



ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER

# SHANTOU BEAT

37

Nov. 2015

English Language Center, Shantou University, China.

## Alex: Study in America

Marie Alexandra Michelle Beneteau is teaching Level 2 students now. She is a new teacher who's both elegant and gorgeous. She used to be a teacher at Tsinghua University. Spending the majority of her life in the States, she has received an American education for years. Therefore, we conducted an interview with Alex about American education, which provided us with a lot of insights and details of this advanced system.

**STB: The tuition in America is really expensive, and I have heard many American parents don't allow their children to go to university. Is that true?**

Alex: A lot of parents want their children to go to the university. Luckily or unluckily, it depends on how you look at it. The government provides financial assistance. But you have to pay them back, at a very high interest rate. But you know, when you're young, before you go to school, you don't have a job, but when you graduate, you will get a good job. So they don't ask you to pay them back until you get a good job. So it's possible for people to go to university, even if you don't have money in your pocket.

**STB: Most Chinese students believe that, generally, American students don't have much homework or courses in primary or middle school. Is that true? Could you tell us something about your school life?**

Alex: I think in primary school there's quite a bit of homework. Probably, it is different state by state. We have history, math, science, geography, spelling, English vocabulary, foreign languages [she took a Spanish course in primary school, and French in high school and college], PE. That's it. After school, most people do sports or go to clubs. I danced ballet after school. It's more important for socialization, like hanging out with your friends in America.

**STB: Do you feel stressed to have so many classes?**

Alex: No, not really. No stress. I think in primary school we have 30 minutes to 1 hour of homework. In middle school 1 hour, and in high school 1 hour to 2 hours at most.



**STB: Before we enter university, we have to take the College Entrance Exam. In America, SAT is a way to select students. Could you tell me how you prepared for your SAT?**

Alex: Yep! I had a book, an SAT quiz book. I just tested in it and practiced questions. We were given strategies to help answer the questions. I probably worked in that book an hour a day, but I still went to my activities after school, like ballet practice. My teachers told me not to study before the test, but have a good rest. Because they think you can't learn anything new, just let your brain rest. But we studied about 6 weeks before.

Through this interview, we can take a glance at American education. American education is really different from Chinese education. Thanks Alex for a good description of education in America.



By: 15 Journalism Jade Gao  
Proofread by: Alexandra Beneteau

1st Place: 600 RMB

2nd Place: 400 RMB

3rd Place: 200 RMB

**2015 Fall English Festival Poster Competition**

**First Prize: En Run**  
1 张恩闰

**Second Prize: En Yu**  
2 林恩宇

**Third Prize: Ka Ho**  
3 杨家豪

**COMPETITION RESULT**

**The First Prize**

**En Run**

**MY 15 MINUTES**

-At Great Hall-

Opening Night: Friday, December 11, 7:30pm  
Speech Contest: Saturday, December 12, 7:30pm  
Debate Contest: Sunday, December 13, 3:00pm  
Singing Contest: Sunday, December 13, 7:30pm

**The Second Prize**

**En Yu**

Shantou University English Language Center

Dec. 11<sup>TH</sup>-13<sup>TH</sup> 2015

**MY 15 MINUTES**

Opening Night: Friday, December 11, 7:30pm  
Speech Contest: Saturday, December 12, 7:30pm  
Debate Contest: Sunday, December 13, 3:00pm  
Singing Contest: Sunday, December 13, 7:30pm

At Great Hall

**The Third Prize**

**Ka Ho**

**MY 15 MINUTES**

-At Great Hall-

Opening Night: Friday, December 11, 7:30pm  
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Debate Contest: Sunday, December 13, 3:00pm  
Singing Contest: Sunday, December 13, 7:30pm



The Placement Test, a tradition of STU to assess the ELC level of the incoming freshman class, was held from September 8<sup>th</sup> to September 9<sup>th</sup> after freshman registration this year.

