

What Are Your Thoughts On This Year's English Festival?



Dr. Jun Liu, ELC Executive Director at the 5th English Festival

Hou: Compared with the previous contestants, how did you find this year's contestants for the speech contest?

Dr. Liu: This year's English Speech Contest was by far the most competitive and successful on two grounds. First, we invited international participants from both the University of the Philippines, Diliman, and Dubai Men's College. Their participants displayed different styles of speech, varied cultural implications, and high-levels of critical thinking, which positioned our EF in an international context. Second, our STU contestants were well-selected, well-prepared, and tried their best, which reflects the confidence as well as competence of STU students as they are more and more motivated in learning English and using English for communicative purposes.

Hou: Many students wonder why the ELC selected the topic: 'Dare to Lead'? Why was it so different from the previous years' topics?

Dr. Liu: Daring to lead is a quality we wish our students to possess in the course of training while at STU. Our society needs talented people who are not only good at absorbing knowledge and honing skills, but also ones who are competitive in the outside world. Daring to lead is one of the most essential and important elements in one's growth. By using this topic, our students will be able to envision themselves 5 or 10 years from now as leaders in various fields. With that impetus, they understand why it is so important to train

themselves as future leaders with passion and vision to make a greater impact on our society. So it is in fact a consciousness raising, and meaningful reflection on the part of our students who are the future of our country.

Hou: How's the topic related to the ELC curriculum's target?

Dr. Liu: The topic "Dare to Lead" is related to our ELC curriculum, the goal of which is to enhance our students' communicative competence. If our students want to take the leadership roles in their respective fields upon graduation, they should also find ways to lead. Through English learning and use, the ELC curriculum provides such ways to build our students' independence and critical thinking, as well as confidence.

Hou: What were the strengths and weaknesses of our university's contestants? How about other universities' contestants?

Dr. Liu: Our STU contestants did an excellent job in the prepared speeches, but they were relatively weak in answering questions and dealing with impromptu speeches as compared with participants from other universities. One major reason is that our students did not have enough exposure to many big events, and their reading did not cover a wide spectrum of content areas other than their majors. Although STU's isolated location is an obvious factor, I think our students are able to excel as long as they listen more, speak more, read more, write more, and think more. This is exactly what the ELC is trying to make happen through both our curricular and co-curricular activities. But we need the entire STU community to help our students, especially in our students' different major areas. Cutting out some required courses, and leaving more space and time for students to engage in community work, self-learning, and group activities might also help enlarge the repertoire of our students' knowledge base.

Hou: What's the consideration of inviting participating universities?

Dr. Liu: Since we have invited a great number of top domestic universities and those from HK to participate in our English Festivals over the

last 4 years, we have reached a point that we need to elevate the level and raise the bar to our international communities. We want our STU students to think outside the box, and to experience what is out there that we can learn from. When I was invited to visit the University of the Philippines, Diliman in July 2006, I was fascinated by the level of English their students speak on campus. I thought it a great idea to let our STU students get this feel and have a greater goal to aim for. When I was invited to give a speech at the TESOL Arabia in Dubai at the University of Arab Emirates in April, 2006, I was also fascinated by the different culture and communication patterns of Arabic students during my visit to Dubai Men's College. I also believed that exposing STU students to more cultures would help us understand varied styles of communication. Therefore, I extended our invitations to these two international universities and I am so glad that it proved to be a valuable experience for great cultural exchange.

Hou: You are a very good speaker. What would you say to motivate students (who are) inferior in English activities?

Dr. Liu: I always share my stories with our STU students whenever there is an opportunity. I myself struggled in public speaking when I was a university student many years ago. But after so many opportunities over the last two decades, I realized that my own speaking abilities became more natural. I want our students to know two proverbs through my own experience: "No pain, no gain", and "Where there is a will, there is a way." Practice is essential, and patience is necessary. As long as our students know where to go and how to get there, they will eventually reach their destination. Let me conclude by saying that my wish is to see our STU students not only speak as well as I do, but also surpass me.

Hou: Thank you very much, Dr. Liu, for sharing with us students about your perspectives and experience on this year's successful English Festival.

Dr. Liu: You're welcome!

--- Dr. Jun Liu interviewed by Hou Yanmei, a student reporter for The Shantou Beat

News in Brief



P. 2 The First TESOL Symposium in China



P. 5 Developing Your Speaking Skills



P. 6 Fifth English Festival Highlights



P. 7 Dubai Culture

The First TESOL Symposium in China



Ms. Wu Qidi, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education

Ms. Wu Qidi, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education, gave the opening remarks for the symposium. She sang high praise for the English Education Reform that has been conducted at Shantou University for the last four years and emphasized the important role that English teachers play in English Education. Three featured speakers were Dr. Donald Freeman, Director of the School of International Training's Center for Teacher Education, Training and Research; Dr. Jun Liu, President of TESOL and Executive Director of the

ELC
Li Yuan

English Language Center and Dr. David Nunan, Chair Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Hong Kong. Each of them presented highlights from their work and shared their perspectives on English teacher development. In the last session, Professor Wen Qiufang from Nanjing University synthesized key speeches and gave the closing remarks for the symposium. Other invited speakers included Gu Peihua, Vice President of Shantou University and Charles S. Amorosino, Jr., Executive Director of TESOL. Liu Xianghong, from the Ministry of Education and Lei Chaozi and Wei Zhonglin from the Guangdong Higher Education Bureau also participated in the symposium.



