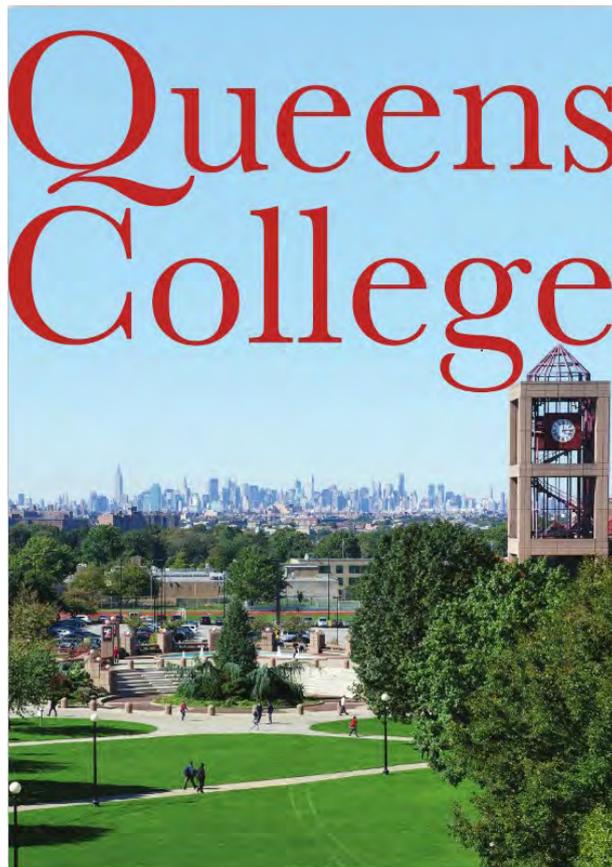


**Toyohashi University of Technology,  
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## ■ Reports

### What I Learned from the Summer Intensive Course at Queens College

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Two and a half months have passed since we came here in New York. During this period, I met many people who inspired me and have had a great influence on this FD program. Because other members of this program already reported about an outline and a beginning of our stay at Queens College, I focus on people whom I met in the Summer Intensive Course at English Language Institute (ELI) of Queens College and what I learned from them.

In the first part of this FD project at Toyohashi University of Technology, I learned that Japanese language tends to depend on high-context communication. In fact, contexts are important also in English conversation because the context means not only the words or phrases that help to explain the meanings but also situations or conditions where it is spoken. One of the instructors at ELI, Beth, who taught us many idioms, emphasized the importance of the context. She sometimes demonstrated like an actress the effectiveness of gestures and voice modulation to change the meaning. I realized that this part of the context, which comes from eye contact, gestures, tone of voice, gives us meaningful information when we speak in English. To learn this elocution, we need to make more time to practice just as an actor or a singer does. Therefore, I came to record and check my voice sometimes when I read aloud and practice for my presentation in English. This practice has

been hard for me because listening to my own voice is really uncomfortable. However, I think this is important in order to improve my teaching skills because by doing it I can recognize how my usual tone induces sleep.

Our writing instructor, Daniel, always corrected our essays of homework, and assigned us revising them at least once. Judging from the number of his class and students, I guess the correction was very hard work for the instructor. His annotations were written extremely fast, and I had difficulty with doing the homework. I was confident of reading handwriting because I am accustomed to decoding students' report and answer sheets of the exam. I tried to guess what he wrote; however, I often went to ask him about the corrections. One day, when someone claimed about unclear explanations in the textbook, which was newly adopted this year, Daniel said that a simplified textbook has a trick and it goes unreality. Moreover, he also said that English is messy and crazy, which means that we cannot organize grammar into simple rules. Based on such an idea, he showed us the real sense of English with various examples. Although it was a little hard for me to keep up with his pace, his classes were very instructive.

Looking back on classes in our college, each professor has their own style of teaching. In any case, interactions between professors and students or among students are the key to make

them interesting. I am thinking that I will go over my teaching style in my mind while observing the lectures in fall semester.

During the summer course, I spent my lunchtime with my classmates. We enjoyed talking about our culture such as food, language, and music.

I had a good friend from Colombia in the class. His name is Nicolas. He is very friendly and always encouraged me to speak more in class. He also helped me when I was one of the team leaders of the debate. After school, I often studied with Nicolas and Inseo, who was also my classmate, in the library or the student lounge.

Nicolas intends to be a physicist and

has a good knowledge of not only English but also math and physics. He also has an experience in working as an engineer, and he is interested in my study fields, which are motor drive and power electronics. Therefore, we decided to start a seminar about my research topics, and he is helping me with my teaching practice. Although our seminar has just started, he patiently provides me a proper feedback.

I am necessarily looking into my inner self while I meet various new people. It is not easy to accept the reality of my slow progress; however, I will be carrying out my intention of being positive with conviction.



Lunchtime



Study after school

## Summer Intensive Course at the English Language Institute of QC

Hideaki Misawa, National Institute of Technology, Ube College

In this report I describe the summer intensive course at the English Language Institute of QC, which took place for six weeks from July through the middle of August, 2015.

The course consisted of 4 classes: a

reading class, a writing class, and two listening & speaking classes. Each class was held two days a week for three hours. In the following, I briefly introduce the classes that I attended.

The reading class focused on the way of

reading that guesses the meaning of an unknown word based on context clues which were words before or after the unknown word. This task was difficult for me and sometimes I could not understand why such a word can be a context clue. Because the use of dictionary was not allowed during class in all the four classes, the course seems to put emphasis on the development of the ability to guess the meanings of unknown words from context.

In the writing class I learned about a basic structure of essay and wrote an essay on a different topic every week. I think that the aim of this class is to make students be able to notice and correct their errors by themselves rather than to learn about how to write an essay. The instructor pointed out that the errors of tenses, articles and prepositions are common.

The first listening & speaking class primarily dealt with idiom exercises and conversation practices with sample questions. The instructor recommends students to watch a lot of TV dramas and movies without English subtitles. By following the advice, I went to see a movie with my classmates. Because the movie was *Inside Out*, a children's film of Disney, I was able to enjoy it without subtitles.

The other listening & speaking class included debates, pair discussions on TED talks and New York Times' videos, and a presentation. Although we had debates on death penalty and gun-control, I couldn't express my opinions well due to the lack of experience and

the difficulty in expressing them in English.

Each class, in addition, covered a different grammar unit with a textbook and handouts (Fig.1). The reading class dealt with determiners, especially the relationship between determiners and count/non-count nouns. Because some parts of rules are grammatical and other parts are based on usage, I recognized again that it is difficult to appropriately use determiners and nouns.

Although the instructors have different teaching styles, they all ask students many questions in common. The instructor of the reading class told me that a professor's job is to ask students many questions to stimulate them.

I feel that my listening skill has improved over the intensive course. On the other hand, my speaking skill has not been improved very well. By the end of my stay in NY, I hope I will be able to speak English more easily.

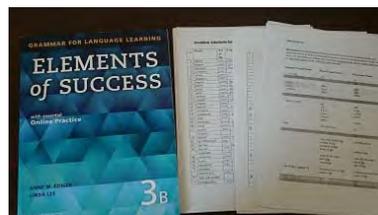


Fig. 1. Textbook and handouts.



Fig. 2. Group photograph of my class.

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