

神戸市外国語大学 学術情報リポジトリ

Pleasant years with professor Mark Campana

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Pleasant Years with Professor Mark Campana

Norio NASU

It's always nice to have somebody on campus with whom you can talk about your research in detail. Unfortunately, this doesn't happen often. So I was lucky to have Mark as a colleague in the same department. When I was browsing Gaidai's website just before I moved to Kobe, I was delighted to find his name on the faculty list. I discovered that we had a lot in common in our research interest.

Soon after I started my job at Gaidai, I visited Mark's office and asked if he was interested in having a workshop regularly. "That's a good idea. Why not?" he said. That was the beginning of our weekly workshop that lasted for several years. We used to meet at his office every Tuesday to discuss journal articles and book chapters that dealt with the latest development in linguistic theory. We invited fellow linguists, both from Gaidai and from other universities.

I enjoyed the two-hour session every week. It did not just help me to keep up with rapid theoretical development. It also freed me from daily chores and troublesome jobs. Its friendly and relaxed atmosphere encouraged all the participants to share their ideas. But none of these would have been possible without Mark. He has an excellent talent for taking a bird's-eye view of debates and drawing a reasonable and appropriate conclusion. When arguments became complicated and uncontrollable, he used to put them into shape. His remarks, full of wit and humor, were always encouraging and relieving. He once said, "You get disappointed when you read a paper by yourself and can't understand it. So it's good to read it together. Even if none of us understands it, at least you can realize that you are not alone."

I owe Mark a lot not only in the workshop but also on various other occasions. In particular, I'd like to thank him for being a generous and reliable mentor. He was kind enough to act as an informant on English. Whenever I asked for his help, he gave me not just his grammar judgment but also detailed comments from a linguistic point of view. His suggestions often gave me crucial clues to improve my analysis. In addition, he kindly proofread my drafts and gave me stylistic advice.

Mark was good company off campus as well. Just a few months after I moved to Kobe, I received an e-mail from my academic supervisor in Britain. He was coming to Japan to give an invited lecture at a conference. Though I wanted to show him around in Kobe, I was a total stranger in the town. Mark kindly volunteered as a guide and spent a whole day with us. From time to time, my supervisor still talks about the day trip. It was a pleasant memory for me, too.

Now Mark has retired. I'll certainly miss all these good days with him.