Similar to the IELTS, during the test students are randomly assigned a topic to talk about and also answer follow-up questions. The majority of interviewees felt terribly nervous throughout the test. A student named Cindy shared her feelings with us: "What I would like to say most is, 'Sorry, teacher.' Although Angela is very kind, I can't express myself clearly because I was too nervous."

As in previous years, students worried about their performance on the test. "When I walked out of the test room, I thought I would be assigned to foundation level, because I didn't do very well when I took the test," said Eric, also a freshman.

Those were some students' voices. From a teacher's perspective, things may be slightly different. Yolanda, an experienced teacher, agreed that students tended to be very nervous, while a Level 3 teacher, Solar, gave an interesting answer about the students' performance: "Students did a great job in the placement test. But some of them were too creative

to understand the questions in the right way. For example, a student took 'What clothes do you like?' as 'What girls do you like?'"

Some well-intentioned sophomores and juniors advised freshmen to talk as much as possible so that the teachers wouldn't have the chance to take advantage of the speech pauses and raise more questions. Sharon, a Level

regarding the question: "Unlike many high school classes, most of the time, ELC classes are conducted in English only. In my opinion, considering your English speaking ability, the basic purpose of a placement test is to determine which ELC class is the most appropriate for you."

For the test, a new ELC teacher, Lisa, has a different idea: "I would prefer not to call it a TEST, because it's actually not a high-stakes exam. To call it a 'test' only makes students too nervous." When it came to students' stress and anxiety, she said, "I think it's necessary to tell students beforehand that it's OK to ask the examiners to repeat their questions. We were mainly trying to assess their oral proficiency, not their listening. It's not the placement result that matters, but their willingness to work on English at STU."

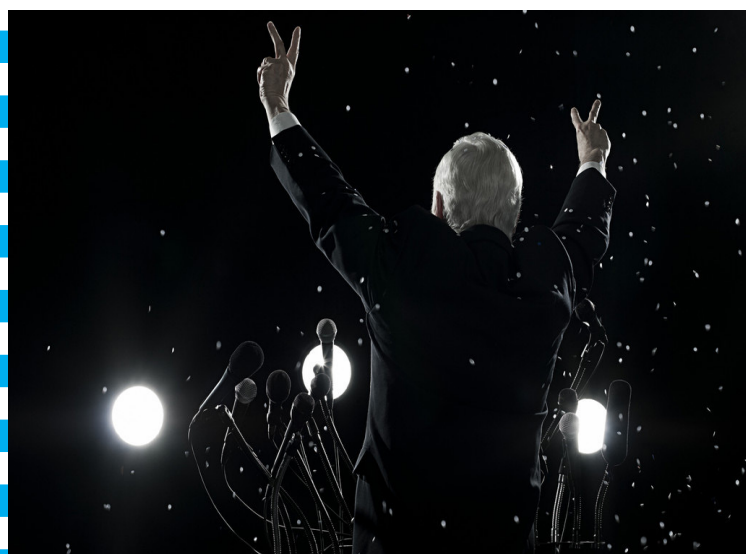
As Lisa mentioned, although the Placement Test is over, the freshmen's journey of learning English at STU has just begun! It doesn't really matter where you begin your journey. What counts is your determination and perseverance. Keep learning, make progress and live your college life to the fullest!

By: 14 Finance Michelle Huang

Proofread by: Ami Tian



## Speech Contest: Not Just One Simple Minute



On October 17<sup>th</sup>, the preliminary round of the Speech Contest held by ELC ended successfully. A lot of students joined the contest with great enthusiasm. The results have been released, but no matter what they are, the most important thing for each participant is to learn something valuable from the process of trying and experiencing.

The Speech Contest requires every participant to deliver a speech in one minute with some specific topics surrounding the theme "My 15 Minutes." Most judges are foreign teachers, so the participants need attractive content and fluent spoken English, plus correct pronunciation to make themselves understood.