Professor Wen Qiufang from Nanjing University

The TESOL Symposium provided an excellent opportunity for English teaching professionals in Asia to interact with experts in the field and learn more about global trends in English education.

The TESOL Symposium provided an excellent opportunity for English teaching professionals in Asia to interact with experts in the field and learn more about global trends in English education.

Speakers' Reflections

I took great pride in hosting the first TESOL Symposium in China at Shantou University. As TESOL President and Executive Director at the English Language Center at STU, I consider this successful event to be both a symbol of internationalization of STU and globalization of TESOL.



—Dr. Jun Liu, President of TESOL and Executive Director of the English Language Center

I found the TESOL Symposium in China at Shantou University stimulating and enjoyable. Your English Language Center is clearly creating not only a strong program at the university, but a wider presence and recognition for TESOL in China, which is crucial.



—Dr. Donald Freeman, Director of the School of International Training's Center for Teacher Education

I always enjoy visiting Shantou University. The environment, the facilities and the students are great. TESOL could not have chosen a better venue for its November Academy than STU. The whole event was superbly organized, and it was fitting that the first TESOL Academy in China should have been hosted by STU under the care of Professor Jun Liu, TESOL's first President from an Asian background.



—David Nunan, Chair Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Hong Kong

ELC teachers' Reflections



When Dr. Jun Liu first announced, with great enthusiasm, that China's first English TESOL Symposium would actually be held at Shantou University, I felt a terrific sense of loyalty and pride for the students and the faculty. It was a thrilling and exciting development, not only for STU, but for China and her English teaching professionals. After the symposium, my feelings were mixed: it was a tremendous and full day of listening to and sharing ideas with other educators but also frustrating that this year it was only a one-day event. Most teachers were hungry for more information and a chance to listen to more outside speakers.

—Marcia Peterson



This symposium gave us a chance to network with English teachers from home and abroad, and gave us a chance to exchange ideas, understand how others teach, and understand the successes and challenges others have in different situations. It will definitely have a positive influence on the development and the quality of English language teaching and learning in China as well. As a teacher who has only taught for a few years, there are still many things that I don't know and need to learn. Thus, I need to try to improve myself in every aspect of my teaching.

—Jiin Yap



(As mentioned, the topic of this symposium was "English Teachers' Development in EFL Contexts"). Now that I have been exposed to some international pioneering educators, what I need most is follow-up professional training and further development to reach my goal. How to apply the theories to my teaching and how to teach my students more effectively are my main concerns. What I am able to do is self-education. However, the most effective and efficient way is to have an

immersion training program in an English-speaking setting. The bell is ringing for our university to invest financially in its faculty's professional development.

—Susan Liu

The Welcome Performance: Vitality Overflowed from the Stage



Welcome Performance: Youth

Ma Shibe 05Journalism

Who says fascinating shows ought to remain merely on the stage? The Welcome Performance held on November 20th was definitely a show to impress the accreditation mission from the Ministry of Education and other audiences with its vitality on the stage.

The show, as one significant part of the accreditation, was divided into three parts: the Chao Wind, Youth, and the Rhythm of the Sea, which together represented a theme that STU was distinctive from other universities based on its location in the cultural Chaoshan area, its 25- year old history, and its advantage of offering students opportunities to go abroad for further education, according to Mr. Zeng Rui, one of the participants in the evaluation evening.

When mentioning Chaoshan culture, the Chaoshan Gong Fu Tea and the Chaoshan music are surely on the list. Considering this, the staff came up with the idea that three girls wearing elegant traditional black blouses and flowing skirts would demonstrate the

Chaoshan Gong Fu Tea Ceremony while a dance was being performed by another group to traditional Chaoshan music. That was what audiences saw that night in the performance called "A Nice Pot of Tea and Moon."

The efforts of incorporating new ideas into the evening were indicated by the high quality performances, such as Multiple Singing. Unlike most multiple singings, the singers of this performance broke the rules of standing still in front of the microphones and singing boring songs. When the music rang out, the singers, all wearing different colored clothes, appeared on the stage hand-in-hand with springy steps. Besides the familiar old songs, some recent hot songs were also sung by the chorus members during the Multiple Singing. "You know the boy who sang QianLiZhiWai? He is great!" said Huang Miaoming, a sophomore from the Medical College. Together with other performances such as the Fan Dance, Hip-Hop Dance, Chorus Performance, Jazz Music, and Orchestral Music, this evening showcased the vitality of STU and the talents of its students.

