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Reflection: EMI Conference at SCNU, Guangzhou, 2018

The conference trip to SCNU was entirely inspiring to me, not only because I earned the opportunity to present the joint research conducted by me and Gabriel, but also, I gained recognition on my English teacher identity.

To start with, this was such an informative conference focused on the upcoming trend of research: EMI. Due to the fact of globalization, ELF and Global Englishes have gained great attention. Apart from them, EMI is also growing fast worldwide. While attending the AsiaTEFL conference at UM, I listened to the speaker, a PhD candidate, who presented after my presentation on Macau Customs' identities and English language status at UM. I found the similarity from our literature reviews and noticed that in fact, in China, Hong Kong and Macau, EMI is still a huge gap that needs to be filled. Thus, I was very much attracted by this field, and would like to get engaged in other scholars' research presentations and see the current work that has been conducted. All of these thoughts and experience brought me to this EMI conference at SCNU subsequently. Although the conference organization was not satisfactory at all, the speakers delivered impressive speech contents in an interactive way. For instance, Dr. Guangwei Hu and Dr. Anwei Feng provided theoretical development of EMI and deeper insights from studies to highlight the concerns and questions for practitioners and researchers. The 'Glocal Talents' promoted by Dr. Anwei Feng was an interesting term to consider. However, it seemed that the sources he cited were not from the same philosophical framework. Some argued that Chinese culture was needed for EMI classrooms, yet how to define Chinese culture remains questionable. Whether it was a statement from a postconstructive point of view or essentialist perspective to suggest for the development of 'Glocal Talents' was not stated, and it raised my question about the justification of this term. Overall, it may seem important to promote Chinese culture in EMI classroom, but the definition of Chinese culture and representatives of it remain uncertain, whereas it was still a nice chance to listen to others and it was indeed thought-provoking for me.

As for my own presentation, I was both nervous and thrilled at the same time. Due to some inevitable factors, I had to present alone for this project conducted by me and Gabriel. It was my first time to see so many elder scholars and teachers from mainland China in such a small lecture room. Once I entered that room, I became very nervous about my presentation and felt that it was totally challenging for my young face to tell them what we found from the research. However, after the presentation, several professors came to me and expressed their great interest in my research and ELC at STU. At the bottom of my heart, I knew that I was nervous and was not feeling myself that day, whereas a professor came to congratulate me for my 'beautiful and excellent' English, which was to my surprise. In comparison with previous speakers who presented in Chinese, I noticed that there were more audiences who videotaped my speaking and took a photo of me for times. I then confirmed with my own English proficiency and realized that it would definitely make a difference if an English teacher is professional enough to present his or her studies, especially in English. Audiences were more willing to interact with me and keen to know more about the chapter that we are going to publish next year.

Last but not least, my gratitude goes to Prof. Mao and ELC for the generous support. It was like a chance to break through the ivory tower and breathe the fresh air from this EMI conference.