Probably due to the tension, some participants chatted or played with mobile phones to relax themselves before the contest, while others were reading their speech manuscripts. It seemed easy for them when they left the competition hall

with smiles on their faces. Actually, they felt nervous when they were giving speeches. Freshmen said they were quite nervous because it was their first time to speak English in front of so many foreigners. Ven, a senior student, said, "Although I had studied abroad, I still felt nervous when I was on the stage." Obviously, no matter how excellent your English is, on this stage, the most important thing is courage.

As an old saying goes, one minute on the stage takes ten years of practice. Every participant must have studied a very long time before mastering good methods of learning English. For example, Amber, a sophomore student with excellent spoken English, always takes part in various activities in CILL and tries her best to seize every chance to speak in class.

It's common to hear some students complain that they are too busy to make time to learn English. But it can't be an excuse to stop you from learning English. Bryan, a junior, stated: "I don't have much time for my English study like many other students do. Every minute is precious. Therefore, I get up early to practice my English every day."

As one of the judges, Mark, said, "The key factor to get a high score in the contest is pronunciation. You should make teachers understand your ideas first." Then he recommended two good resources in CILL to improve pronunciation: Voice and Accent Training and How Do I Improve My English.

In the end, let's congratulate the participants who can enter the semi-final! We are looking forward to your excellent performance in the next round! And we hope to see a successful end to the English Festival at the Great Hall in December!

By: 15 Electronic Engineering Victor Chen

Proofread by: Woody Jacobson

## English Festival Singing Contest Preliminary

English Festival is coming again this semester, and the theme this year is "My 15 Minutes." English Festival begins with different activities, such as the Poster Competition, Singing Contest and Speech Contest. The Singing Contest Preliminary was held by English Corner on October 17<sup>th</sup> at EAC (English Activity Center).

Participants were supposed to sing for one minute with background music at the preliminary. Ami, one of the organizers, pointed out that the Singing Contest is aimed at offering a stage for students to demonstrate their abilities and make them known around campus, which matches the theme of English Festival this year. "This judging team consists of teachers who love listening to music and singing," said Ami. She claimed that the contest was considered as a very important activity.

Many of the participants, such as Troy, Candy and Yackey, performed very well. Candy, a girl who was in red on that day, sang really well. In a sense, red matched the style of her songs and made her seem more active and confident; she sang more like a boy. Nonetheless, she still sang the song in her own style without any influence. What's more, she made a short but unique comment on the difference between singing English songs and Chinese songs. She said singing Chinese songs required more skill and singing English songs meant more freedom for her, though she was more familiar with Chinese songs. Without a doubt, her performance left a deep impression on a great number of participants and judges present.

Nicholas, a teacher on the judging team, spoke highly of the participants because he thought they could catch the emotion of songs. Mickey, the coordinator of English Festival, gave her similar understanding of singing, "Singing is not simply singing. It is related to performance and expression. Because when you are singing, you must feel the artistic conception and emotion of this song."

Some students who were interested in music came to watch the contest to learn from others' experience and to obtain courage and skills so as to move forward with singing.

The English Festival Singing Contest is a very meaningful activity because it fills our university with beautiful voices. Don't miss the wonderful moments at the Singing Contest Final on December 13<sup>th</sup>!

By: 15 Journalism Anna Hu

Proofread by: Ami Tian



# Challenging Toastmasters

By: 15 Public Administration Cindy Huang

Proofread by: Alexandra Beneteau

"Toastmasters" is an activity held in CILL every Tuesday. In this activity, a number of students gather together to practice making a short speech with the help of teachers, namely Paul and Tian.

The activity generally contains two parts. The first part is that every group chooses two leaders and they take turns to lead the discussion. Another part is that every group needs to select one person as their representative to make a short speech. The speech topic depends on what the teacher shows on PPT.