A good ending may also be half the success. At the end of the Welcome Performance, the performers who were from the same colleges presented teams to show the characteristics of their individual colleges in various ways. "The students made their decisions on their own," said Chen Li, one of the directors of the show, "They stood for their colleges when they were on the stage then, so they put heart into it."

(Photo provided by Feel)

Perspectives on the Future of Shantou University

–ELC Conversation Series #22

ELC Instructor
Claudia
Kunschak

Wednesday, November 22, 2006 saw the 22nd event in the Conversation Series held by Shantou University's English Language Center. On this occasion, very fittingly scheduled during STU's accreditation, Dr. Jun Liu, Executive Director of ELC, interviewed Vice President Pei-Hua Gu on the topic of "Perspectives on the Future of Shantou University". Before a packed audience of students from all majors, Dr. Gu shared some of his 20-year-long experiences in Canada, from his beginnings as a graduate student to his career at the University of Calgary, which culminated in the positions of Department Head and Vice Dean.

When asked about his motivations for returning to China and helping to bring STU up to international standards, he mentioned what a unique opportunity this provided, along with the effective persuasion on the part of the Li-Ka-Shing foundation, and the great sense of responsibility he feels in giving something back to his country.

Concerning the future of Shantou University, Dr. Gu emphasized the need for further internationalization of the institution, the requirement of reaching international standards, and the precondition of full English competence for teachers and students alike.

During a highly informative Q&A with students eager to participate in the discussion, Dr. Gu shared his views on the comparative advantages of graduate studies abroad versus China, as well as the comparative strengths of Chinese and Canadian students. Both Dr. Liu and Dr. Gu concurred in emphasizing the importance of international experience in learning intercultural understanding, overcoming difficulties, and being able to face the greater challenges which lie ahead.

Overall, it was a pleasure to hear eminently practical, straightforward answers to some highly pertinent questions raised during the evening.



Lively discussion between Dr. Gu and Dr. Liu

Directions in Public Speaking

–ELC Conversation Series #23

ELC Instructor Marcia Peterson



Dr. Coombe being interviewed by Dr. Liu

On Thursday night, November 30, 2006, Shantou University's English Language Center held its 23rd Conversation Series. The event was particularly timely due to the English Festival's Speech Contest being held on December 1st. On the topic of "Improving Your Public Speaking Skills", Dr. Christine Coombe from Dubai Men's College addressed a multitude of questions asked by Dr Jun Liu, Executive Director of ELC, as well as engaging questions from the enthusiastic audience. Before an overflowing and exuberant crowd of both students and teachers, Dr. Coombe often effectively intertwined humor while sharing her wealth of public speaking experiences, thus contributing to a lively and informative evening.

A few of the key points examined and explained during the 70 minute conversation and questioning were as follows:

- 1-Nothing can replace practice, practice, and more practice
- 2-Body language includes the whole body, gestures, stance, posture, movement
- 3-Pronunciation and increasing confidence can be aided by writing and reading
- 4-Practice in front of a mirror, if necessary
- 5-Smiling must be sincere and appropriate
- 6-Control and use of one's voice is essential for successful public speaking
- 7-The appropriate use of humor should be understood as cultural - be careful
- 8-The equal importance of both fluency and accuracy
- 9-If you are going to use memorization, know your material inside and out
- 10-Use short notes, if necessary, only a few key sentences

Dr. Coombe stressed the fact that everyone makes speaking errors and no one is a perfect speaker. We all continue to learn and gain confidence when we are challenged to speak in public. Practice is the key even if one is not intending to make a career out of public speaking. With a crowd stretching the seams of the Science Hall to capacity, students needed no encouragement to ask questions of both Dr. Coombe and Dr. Liu. The evening passed by too quickly, filled with information and helpful speaking tips.

“SLC offers great opportunities for students to communicate,” Liao Qinghong, a junior Computer Science major, said. As a student tutor in SLC, he has gradually become more confident and has gained better oral expression abilities. He is grateful that SLC provides him a platform to disseminate his knowledge. He feels very happy and fulfilled to do his best to help others and consequently get recognition for his efforts.

06 Business Tang Ying



Qinghong Liao from Computer Science Department



May Liu from the English Department

Two years ago, May Liu was a student tutor in English in the SLC. Guess what? Now, she’s there again, but as a tutor in Japanese. “I have witnessed the growth of the SLC, and I’ve been growing with it. I’m happy that the SLC is becoming more and more popular with students. So, peers, please do not hesitate. Come and enjoy our varied services and you may find exactly what you need in the SLC,” May Liu said passionately.

03 English May Liu



Liu Yu from 04 Mathematics

Liu Yu from 04 Mathematics is a tutor in the SLC. To his understanding, SLC is a place for heated discussion. “It provides us a stage to discuss questions—not just think them over, but also talk them over! And I believe wholeheartedly that learning through discussion is a much better way than meditating long and hard!” Additionally, he mentioned, “I hope more and more students can come here with their questions because I haven’t met a real obstacle yet, so I’m hoping someone will come and baffle me.”

