

Title of Session: Benkyoukai - IT Infrastructure

Moderator: Keiko Schneider

Guest Speaker: Misa Gratton

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KeikoSc looks at Misa sensei to see if she is ready...

MisagGst34: First of all, I am not a Japanese language teacher, like most of you. My specialty in the field of Information Technology. My main interest today is to offer information for those Japanese language teachers and make it easier for them to use computers and the Internet which are Japanese enabled.

KeikoSc: a, sensei, introduction...

KeikoSc: Here is Misa Gratton. I thank her for the contribution.

KeikoSc bows

KeikoSc: I would like everybody to introduce ourselves.

KeikoSc: I am Keiko Schneider, the organizer of benkyoukai...

KeikoSc . o O (next)

MisagGst34: Dozo yoroshiku.

MiyukiF: I'm Miyuki Fukai, a grad. student of Indiana University

MiyukiF bows to Misa sensei

LobnaK: I am Lobna Kabbara an education student at University of Houston

KeikoSc: Welcome Lobna

SteveC-Gst36: Steve C, IT person from UVM Academic Computing / Center for Teaching and Learning

MikaW: I am Mika Welborn, I am grad student at U of O. yoroshiku, onegaishimasu.

KeikoSc: Today's presentation is based on Misa sensei's paper.

KeikoSc: Should I project here so people could click?

MikaW: well, I have hard copy in my hand..

KeikoSc: If you haven't read, please do.

MisagGst34: Yes, that's good.

KeikoSc: Mika sensei is prepared...

KeikoSc: <http://www.gratmis77.freervers.com/SOL/2003.html>

KeikoSc: Now, are we ready for Misa sensei?

MiyukiF nods

KeikoSc: onegai shimasu.

EmiGst32 joined the room.

KeikoSc: Welcome Emi

EmiGst32: Ochiai desu.

NobukoGst37 joined the room.

KeikoSc: ara doumo.

KeikoSc: Ah, Nobuko sensei.

KeikoSc: Could you ladies, quickly intro?

NobukoGst37: Konnichiwa.

MisagGst34: To start, I have defined the infrastructure in a simplest terms; (1) your own workstation and connection to the Internet; and (2) the grouping of the software involved in the above two environments.

KellyWGst35 joined the room.

KeikoSc: Hi, Kelly. We are just starting...

KellyWGst35: I will sit quite in the rear.

MisagGst34: In the simplest terms, our workstations software can be identified as the Operating System and Application Software.

MisagGst34: Although this sounds simple, this works in the most complex situations.

MisagGst34: Between the OS and App, you have software products that may be called "language extensions"

MisagGst34: When the "language extensions" are properly integrated into your workstation, you can use application software products that are Japanese enabled.

KeikoSc: Hummm.

KeikoSc: Any comments, Q so far, folks?

NobukoGst37: no

MikaW: so far, ok.

LobnaK: no

SteveC-Gst36: ok

MiyukiF: ok

KeikoSc: Misa sensei, would you like to continue?

MisagGst34: I was asked to talk about myself a bit. I was born and got a BSC equivalent in Japan. I got a scholarship from US Gov., studied in the US and came to Canada, I always worked in the IT field using many computers in many languages.

KellyWGst35: So today is payback time?

MisagGst34: In continuing, when I was working in Japan full-time from 1986-1989, I use to use four computers, two native to Japanese and two North American. In later 1990s, I found out that the North American computers can be upgraded to handle Japanese.

MisagGst34: However, it was not like using a Mac, as Apple Computers have good support in integrating Japanese. You needed technical knowledge to take advantage of what was available.

MisagGst34: I produced the first paper in 1999. This is an update in that things have progressed. It is getting better.

MisagGst34: Now that I talked about the basic items, I will ask you if you have any specific questions.

MiyukiF: How are Windows getting better these days in terms of handling Japanese?

MikaW: so, Apple is better to use Japanese language than Window? I am Window users, and do not know very well about Apple

MisagGst34: The products come with various language extensions, free of charge,

MisagGst34: The problem is when they arrive at you institution, e.g. school, university, they are installed by technical people. They may or may not be ready to integrate such extensions.

KellyWGst35: In the late 80's and early 90's such software was mostly bitmapp'd sourced, as is JWPC today. There seems to be conflict between the windows unicode and the older bitmapped programs. For example the "notepad" applications like Crimson

Editor. Too, Word Perfect says it is a language extension, but does not work all that well. Is it a problem with the input methods?

KeikoSc nods solemnly

MisagGst34: I mention in the paper, some possible cases of almost ideal situation to not so good cases,

MisagGst34: Therefore, there are now diverse situation where things have become easier and things are still not so.

MisagGst34: I do not have good solution for change the bad cases to good because some of the reasons are legitimate, e.g. security.

KellyWGst35: For example?

MisagGst34: Windows have ongoing security problems. So we still have a way to go.

