A Report on a Stay at Professors Sakai and Teshima’s Lab

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1. Introduction
This was my first time flying overseas. Seeing the sky close up was very exciting. My welcome party was held by the research group and by the kindness of Prof. Dr. Sakai and Prof. Dr. Teshima. The smiles and friends there made my time pass by so fast. I was in Japan for 6 months from October 2012 to April 2013. My home was the Aichi Institute of Technology (AIT) with Prof. Dr. Sakai and Prof. Dr. Teshima research group. It was a great opportunity to study and to do research in the laboratory of Prof. Sakai. Not only did I finish my research there but I also made lovely friends too. Sakura and snow were always great to see and made me excited. It was wonderful time to see because I had never seen this in my own country (the land of smiles).

2. Life in Aichi Institute of Technology, Nagoya, Japan
The City of Nagoya is located close to Kyoto city (middle of Japan). The modern IT and high technology show around this city. This was easily noticed all around me for example trains, toilet, facilities, automatic system to turn on and turn off electricity. The fastest train includes a subway that goes around the city. It also goes to AIT by the Linimo line. You can easily visit famous travel places where are close to the subway stations around Nagoya city. The accommodation at AIT was very comfortable and included necessary facilities and internet. AIT is situated in metropolitan Nagoya and adjacent to the Nagoya Eastern Hills Research Zone. AIT is surrounded with hills and a nice environment. The dormitory had modern public common kitchen which was convenient to cook and to meet with other international students who came from all over the world. The kitchen was located in the first floor of my dormitory. To go to the Lab building, I only had to walk for 5–7 minutes only or just 2 minutes by bicycle. For my food and drinks, I usually went to the department store (Apita) once per week to buy groceries. I took the Linimo Line to Irigaike-Koen station. The prices of...
Oasis 21 (water roof) and TV tower at Nagoya city

Snow time in the winter season (white land)

Nice trip with Japanese friends from the Lab group

Wonderful cherry blossom before I left Japan

Golden temple trip with friends

Prof. Dr. Sakai and Prof. Dr. Teshima research group (Graduate ceremony)

groceries there were 8-times higher than the price of Thailand. I had to pay 40 baht for 250 mL water. The mini store that I always bought foods and drinks at AIT was a well-known convenience store named Lawson. Another one was located before the entrance to AIT named Mini-Stop. Japanese people are very kind and friendly. They were always helping me with the things that I asked for without hesitation. My friends at AIT were nice and never minded my Thai foods when I let them taste it. On the 23rd of November 2012, I went to Kyoto city with my lovely friends from the Lab group. We spent 2 hours on the bus from Nagoya city to Kyoto. Golden temple was the first place where we visited. This temple was really amazing. It is made from golden stuff which was surrounded by the various colored leaves of the maple trees. It made me feel like I was in paradise. After then we went to another temple which was packed with people. On the way up to the temple, they had good products such as desserts and quality handmade crafts for sale. This trip made me dare to talk with my friends more than ever and gave us a chance to know each other better. My Japanese language is very poor but it was not a problem to live in this city because they have good systems for buying stuff and everything shows prices on products already.

The – 4 °C winter season in Japan made me get sick sometimes but it was a very good to have the chance to touch snow. I had to wear at least 4 layers of clothes before I went outside. In April, it made my heart beat faster because I was excited to see the blooming Sakura (Cherry blossom) trees around the city. I am grateful for seeing Japan in autumn because of the wonderful maple leaves, in winter for the white land of snow and in spring for wonderful Sakura trees blooming. My 6 months in AIT passed by so fast because I had nice teachers who always took good care of me. I also had lovely friends around
me who always smiled at me and helped me without hesitation. I would like to say thank you 1000-times which are still never enough for their kindness towards me.

3. Research

The research group of Prof. Dr. Sakai and Prof. Dr. Teshima include about 20 students from bachelor degree, master degree, and doctoral degree programs. Most of them are doing research about Flow-based techniques such as FIA, SIA, and the recent analysis system that was proposed by Prof. Dr. Sakai research group namely, SIEMA system for the determination of various samples. Sequential injection Lab-at-valve with monosegmentation for creatinine and albumin as bovine serum albumin (BSA) as standard was what I researched. This provides a fully automatic system for on-line sample dilution and in-line standard addition for urinary protein as BSA standard to creatinine ratio in real urine samples.

4. Participation of 50th Annual Meeting of Japanese Association for Flow Injection Analysis (JAFIA)

The 50th Annual of JAFIA was held on November 16, 2012, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, The University of Tokushima, Tokushima. We went to Tokushima on November 15, 2012 by Shinkansen high speed train from Nagoya station. We then went by bus across the ocean to Tokushima city. Tokyo-Inn was a nice hotel with very good facilities. We stayed 2 nights. The first night there was a welcome party with some Professors at a good Japanese restaurant in Tokushima city. It was really impressive. The fried chicken with salt and lemon was delicious. In the morning of November 16, 2012, we went by bus to Tokushima University which took us 15 minutes from our hotel. Opening session started at 9.00 am. Oral presentations were given in Japanese. As a result, I understood about 50%. The poster sessions were started 17.00-18.00. I presented my poster in research topic “P17S Simple lab on chip for the assay of zinc”. The welcome party for all participants of the 50th annual JAFIA meeting was at a very nice hotel. This was a good chance to meet famous Japanese Professors. The cocktail Japanese foods were setting along the meeting room with drinks and fruit juices. After a great dinner, the oral and poster presentation awards were announced. My friends who are doctoral students (W. Wongwilai) and bachelor students (S. Sateanchok). They work under Prof. Dr. Kate Grudpan as advisor and received awards for oral presentation and poster presentation, respectively. On November 17, 2012, for an excursion, we went to famous travel places in Tokushima. It was not as good as we had planned because it rained all day. We went to Natural Indigo museum, the place to show how to dye fabrics with natural plant dye. I had my own dye fabric handmade with nice printed pattern. After then we went to a nice temple named Ryozen-ji. I prayed for rains to stop but it didn’t work. Lunch time was coming after we went to another nice restaurant. I ordered Tempura set which was very delicious. I could not finish it because of the very big bowl. After we had lunch, we went to Otsuka museum of art and then went to visit the whirlpool which we viewed from the Naruto Bridge (Uzu no michi). It was really amazing and seemed like the magnificent whirlpools in the Naruto stairs. We spent at least 3 hours there which was a really good experience to see all the nice drawings and paintings. For dinner we went to a restaurant located not too far from our hotel. I had the chance to eat raw chicken and sheep meat that I never tried in my country. I also had great conversations with other students and professors. November 18, 2012, we got up about 5 am to leave and go to Kansai airport by bus. We said goodbye to Prof. Dr. Kate and his students who
were going back to Thailand. I arrived at our dormitory about 9 pm and fell fast asleep.

5. Conclusion

My 6 months at AIT, Nogoya, Japan was a great experience. The research, learning Japanese culture, making lots of friends, and exploring new things never seen in my country were all great. I gained new knowledge, experienced research, and had a great time touching wonderful maple leaves in autumn season. I also saw white land with snow in winter season and wonderful cherry blossom blooming before I left Japan. Finally, I hope that I will have chance to visit Japan (my second home) again as soon as possible.

Acknowledgement

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