04 English Wu Aixian

Self Learning Center

Feeling uninspired about studying alone? Worried about falling behind in class? What can you do? It’s high time for you to go to the Student Learning Center. The Student Learning Center, also known as the SLC, holds a leading position among other universities as a pioneer in providing all-free learning services such as group studying, tutoring, and ITC (Information Technology Competence) help. In the SLC, there are teacher managers, student tutors and student correspondents, who help students with questions and problems in their academic studies. Great numbers of students have already benefited from the various services and activities offered by the SLC. In our forum today, some students will share with us their feelings and stories about this place of giving, helping and sharing.



Gump Ye (right) is asking student tutors

“SLC is my cup of tea!” said Gump Ye, a freshman from the College of Engineering. He is rather keen on discussing problems in his studies with others. In order to spend less time getting to the SLC, he even bought a second-hand bicycle. “It is impressive that every student tutor I have met here is enthusiastic, patient and friendly. Discussing problems with them has helped me a lot in my schoolwork!”

06 Liberal Arts Ke Rensi

As for Wu Mimi, a humorous kindhearted manager in the SLC, I find her most attractive quality to be her lovely and warm smile. It’s hard for me to believe that she can always be so easygoing around her staff as a manager, and we all love her. She never puts on airs around us and is always gentle and patient when giving us commands, to say nothing of her attitude toward the students coming to SLC. She keeps smiling all the time. I really enjoy working in SLC in such a comfortable atmosphere.

05 English Tracy Li



Wu Mimi(middle), SLC Manager



Chunyuan Guo from Biology Department

Guo Chunyuan, a junior Biology major, was a big fan of the SLC a year ago. At that time, she always headed to the SLC when she found she couldn’t follow her teachers. Since student tutors in SLC could teach her face to face, she realized that she could understand them better. “I’m a girl who tends to be anxious about my assignments. However, whenever I would go to the SLC, I was always greeted by the tutors’ sweet smiles and their friendly attitudes. For me, that really calmed me down and helped me to focus on my studies.”

04 English Wu Aixian

Developing Your Speaking Skills

Being a judge for this year's speech contest was not an easy job because all of the contestants were very skilled in their words and delivery. Just by being on the stage, each of them "dared to lead" and represented the theme of the contest very well. This year was an especially important year for the English Festival Speech Contest because it was the first year that it was an international speech contest. We can look at this experience as a great opportunity to learn from the performances given by our international visitors, as I am sure they learned from our students as well. Let's take a look at the speech given by the first place winner, Amelia Berselona, who came from the University of the Philippines. Here is what she had to say:

"Dare to Lead" - Amelia Berselona

Have you heard of remarks like, "Oh, I don't want to be the leader. Go get someone else," or "Sorry, I am not fit to be a leader..."? Surely, these statements make leadership sound like a disease that is either hereditary or congenital.

Good evening. Today I am going to talk about leadership - what it is and what it is not.

First, let me define what leadership is. Put simply, leadership is the ability to influence others and move people to action. This means that you may be a leader even without an official title. You need, however, the ability to lead yourself, because you cannot influence other people's lives unless you first take charge of your own. You see, leadership starts from within, and extends across through words and action, as it is best set through example.

Second, leadership, that is, true leadership, is an act of service. Without a sense of service, any type of leadership will be meaningless. This quality of leadership as having a sense of service distinguishes the statesman from the dictator, the hero from the conqueror. And while not all leaders are heroes, all heroes are in some way, leaders.

Lastly, leadership can be learned. From luminaries such as Mahatma Gandhi, Deng Xiaoping, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King and Ninoy Aquino, to our present-day teachers, parents, and local community leaders, we learn that leadership does not impose a certain gender, race, nationality or economic status. But leadership does require diligence, courage and strength of character.

Ladies and gentlemen, none of us are born with the ability to lead, but we can all work on becoming leaders by influencing others through sincere acts of service. Remember: Leadership is not a responsibility to be feared, but a challenge we must dare take.

So the next time someone asks you to be a leader, don't say "no" and point your finger at someone else. After all, you will be surprised to notice that three fingers are pointing back at you. So instead, humbly but firmly say, "I will do my very best to be of service to all of you!"



Amelia Berselona, the first place winner in speech contest

Comments:

We can see that this speech is well organized, interesting and it is directly related to the topic, right? Through her words, she creates a relationship with her audience. She begins with a specific question, provides several detailed points and ends by presenting us with a challenge. This is very effective and keeps the audience's attention.

Another very important lesson to learn from this script is that when preparing for a speech, you should try to write how you speak. Don't try to speak how you write. In other words, everyone has a particular way of speaking that is natural and real. Try to preserve your individual "voice" when you are preparing your speech. Let your true personality shine through your written script, your spoken language and also your body language, whether it is funny, serious, sweet, or argumentative. Giving a speech is more than just what you say. It is also how you say it.