In the meantime, I hope to offer information to you so that you can progress.

MisagGst34: To answer question from Kelly-san, the MS Operating systems are well known and anyone can "break-in" to disturb the operation.

KeikoSc: May I ask you a question?

MisagGst34: There are some fundamental issues related to the software business. Some think it is not a good practice to make money selling software.

MisagGst34: In the paper, I mention the Open Source Software and other products that are not for profit.

MikaW: free ware, and share ware?

MisagGst34: It is an alternative to the current problems, e.g. security, propagating widely to students, profit and control.

MisagGst34: Miksa-san, They are included. I would like add organizations which are more formal and well established in developing and distributing the software.

MikaW: humm

MisagGst34: It is very possible that the Japanese language applications can be helped using such software products.

MisagGst34: I would like to bring in one more complexity related to the Japanese language.

MisagGst34: Japan was advanced in the development of the language extensions.

MisagGst34: Unfortunately, it led to several encoding methods created by major computer vendors.

MisagGst34: As I explained in my paper, this causes the mojobake.

MisagGst34: I hope that Japan as a nation becomes committed to standardizing the encoding method for the better of everyone.

KeikoSc raises her hand

KeikoSc: May I...?

MisagGst34: I will stop here as I more or less covered items included in my paper. If there is any time left, I would like to add a few things, if it is all right with you,

KeikoSc: Well, I have a couple of comments and questions...

KeikoSc: Are you implying IT world in Japan is not still acceptable with unicode?

MisagGst34: There are two groups, one that is going with unicode and the other "opposed."

KeikoSc grins

KeikoSc: What does that mean for the rest of us?

MisagGst34: The reason for the "opposed" is the implication of "loss and profit" that may be implied.

SteveC-Gst36: . o O (or others that are forgetful ...

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/stream/hotels/>)

SteveC-Gst36: . o O (even within a site, there are different "encodings"?)

KeikoSc: I mean unicode implementation is ALMOST there...

KellyWGst35: Yes, but Japan's response recently was that it will join with China to develop a "new system."

MisagGst34: The large vendors are very powerful, they must all give up their encoding.

KeikoSc sighs

MisagGst34: I must tell you that standardization is a very difficult thing when \$ are involved.

KeikoSc: I mean for small guys like Japanese teachers overseas...

KeikoSc: what can we do?

KeikoSc: Should we trust unicode and go with it or not?

MisagGst34: One of the things if to become a group with external influence and have connections to standardization, e.g., ISO,

MisagGst34: I have been thinking about this for a long time. It will take a lot of resources to get there.

KeikoSc: So you don't see the near future too bright...

MisagGst34: I see things improve as you go.

KellyWGst35: I think the Open Source process is the best. It is different from freeware in that they invite donations of time and money. Colleges could have master programs around development of the unicode process. But as long as major software hangs onto Shift-JIS, it will be hard.

SteveC-Gst36: Would it be possible to work with an "interest group" with some larger body such as the Japan Foundation ?

MisagGst34: I agree with Kelly-san.

MisagGst34: To fight through the establishment, you will need more than the interest group, at least that is my opinion.

MisagGst34: Again it relates to dollars.

KeikoSc: Humm, so small guys like us should use JWPce?

MisagGst34: When the Open Source process is accepted more, especially in the group such as SenseiOnline, there can be improvements.

MisagGst34: I think that is JWPce is not the only solution. Solutions are multilevel.

KellyWGst35: Every US college and major high school has a Japanese program. The education leaders get what they want. If Japan Foundation could turn them the process could get better. Hard for a CEO to resist. And it is not just Japanese, it is the whole International spectrum.

KeikoSc: Kelly, who are educational leaders who get what they want?

KeikoSc: . o O (like ATJ board?)

MisagGst34: I think you need to get to the world standard bodies. The war is lost or won there.

MisagGst34: I think time is passing. I am most grateful for the interesting discussions we have had today. If there are additional questions, you are welcome to send them to me at the address given on the paper.

KellyWGst35: Thank you.

KeikoSc: Thank you very much Misa sensei.

MikaW: Thank you very much.

MisagGst34: Please note that I'll be in Japan and Korea in November.

EmiGst32: Thank you.

MiyukiF: thank you for your presentation

SteveC-Gst36: Thanks !

LobnaK: thank you I enjoyed the discussion

MisagGst34: Bowing deeply.

NobukoGst37: Misa Sensei, Thank you very much. I enjoyed your presentation and learned a lot.

KeikoSc: Thank you all for coming and participating!

NobukoGst37 bowing deeply

MikaW: Keiko-san, about SenseiOnline, Can anyone join it?

KeikoSc: Oh, you don't know about it?

KeikoSc: Just send a subscription request.

MikaW: I am not Sensei yet

KeikoSc: You are VERY VERY welcome!

MikaW: Thank you. I will do that

KeikoSc: <http://www.sabotenweb.com/bookmarks/about/senseiOnline.html>