

FOR MR. MURAKI

Richard Linde

It is an honor to be asked to write this for Mr. Muraki — “Masa” to me — and in the preparation it has been a pleasure to go back and remember my association with him. There is no clear memory I have of our actual first meeting, but in retrospect, it was momentous since from those early days we have been close colleagues and friends.

My teaching began in April of 1959 in the Freshman English Program. Robert Gerhard was then the Chairman of the Division of Languages and Arthur MacKenzie was the head of the Program — there was no formal Director in those days. There is no way to be sure of all those who were involved in FEP when I actually began, but then or soon after, I was working with Mr. Muraki, Setsuko Mizoguchi, Kimi Swindell, Matsuo Soga, Eichi Kobayashi, Kazuko Inoue, Everett Kleinjans; and Miss Koizumi then was the secretary of FEP. Others in the Language Division I remember well are Henry Henne, Roy Miller, and Nils Ege.

Before he came to ICU, Mr. Muraki had taught for some time in a high school, and was of particular help to me since I had not been teaching for four and a half years before that time, and felt some trepidation about standing in front of classes again. He helped me greatly to readjust to that kind of life. It was easy for me to see him since we shared an office then when the Language Division and FEP were on the third floor of the Main Building over the Library which was on the second floor. It was about that time that he graduated from the English Teaching Department of the Graduate School of Education at ICU.

The second year at ICU was particularly busy for all of us since that

was really the first year of the new Freshman English Program as I remember it. All of us, under the direction of Kleinjans, were involved in preparation of entirely new materials, teaching kinds of classes we had never taught before, and choosing books we wanted freshmen to read. Having a Language Laboratory was also a new experience for us and involved learning how to use it by doing just that — using it — trying it this way and that way since we found out no one really knew what to do.

Another change in the 60s was moving to the first floor after the Natural Science Division moved into their new building. From then on both Mr. Muraki and I had our own offices, and as Mr. Muraki taught more and more in the college I think I saw a little less of him than I had before, but except for times when one or the other of us was on leave, we never really lost contact. There was a brief period when our sons, both born within weeks of each other, played together as small boys. My son still asks about his old friend sometimes.

There was a year when I was the Acting Chairman of the Language Division, filling in for Kleinjans when he was on leave. That year was made tolerable by the strong and steady support I received from Mr. Muraki. Without his help at that time, I would hate to think of what might have happened to the Division.

Late in 1971 another change was made which brought us close together again and that was that I became a member of the Graduate School of Education in order to teach Teaching Methods of English there. Since that time, I have seen him quite often. For his students in the Graduate School, I acted as a native speaker informant reading thousands of sentences in all, deciding which ones were grammatical, which were ungrammatical, and which were questionable. In turn, whenever an advisee of mine asked a question I could not answer, I would send him or her to Mr. Muraki. Both of us have served on each other's Oral Thesis Examination Committees for most of our advisees. That system has worked out very well; it continues even today, and I like it.

Mr. Muraki has always been active in the IERS, and as part of that work has arranged for the yearly IERS year-end party which I and my wife attend. I can imagine how much organizational work is involved in that.

At the most recent party I learned that Mr. Muraki came into ICU from his high school teaching job through being involved in an IERS research project those many years ago.

Mr. Muraki is about to retire from ICU. As writing this has been an honor and a pleasure, there is also an aspect of sadness about it. There is a feeling of my not wanting him to retire, at least until I do. Who can I go to to get advice, to find an explanation of some complex problem, either administrative or grammatical, to ventilate some frustration I feel, or to get a good cup of coffee?

I am not alone. There is a small army of colleagues and students who will miss him greatly. His colleagues will miss him as I do. His students will miss a caring professor – one who has always been willing to listen, to help and to guide without worrying about how much time any consultation takes. He is also one who listens carefully to any matter, from a major administrative problem to a minor problem in grammar. I, for one, have never known him to be too busy, or to be uninterested in anything. And without exception in my memory, he is always able to offer a response that clarifies, resolves, and supports – a gentle and kindly response which always throws a new light on the issue in such a way that what seemed to be a great problem then becomes one of manageable size.

Mr. Muraki's retirement from ICU will mean a change and a diminishing in what ICU is. He will be working with other students and other colleagues. My wish, my hope, my prayer and my belief is that he will continue to find a full life in enriching the lives of those with whom he will come in contact. They are lucky people. I have been a lucky man to have known him and be his friend.

Sincerely, and with love

Richard Linde