Finally, I have to say that I learned a lot from all of the contestants. They taught us a lot through their words and their body language. I think they were all very brave to get on that stage in front of everyone in the Great Hall. Thanks to everyone who participated and dared to lead.

ASK JENNIFER !

Jennifer Nowicki is an ELC Level 4 instructor. She has been working as an ESOL Instructor and Civics Program Coordinator at Pima Community College Adult Education for 7 years in Tucson, Arizona. You may e-mail your questions to be considered for the next issue to jlnowicky@stu.edu.cn.



Q: Is there any way to help remember vocabulary well?

A: Let me share my experience with you. I am having a very difficult time remembering Chinese vocabulary now too. I try to copy words on cards, label the things in my apartment, and I still seem to forget everything! But through this experience, I'm learning something about myself: I think that my ears remember better than my eyes do. I find that I remember words better when I focus on listening more than just reading. I feel such a sense of accomplishment when I understand new words being used outside of my class. For example, when I hear the woman at the store tell me the price for something, I remember the number words better than if I just tried to read them over and over again in the book. They are no longer abstract. So pay attention to the words that you hear in English movies, songs or conversations. Notice what context you hear them in. Look for connections that you can make with other words that you do know. With patience and practice, I think we will both improve our vocabulary.

Q: I have found the grammar that I study is different from that in other foreign books. It seems that they tend to use the words casually. Sometimes I get confused. Which one is right?

A: Probably they are both right! While the grammar lessons taught in your schoolbooks is the officially "correct" way of using the language, in the real world, people do use the language more casually- in their speech as well as in their writing. Maybe some words are not used in the literal way, but in a symbolic one. Maybe you find many idiomatic expressions or ideas that are expressed indirectly with sarcasm. These are all tools that are common and add a deeper meaning to the words. While it is important to understand the correct grammar, it is also important to notice how it is used and how it changes in different situations among different people. In order to figure that out, it helps to read a lot, pay attention to what seems "casual" and try to notice patterns. It can even be fun to try to figure out these "unspoken" rules of communicative competence. Yes, developing this skill can be confusing, but it is also a great way to improve your understanding of the language.

Good Organization, Excellent Performance STU English Festival Highlights

05 Journalism, Yang Mingyuan
04 Mathematics, Hou Yanmei



Joanne Liu, the third place winner in the Singing Contest

This year's English Festival was a great success. Everything went smoothly and the performances were so wonderful that they won high praise from the judges.

"A Fantastic Idea"

Christine Coombe of Dubai Men's College in the United Arab Emirates, who was the chief judge of the Speech Contest, said that she was deeply impressed by the English Festival. Professor Lorna Paredes from the University of the Philippines shared the same opinion with Dr. Coombe, saying that "on the whole, it was very impressive." Dr. Coombe even wanted to share the "fantastic" experience and ideas with her colleagues back home. "What a fantastic idea to put English in the spotlight and conduct all the events in English," said Dr. Coombe. She also praised the students from STU by saying they "have international awareness". "I think it's necessary for people who want to be successful to participate in such events," she added.

Good Organization

Professor Paredes and Dr. Coombe both said the English Festival was well organized. "Everything was in good order," said Professor Paredes. Dr. Coombe told us that the organizers looked very young, and she initially thought they might not have had enough experience. "In fact, they did very well. They thought of everything - the water, snacks for the judges, the MCs, the operation of the lights, and so on," she praised.

Excellent Performances

Tao Qing, a judge from Shanghai Jiao Tong University, was impressed by all the contestants' excellent performances. "Their language styles distinguished one from another and they performed very well." Philippe and Gaelle, Co-chairs of the English Festival, and Dave Williams, the chief judge of the Singing Contest, had similar opinions of the contestants' performances. "Our own STU participants did quite well, as did our visitors from other Chinese universities," Dave stated. In Philippe's opinion, the contestants from Shantou University competed well with the students from the other top universities in China and abroad.

A Big Opportunity

As Philippe said, the English Festival offers chances for students to practice writing, speaking, listening and singing. Besides, the contestants set good examples for their peers and classmates, encouraging them not to be afraid of making mistakes. What's more, Gaelle added that both contestants and spectators had the opportunity to learn about the topic "Dare to Lead" outside of their English classes.

The 2006 English Festival has successfully concluded and there is no doubt that next year's festival will also be a shining occasion.

06 English Ke Rensi The fifth annual English Festival, organized by the English Language Center at Shantou University, was quite a success after a series of festivities on the nights of December 1 and 2, 2006.

This year's festivities included the Intercollegiate Speech Contest and the Intercollegiate Singing Contest, featuring students from five universities: the University of the Philippines, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Beihang University, Dubai Men's College and Shantou University. It was the first year that two foreign universities got involved in both contests, which made the competitions more intense and exciting.

