

**Toyohashi University of Technology,
Institute for Global Network Innovation in Technology
Education
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Reports

Lecture Practice in Penang and Kedah

Masayoshi Sekiguchi, National Institute of Technology, Kisarazu College

1. Overview of our training in Penang

We give lectures in English as a practice at two polytechnics and a university with staying in the state of Penang under the support of the TUT-USM Technology Collaboration Centre at Penang (TUP, for short), January 16–March 5, 2017. We prepare lectures at TUP until February 3, give lectures at Politeknik Seberang Perai (PSP) in February 6-10, at Politeknik Tuanku Sultanah Bahiyah (PTSB) in February 12-16, and at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), in February 20-March 3. We didn't know the details of audience, dates, and timetables before coming Penang.

2. The states of Penang and Kedah

Penang consists of the island and a part of the peninsula where PSP is located. We can see a lot of factories of Japan's companies everywhere. There are many Japanese people living there.

The island with a half of the area in Awaji-island is populated with a bit less than 740 thousand in which 45.8% is Chinese, and 36.8% is Malay (survey by USM in 2010). The ratio is quite different from the whole Malaysia's (the half is Malay and the quarter is Chinese).

George Town, a downtown of Penang, is famous with its World Heritage.

Kedah touches Penang and Thailand. They have two weekends on Friday and Saturday because of Islam. Kulim is a beautiful town surrounded by soft skylines and mountains. They are easier to live than in Penang, due to reasonable prices and a few traffic jams. Frankly speaking, it is just a rural area with nothing especial, but they are not poor, with many goods in high quality. Mild residents are impressive.

PTSB is located in Kulim where we can see some industrial areas.

3. Activities at PSP in the peninsular Penang

PSP and PTSB are national polytechnics, which some graduates of 5-years secondary schools learn engineering. It is like a Japanese vocational training school containing some of Mathematics. Students already learned basic Mathematics in secondary school; therefore, they want to learn useful techniques rather than Mathematics.

We visited PSP for clarifying details on January 25. We enjoyed their welcome reception with regional dance and cuisine by dominant Indian students. We spent an hour for the discussion.



Photo 1: With students at PSP

I gave my lectures in the morning of February 7 and 10. Students looked absolutely passive still before starting it, some chatting or napping appeared during the session. I should say my first one in failure. The number of participants decreased from 41 to 26, which proved their low interest. Actually, their feedbacks to my questionnaire were full of negative comments, for instance, "Math is boring," "we need videos," "we

need games,” “we need BGM” which surprised me the most. I was really tired. However, I felt at ease when I found some positive comments and appreciation.

4. Activities at PTSB in Kedah

Some teachers of PTSB visited us at TUP on January 23. Ms. Rahmah repeated that their students were low at Mathematics, so I carefully prepared my lectures, which were scheduled on February 13 and 14.

We arrived at PTSB on February 11. The next morning, we attended a general meeting, and participated in different events by departments, which was for me a monthly meeting of the department of mathematics, science and computer (JMSK for short in Malay).



Photo 2: With students and teachers at PTSB

My first slot was at 9:00 on 13 entitled with *Academic Research Methodology* for JMSK teachers which was related to a regular subject at Kisarazu College. *Consultation hour* started at 11:00, in which teachers of JMSK asked me various kinds of pedagogy in Mathematics. In fact, they have problems on the pedagogy because they are not proper mathematicians. After this slot, I had several times to give them advices. Through these opportunities, I was very glad to have contributed to their education.

In my second slot on 14, I lectured *Quaternion Algebra* for students majoring Mechanical, Electrical, and Civil engineering for two hours without any

breaks. I was really impressed with their serious attitude to concentrate on my talk. In the afternoon of the day, we visited a factory of Pak Ali, a company growing up by their major products, fruit pickles.

We enjoyed cultural events in the evening on 15, for instance, regional sports, dances and music. Finally, JMSK teachers invited me a farewell breakfast with their home-made cake decorated with my name. How impressive!



Photo 3: A cake decorated with my name

5. Activities at USM

USM is a top science university in Malaysia located on the east side of the island, with 70% of students being female. Apparently, girls dominate in classrooms.

Dr. Amirah, permitted me to use three slots on February 21–23 of her course *Introduction to Modeling*. I lectured *Kepler Problem as an example of modeling*, just after the decision on the previous Friday. This was my first lecture on this topic. I didn't have enough time to prepare for it, which was hard for me, and they showed negative responses. I found them to be a difficult audience because they were not at a same level, which I noticed after checking their feedbacks. Some students looked boring, but many of them were satisfied with my lectures.

I plan to give a talk on my study on March 3.

(Feb 25 2017)



Photo 4: Dr. Amirah, students, and me

What I have learned this year

Masayoshi Sekiguchi, National Institute of Technology, Kisarazu College

I aimed to have many experiences of lecturing in English before the program because I can improve teaching skills by such occasions. Fortunately, I got chances of two lectures, one colloquium at Queens College, and almost same chances as my colleagues' in Malaysia. I felt them insufficient. It would be fine if I had 2 slots a week through year. Anyway, I should say I'm happy because few ordinary institutions accept foreigners speaking poor English to give lectures.

Still, I think reading and writing are important in learning English while oral communication skills are stressed in recent Japan. There are some foreigners speaking poor Japanese who look a kind of sophisticated. In fact, I am not good at conversation even in Japanese but I could become thoughtful by simple efforts. So, I decided to write a book in English. There is another reasoning: a contribution to the academy. Due to Celestial Mechanics, I got a job and my family despite my poor social skills. Population of

scholars in Celestial Mechanics is quite small even in the world. I might contribute to this field by publishing a book. Now I finished only 50 pages though I planned to complete the first draft with 300 pages until the end of the program. I told people my plan in order not to give it up.

I was impressed to know the Common Core State Standards Initiative because I engage with the project of the Model Core Curriculum by NIT. The background idea would affect my teaching style. I shared the value in giving proofs of mathematical theorems at lectures, with only a few students who love mathematics. Many students want to know how to apply the theorems to real problems. It is significant to tell students its applications and attainment levels. My future works are the improvement in my pedagogy, practices of lecturing in English, and the completion of my book. I would like to thank everything because I got a lifelong purpose as a scholar.

Toyohashi University of Technology
Institute for Global Network Innovation in Technology Education
Center for International Education
1-1, Hibarigaoka, Tempaku-cho, Toyohashi, Aichi, Japan
Tel: +81-532-81-5161
Mail:unireform@office.tut.ac.jp