Prefecture on September 14-17. A complete English Session BS-7 "Network Planning, Control and Management" will provide quite many papers to be presented and discussed. Every paper has 2 page length for It covers network issues including wireless applications. It is easy for any overseas member to register for participation. Please see:

[http://www.gakkai-web.net/gakkai/ieice/kaikoku\\_e/](http://www.gakkai-web.net/gakkai/ieice/kaikoku_e/)

### IEICE SGI Workshops will be provided at CEATEC JAPAN 2010

"CEATEC" is the biggest annual exhibition in the field of electronics, information and communication in Japan. IEICE will organize Small Group of Interest (SGI) workshops there for better academic and technical activities in relevant industries. IEICE participants also have a chance to know updated technical trends in industries through the exhibition. The important information is: Date/ October 5-9, 2010, Venue/ Convention center "Makuhari Messe", Chiba, 5 min. on foot from the nearest JR station "Kaihin Makuhari" on JR Keiyo Line terminated at JR Tokyo Station. Admission/ free of charge (planned)

The details will be announced in next issue of Global Plaza.

### Message from TFIPP Secretariat

This issue is delivered also by a free mail magazine "IEICE Global Plaza on Line" with updated news of interest for you. Please contact Prof.Takahashi, TFIPP (Task Force for International Policy and Planning) at [global@ieice.org](mailto:global@ieice.org), if you need. Back numbers are available in archives at [http://www.ieice.org/eng/global\\_plaza/index.html/](http://www.ieice.org/eng/global_plaza/index.html/). Whenever you have any questions or opinions about IEICE, please do not hesitate to contact him as well.

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