The festivities began on the evening of December 1st with an opening ceremony in the Great Hall at STU. The Co-Chairs of the English Festival Organizing Committee, Philippe Bierny and Gaelle Sabben, gave a brilliant opening speech. The Vice President of Shantou University, Dr. Peihua Gu, and the Executive Director of the English Language Center, Dr. Jun Liu, explained the rationale for EF as an integral part of ELC's mission to enhance STU students' communicative competence before he recognized the visiting universities. Then Dr Liu, as he has done in the previous years, shot the EF t-shirt into the air, to be grabbed by excited students in a sea of thunderous applause. The EF reached its climax -- a symbol of excitement only experienced in the annual EF at STU.

The Intercollegiate Speech Contest ensued with the theme, "Dare to Lead." Ten contestants from the five schools participated in a cut-throat competition lasting two rounds. Each contestant gave a prepared speech lasting three minutes and an impromptu speech lasting two minutes. All speeches were followed by a question posed by the guest Question Master, Dr. Christine Coombe. At the end of the night, Amelia V. Bersalona from the University of the Philippines took first place without contention.

The Intercollegiate Singing Contest brought us great delight on the following evening as ten contestants from the four universities (Dubai Men's College did not participate in this competition) rocked the stage in the Great Hall. The attendance rate was so high that some spectators were even jammed in the corridor. Waving colorful glow-in-the-dark sticks and blowing whistles, the spectators enjoyed a feast for the ears. After two rounds of fierce competition, first place went to Gretchen Stephanie M. Espina, also from the University of the Philippines.

In addition to the contests, spectators gathered to watch the interlude talent show, which included the drama of the year, "The Lion King," performed by CEC members, dancing, a piano performance and a Tae Kwon Do performance. This year's festivities won favorable comments



ELC teachers and Speech Contest contestants

from the public. Huang Xiao Ming, one of the most excited audience members, thought highly of the speech contest, "All the contestants were impressive! They spoke excellent English!" Besides that, 133 comments on the English Festival were made on STU's Tulip BBS during only two days.

English Festival Winners' Reflections



Amelia V. Bersalona, the first-place winner of the Speech Contest from the University of the Philippines said, "As an

English learner, you not only need to know how to speak English but also how to understand what English speakers think. It's not only a speech but also a performance. I prepared materially and emotionally. You should have your own points and ideas."



Gretchen Stephanie M. Espina, the champion of the Singing Contest from the University of the Philippines

said, "I just love to sing. It's my passion and something that I really love to do. I'm here to share my culture with you, not for the competition."

Viola Shen, the second-place winner of the Intercollegiate Singing Contest from Shanghai Jiao Tong University



said, "When the music is loud, my anxiety flies away! It wasn't easy to sing and dance at the same time, but the atmosphere was so exciting that I ended up feeling very comfortable on the stage!"

Peter Zong, the second place winner of the Intercollegiate Speech Contest from Beihang University said, "In our speeches, we try to



demonstrate our ideas and persuade others. I think we not only have to be excellent speakers, but also logical thinkers."

06 Liberal Art Ke Rensi
05 Liberal Art Zhai Wanyi
04 Science Hon Yanmei

A Slice of Philippine Life



A "Dressed Up" Car

With the first word of Amelia V. Bersalona's speech, the attention of all audience members was focused on her perfect and powerful spoken English. The next night, singing with a beautiful voice on the stage, Gretchen Stephanie M. Espina wowed the audience. Amelia and Gretchen, who came from the University of the Philippines, were the champions of the Intercollegiate Speech and Singing Contests. They were pleased to talk about their culture and share a slice of Philippine life with us.

Multicultural Society

Influenced by China, Malaysia, Europe, and America, the Philippines is a multicultural country. It is comprised of thousands of islands. There are more than 90 different kinds of people and more than 70 languages spoken in the Philippines. The national language is Tagalog, though English is also widely used in official and business contexts. Filipinos believe in different religions. For example, Gretchen, who is a Muslim, said her family won't sweep the floor at night. However, as a Romanist, Amelia doesn't follow the same custom.

Philippine Music

Filipinos love music very much. They often use music to express their feelings, whether during a festival, when they are working, or in their daily lives. When asked about folk music in the Philippines, Gretchen quickly became excited. She thought of a folk song and immediately began to sing it while we were walking in the street. Colonized by Spain for over 300 years, the Philippines is the only Asian country today that also has

Latin culture.

Its music has been influenced by Western music. Filipinos will mix gongs or bamboo with guitar in their music, which creates a special fusion, Eastern-Latin sound.

A "Dressed Up" Car

When you think of the Philippines, what comes to your mind, the bright blue oceans or the tall green palms? The Philippines is much more than that. You will come to love it when you see a vehicle common there - the jeepney. It is a popular means of public transportation in the Philippines. It is a special car that you can seldom see on the streets of any other country. Decorated with vibrant colors and bright chrome hood ornaments, it looks just like a "dressed up" toy car. A lovely kind of transportation, the jeepney is convenient and low in price. Passengers are allowed to board and sit practically anywhere they want. All they have to do is raise their hands and pay a small amount of money. Sitting in a colorful toy-like vehicle and looking up at the blue

sky is a most pleasant experience. The jeepney was originally made from US military jeeps. When the American troops left the Philippines after the end of World War II, hundreds of jeeps were left behind. The smart Filipinos added metal roofs for shade and painted colorful pictures on them. In such a way, they made practically brand-new cars!

