

ICYS Workshop 2005

Living under the Same Roof for Earnest Discussions,
Participants find New Prospects

During March 2 (Wed) through 4 (Fri), the ICYS Workshop 2005 was held at Toray Human Resource Development Center in Mishima City, Shizuoka, with the main purpose of reporting ICYS research fellows' research achievements. All research fellows, together with newly hired NIMS researchers, attended the three-day workshop. The participants found new prospects for their studies through presentations and discussions, providing fresh inputs for each other.

Four outstanding scientists actively working at research fronts both within and outside NIMS were invited as lecturers and asked to participate in discussions, which added to the significance of the workshop.

With 54 presentations given and thorough discussions held, the intent of the workshop was attained. The bond among research fellows was fortified through exchanges of frank opinions and a friendly reunion. We will organize a workshop as an annual event from next year onward. The invited lecturers and their lecture themes were as follows:



Professor Masakazu Aono (Osaka University, NIMS fellow):
Field and current induced chemical reactions on nanoscale

Professor Yutaka Kagawa (Institute of Industrial Science, The University of Tokyo): Though surface composite layer for the protection of highly brittle structural materials

Professor Toru Maekawa (Toyo University Bio-Nano Electronics Research Center): Self-organization in Nano/Micro Systems

Professor Kunio Takayanagi (Tokyo Institute of Technology): TEM-SPM for materials science: towards a 4D analysis at very high-resolution

ICYS Calendar

2005

January 25: President Kishi and the director generals of research units attended an opinion exchange meeting for a strategic research base development program hosted by the Science and Technology Policy Bureau of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. During the meeting, the long-term prospects of NIMS in general and problems identified in the course of research base development were discussed.

February 25: The French delegations to the Japan-France Joint Workshop (Nano science and nano technology) visited ICYS.

March 2-4: The ICYS Workshop 2005 was held at Toray Human Resource Development Center in Mishima City, Shizuoka.

March 7-11: Catherine Bréchnignac (former CNRS director, France) visited ICYS and gave a lecture in an ICYS seminar.

April 18-20: First NIMS/ICYS-UPenn (University of Pennsylvania) Workshop was held. Professor Michael L. Klein led the delegations. Exchanges were made with ICYS research fellows and NIMS researchers through the seminar and visits to laboratories.

April 28: Professor Harold Kroto (ICYS executive advisor) made his third visit and held individual interviews with eight ICYS research fellows.

Coffee break

I found an interesting passage in an "Essay on Cultural Studies" written by Koichiro Nakamura, a public journalist of livedoor Co., Ltd. "In a highly homogenous community, people become sensitive to differences found among them as they are similar to each other and they tend to envy successful members. On the other hand, since people are all poles apart from each other in a highly heterogeneous community, they respect successful members as they see them and consider that they should endeavor to replicate such successful examples," he wrote. ICYS might be one such group; consisting of completely heterogeneous members for which no previous parallels can be found. Because of this, we encounter difficulties occasionally, but hopefully it will also bring us the positive aspects of a heterogeneous community. (Sahya) ☕

Internationalization Under Way!



Outcomes from the
"Speak English Campaign"
run for a year

One of the features of the ICYS is the use of English as an official language. One and a half years have elapsed since the start of the project, and the objectives envisaged in the original plan, such as hiring supporting staff capable of communicating in English, converting official forms and documents into English and releasing information in English have been fulfilled almost completely. Now we are getting to the stage of checking whether the present activity is sufficient or not.

How will Japanese be treated?

In the early stage of the project, we were planning to use English exclusively during office hours for conversations among staff members and meetings. Some companies and advanced research institutes adopt and practice such ideas. At ICYS, we are working on a consensus that we will develop an environment free of language barriers where non-Japanese speakers can work on equal terms.

Isn't Japanese ability necessary for foreign researchers?

As long as they live in Japan, a lack of Japanese ability can cause them considerable inconvenience. One of the most pressing examples may be a bank's ATM, which does not offer English guidance. Occasionally, they encounter some difficulties in acquiring a driver's license. Since these are indispensable steps to starting one's life in Japan, prompt improvement is desired. In the meantime, foreign researchers and their families are studying Japanese and ICYS renders support to their efforts to master the language.

How should Japan's internationalization ultimately be in terms of language?

Speaking of English as an internationally used language, we can find good examples in the Netherlands and Sweden, where English is understood almost everywhere in their countries. If English is understood almost perfectly in political, economic, research and academic areas in this country, we will be able to contribute more to international society and enhance Japan's presence. ICYS's activity is a step toward this goal. (MO)



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