

ERC NEWS LETTER

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CHRISTMAS PARTY 2018

Annual Christmas party was held in ERC on Dec.21. Many students and professors, office workers in Chikudai also joined.



Many people brought their own gift to exchange. It feels like real Christmas holiday.

We also had Christmas dish. Prof. Campbell made Christmas pudding originated from his Great grandmother, cornflake wreath mixed with caramelized marshmallow, and eggnog (a drink consisting of rum, brandy, or other alcohol mixed with beaten egg, milk, and sugar.) Prof. Hill brought Christmas cookies, also gingerbread cookies. Cookie with eggnog was perfect combination.

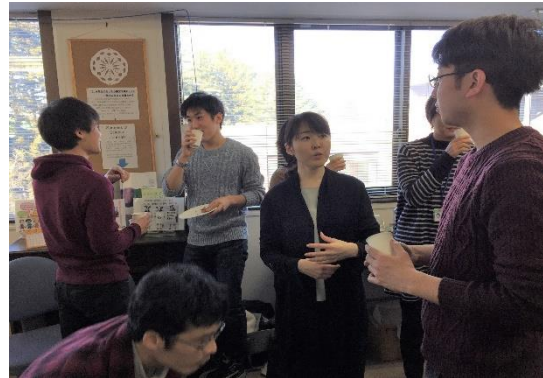
While enjoying ourselves, we also made snowflakes, we played word matching game on the whiteboard.



President Okuda gave us farewell speech, he said, "I've been always waited for this annual event, I hope more students participate to improve English skill and feel Christmas. So that in the future, they can have big sight in their life."

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This party was my first event in Japan. It was an honor that I can participate with many students and professors. It was a great experience to have Christmas dish, and I can really feel sweet touch of Christmas. If you have never been to a party before, I highly recommend you to attend it next year!



LANGUAGE STUDY BOOKS

We have new books for studying English for popular tests: 10 TOEIC, 7 TOEFL, 20 IELTS and 5 vocabulary books.

All books have explanation in detail and it is good to make your English level up. Let's study English at this chance.



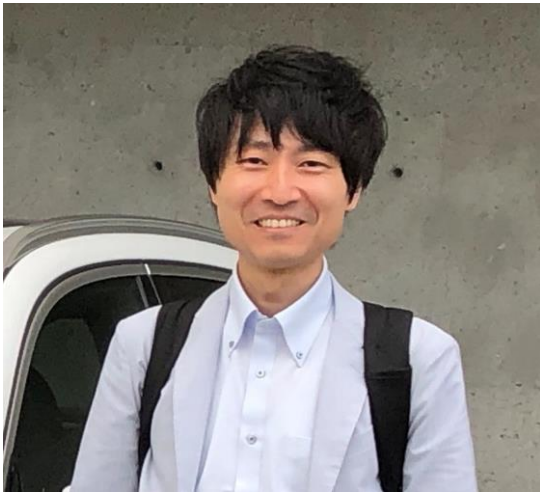
PUMPKIN CARVING 2019

Almost 10 students helped to make this year's pumpkins. They had scary faces and faces from animation characters.

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INTERVIEW WITH PROF. JUN SAITO



Tell us about your English learning experience after high school.

When I was an undergraduate, I had to take four English courses in the first year. As the coursework was very limited in amount and I did not feel it enough for improving my English, I started listening to NHK radio programs of English. I do not think that just listening to radio quickly improved my English skill, but I believe that it was good to me for getting used to English. After moving to the second year and entering the department of my major, physics, I tried to read as many English textbooks of physics as possible. The structure of English used in textbooks of physics is usually very simple and easy, and I am sure that this is also the case in any other science disciplines including agriculture and veterinary medicine. I remember that I could therefore read those books without much effort, and that they were really effective to learn not only physics but also English.

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At graduate school, almost all books and papers that I needed to read in physics study were written in English, and most documents that I made, like papers and presentation slides, were also in English. In the lab, there was a French postdoc, so the language used in seminars, meetings, and daily communication was English. I had chances to collaborate with an Italian professor, go to international conferences, invite guests from abroad, etc., where I needed to use English. I was fortunately surrounded by the situations of using English through the graduate school study, which gave me great experiences for learning English as well.

How and where do you use English for your work? How often?

I use English almost every day to read papers and other documents that are necessary for doing my research and preparing teaching materials. I often write documents in English to be used for my research and teaching, and also write research papers, proposals, etc., in English. As for listening and speaking, I normally use English for communicating with the English faculty here. I go abroad two to three times a year for my research, where I need to rely on all of the four skills of English.

Which English skill do you use more: reading, writing, or speaking?

I use reading skill more than the others, because documents that I need to read, for instance, research papers of physics, are

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almost always written in English. I do computer programming for both my research and teaching and I often need references and manuals of the programming languages that I use. They are usually freely published online with multiple language versions available, but in many cases English version tends to be the one that is the best-maintained and most up-to-date. I thus choose to refer to those English references/manuals, which is another example that I use English reading skill. As I said above, I write documents in English, but less often than I get inputs in English. I do not have as many opportunities for speaking English as those for reading and writing, except when I go abroad.

What is the most difficult part of English for you? How do you try to overcome that?

I always feel it difficult to catch up face-to-face communication in English, mainly because, I think, natural conversation is often fast and needs quick interpretation and response. In order to overcome this, I sometimes watch or listen to free online videos and try to train myself by thinking something in heart like “what can I respond in this case in English?” In general, though, I have just been struggling to overcome.

How often do you use English for personal reasons, not work reasons?

I often read online documents in English for looking for information of various types. I sometimes watch English

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TV program for kids with my daughter.

In your opinion, what are the differences in English that Chikudai undergraduate students and graduate students should learn?

Generally speaking, undergraduate students should learn English “in action”, namely practical English being used for real communication, documentation, etc. Grammar and vocabulary are also important, but just a basic level of them would suffice to improve their skills later. Graduate students should learn English used for more technical and specialized situations like research and professions. A short systematic course targeted on such topics would be appropriate for them. I am not, however, really sure if there is a clear difference of English to be learned by undergraduates and graduate students. They should learn whatever English that they need and get interested in.

What advice do you have for any Chikudai students about learning English?

Have fun! Learning English is not a troublesome work annoying you, but is an investment in yourself to enlarge your future possibilities.

Begin with what you need, instead of just “study”.

Using online resources of your interests, communicating with people through SNS, etc., should be a good introduction to learning practical English.