A Special Lantern

The parol is a traditional Filipino Christmas lantern. The word parol comes from the Spanish word for lantern. Colorful garlands make up the star-shaped lanterns, which are linked with 'comet tails'. Other materials, such as bamboo sticks and crepe paper, are also used to make parols. The parol symbolizes the star of Bethlehem, where Jesus Christ was born. The star lantern is therefore the symbol of Christmas in the Philippines. All throughout the Christmas season, these kinds of lanterns can be found hanging everywhere - along the streets and outside homes and villages. For a Filipino, making a parol, decorating it, and lighting it is a way of expressing hope and faith.

Dubai Culture

05 Liberal Arts Huang Yuepeng
05 Science Li Hui

Dubai is the second largest emirate in the United Arab Emirates. It is a developing emirate with a high GDP, attributed to a great extent to the rich oil supply. More significantly, Dubai has a rich culture. In an interview, Adnan Mohammed, a post graduate at Dubai Men's College, shared with us the abundant culture of Dubai.

Dubai culture has unique characteristics in food, manner, and societal structure. The foods Dubai people eat are heavy, and they eat large amounts of food at every meal. Adnan told us humorously, "Last night, I kept eating and eating, but I still felt hungry." Their main foods are rice and meat. They also eat a lot of soybeans, garlic, and eggplant. One interesting thing is that they do not eat pork, for they consider it to be unhealthy.

Dubai people are becoming more and more open in terms of how they dress. Women who stick to Islam strictly wear veils over their faces, leaving only their eyes exposed, while men wear conservative suits. However, with the influx of immigrants and visitors, more and more people are wearing casual clothes, such as jeans and T-shirts.

Last but not least, patriarchy is fully emphasized in Dubai. Women seldom work. They stay at home and care for the children as well as do the housework. Men can legally have three or four wives. If a man divorces his wife, he shall continue to support her until she gets a job or finds other economic

resources.

Dubai culture features special holidays and festivals. The most important holiday for Dubai people is the National Day. On this day all seven emirates of the United Arab Emirates have big celebrations. Traditional festivals are an important custom in Dubai. The most important one is the Shopping Festival, which lasts for a month from March to April. People sell all kinds of things for decent prices. Cars, jewelry, and electronic products catch most people's eyes. The Shopping Festival promotes tourism. Big Eid, another festival, is at the beginning of January. During that festival, people do not eat from sunrise to sunset for a month. Besides Big Eid, there is also Small Eid, for which people will have a day off.

Dubai culture has interesting specialties in food, manner, patriarchy, and customs, which attract a lot of visitors from around the world. Its rich culture is worthy of our appreciation.



The Dubai Shopping Festival

Place Students' Intellectual and Creative Growth First

04 Liberal Arts
Zhang Minli

The world-famous University of the Philippines (UP) is a cradle for great intellectuals of the country. Their educational motto is "Place students' intellectual and creative growth first". UP plays the leading role in education for the entire nation. The headmaster of UP, Professor Lorna Paredes gave us an inspired talk about education in this outstanding university.

Freedom of Speech

Since the Philippines was controlled by Spain for 300 years, over 80% of its population is Catholic, around 10% is Islamic, and the remaining 10% is comprised of other religions. The Philippines is a melting pot, where one can find many different beliefs and dialects. People there treat the many different cultures fairly and equally. This attitude penetrates into the university's academic philosophy. Paredes says that they encourage all religions. "UP is a place that provides academic freedom. There are no officially supported religions. Students are encouraged to voice their opinions, to argue with their professors, and not just to accept what the professors and textbook say."

Wide Platform

UP has one autonomous college and six constituents, providing instruction in



The University of the Philippines in Manila

hundreds of major subjects, including rare subjects like home economics and research of Islam. Students are required to study 45 general subjects before they focus on specific academic areas. "We offer a platform for students to acquire a wide range of knowledge," Paredes said confidently.

Hard work and Contribution

Since U.P. is the No.1 University in the Philippines, students are always urged to "be excellent" and "perform their best". Paredes stressed that, just because a student is accepted to UP, that doesn't mean they have worked hard enough. They must maintain diligence in their studying and research. When asked what students do after graduation, she told us that most graduates choose to find domestic jobs, where they can contribute to their respective fields. Just as U.P. claims, it is "a major source of leadership and expertise for public service."

ELC IN NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

ELC Li Yuan

The five-day National Accreditation came to an end on November 24. The evaluation of the English Language Center (ELC) indicates the great success of the English Enhancement Program (EEP) first implemented four years ago. The accreditation experts were significantly impressed by STU students' high English proficiency and they sang high praise for the ELC, which not only acts as the public English education center in STU, but only as a strong community to connect teachers and students together.

On November 20, Professor Cheng Jieming from Hong Kong University and Professor Cao Yiqiang from the China Academy of Art visited the ELC office and had a meeting with Dr. Liu, Executive Director of the ELC, as well as other ELC faculty and staff. Dr. Liu gave the two experts a brief presentation about the ELC, with a twelve-minute video followed by an update on the EEP, after which he answered questions raised by Professor Cheng about the curriculum, teacher development and recruitment, as well as ELC activities. Both of the experts were impressed by the variety of student activities, international outreach, competence-based learning and teaching orientation.

On November 22, 15 students from 6 colleges were randomly chosen to take a test of English proficiency. They were interviewed by Professor Huang Yushan from Hong Kong Science and Technology University and Professor Zhong Binglin from Beijing Normal University. After the test, Professor Huang told the students, "I am so impressed by your performances. I believe your English proficiency and critical thinking are on par with those of students at Hong Kong Science and Technology University. Some of you are even better than our students."



Dr. Liu welcoming the MOE experts in the ELC Conference Room.



From L to R: Dr Cheng Jieming, Dr. Jun Liu, Dr Cao Yiqiang and ELC Associate Director Peter Xiao

On November 23, Professor Cheng observed the class of ELC instructor Dave Williams. Dave was well prepared, interactive and humorous. His students were active in class and participated in different group discussions. Professor Cheng was very pleased to see the liveliness of the class and commented with praise on the oral competence of the students.

In general, the positive Accreditation appraisal indicates the ELC has achieved a great triumph after four years of hard work, and it encourages all of the ELC members to keep working towards its goal.

ELC CLASS RECEIVED HIGH PRAISES FROM MOE

05 Journalism

Feng Miaolan

On the morning of Nov. 22, ELC teacher Dave Williams' Level 4 class was observed by one of the experts, Professor Cheng Jieming from HK University, accompanied by Dr. Jun Liu, for the undergraduate course evaluation of Shantou University. Williams and his students did an excellent job, receiving high praise from both the expert and Dr. Jun Liu.

Students were divided into five small groups and sat facing one another. Initially, they reviewed the vocabulary through questions and answers. Then they turned to the class topic, Feng Shui. Students were asked to have a discussion activity in which each group held a conversation to discuss different questions posed by the instructor. After their discussion, a speaker representing each group gave a mini-presentation to the other students. After the discussion, Williams used a few floor plans to stimulate students' critical thinking by commenting on the designs using the concept of Feng Shui.

Several students did some preparation before the class. "I read the new lesson and looked up some vocabulary before the class," said Wang Xiaoli, one of Williams' students, a sophomore in Engineering. "And all of our classmates were active to show their opinions. The classroom was full of English discussion."

"Dave was well-prepared, interactive, humorous, and felt at ease. All those who spoke on behalf of the class did extremely well - they spoke confidently, competently, and substantially" said Dr. Liu. "Professor Cheng was very pleased to see the liveliness of the class and commented with praise on the proficiency and oral competence of the students," wrote Dr. Liu in the feedback letter,



ELC teacher Dave Williams

EEP APPRAISAL MEETING

04 Electronic Li Zhimin

The week of November 19th to 25th was a historical week at Shantou University (STU). It was historical because of the national educational accreditation of STU, a test and evaluation of the efficacy and efficiency of the work STU has done over the past 25 years.

The English Enhancement Program (EEP) at STU is on the cutting edge of English teaching in China. The appraisal of the EEP by the Ministry of Education was therefore very critical, having implications not only for STU, but also for English teaching in China's higher education system at large.

On November 21st, a group of experts in English teaching held a meeting with 15 students, who were randomly picked from various grades and majors. The meeting was casual in style but intense in content, as all attendees, experts included, had heated discussions about some current controversial topics. The topics varied from education to the environment, from politics to technology. Each and every student was actively engaged and eagerly expressed ideas in English.

When the meeting concluded, one expert, the Vice President of Hong Kong Technology University, was reported as saying to the students that they had made a strong impression on him with their excellent speaking skills, which could rival those of some students in his university.

After the meeting, one attendee from the Science College, Mai Jun, said, "I got to know more about the advantages of Shantou University as well as its potential for the future. I believe that after the meeting, everybody present there, including me, was even more optimistic and confident about the bright future of STU." Another participant in the meeting recalled, "If time had permitted, we could've discussed more. I enjoy expressing myself in English and I am very optimistic about the future development of my school."

The Shantou Beat

The Shantou Beat is a publication of the English Language Center.

Editor-in-Chief: Jun Liu

Managing Editor: Li Yuan

Assistant Editors: Robyn Wall

Kate Hardeman

Column Editors: Huang Zengfei

Jennifer Nowicky

Hou Yanmei

Zhang Weizhun

Li Yuan

Bai Xi

Lin Wanqi

Coordinators: Zhang Bingyan

Li Likui

Art Designers: Lin Wanqi

Jiang Yuanting

Email: yuanli@stu.edu.cn

website: elc.stu.edu.cn

telephone: 0754-290-4639

No reproduction or republication without written permission.