During the discussion part, the teacher always encourages the leaders and helps them move the discussion forward. A leader once mentioned, "A school in London owns 600 students with 42 languages in total." But his group couldn't continue this topic. Thus the leader was disappointed and had to

say "Maybe this topic is boring, let's talk about another one." However, Paul told the leader: "You should try your best to continue your discussion rather than stop it for its boredom." Hearing this, the leader found a way out and asked the group to share their opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of so many languages spoken in a school.

The most exciting part comes after the twenty-minute discussion. In this part, only one student can represent his or her group to make a short and impromptu speech after seeing a picture provided by the teacher. Once Paul showed a picture containing two parts: One was a boy watching TV at home while another was the same boy sitting in the forest. At the beginning, most participants felt frustrated because they didn't know how to talk about it. Therefore, Paul encouraged the students: "I know some of you are afraid of making a speech in public without preparation. Maybe it's really kind of difficult, but if you want to be a good toastmaster, it is of great necessity to have a try." Thanks to Paul's encouragement, one girl finished her speech using some typical examples and old sayings, with the topic that a child should get close to nature.

Sometimes, visitors are supposed to give comments to the speaker, a



speaker named Emma once said, "When I was asked questions, I think it's not a challenge, but an improvement." What deserves to be mentioned is that Tian prefers to ask the speaker to talk about the picture in different ways.

The teachers win great applause for their commitments. Nancy, a sophomore from Journalism School, thought highly of the teachers: "Paul is pretty handsome. Tian always smiles with two dimples. They contribute a lot for this activity. What's more, they tell me a lot about how to describe the picture extensively. I really appreciate them and this activity deeply."

According to the students' reactions, most of them have decided to overcome their fear of making mistakes and try their best to make a short impromptu speech in Toastmasters under the teachers' guidance.



# Celebrating Mid-Autumn Festival

A full moon, brightening the heavens, symbolizes family reunion in Chinese tradition. In ancient times, Mid-Autumn Festival was a time to celebrate the successful harvest of rice and wheat, with food offerings made in honor of the moon. Today, it is still an occasion for outdoor gatherings among friends and relatives to

that I can't physically be with my family in China, I still feel some warmth from my Chinese friends here. I went out for a nice dinner with all of my Chinese friends, and we did a bit of karaoke in the restaurant, which was of great fun."

Another overseas student, Roger, who went to Melbourne this summer, was telling us about a special feeling he had in the foreign land. "It is the first time that I study overseas in Melbourne without company of my parents. I feel a little lonely. However, there are many activities in Melbourne to celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival with Chinese. I am going to take part in some of them and enjoy the dinner. After that, I will have a video chat with my parents by WeChat and share my life here with them," said Roger.

Nevertheless, even when living in a city where it is easy to find Chinese people, students can have different feelings about Mid-Autumn Festival. Fang Yichun and Li Ziyang, two exchange students who are studying in Singapore, gave us two totally different perspectives. To maintain the same tone of happiness, Li said, "The Singapore Teochew Students' Association provides a warm party for Chinese students who come from the Chao-shan Area and they always have a good time together every year."

In opposition to the previous tones,

Fang put forward her own point: "I guess the importance of such traditional festivals and rituals is gradually fading here. There is no public holiday for Mid-Autumn but I feel partly it's because Singapore is multiracial. Some of the celebrations take place mainly in Chinese schools. Also now for students it is during the exam period. 'We can't even finish reading the notes, let alone taking a break to eat moon cakes!'"

It's never easy to live alone in a foreign country, away from everything you're familiar with. To all the STU students who are currently studying abroad, we hope your hard work will be rewarded and all of your efforts will result in a great harvest!



By: 15 Chinese Rachael Xiao

Proofread by: Woody Jacobson

# Tongue Twister

1. Can you can a can as a canner can can a can?

2. I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish, but if you wish the wish the witch wishes, I won't wish the wish you wish to wish.

3. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

4. Betty beat a bit of butter to make a better butter.

5. Few free fruit flies fly from flames.

6. There is no need to light a night light on a light night like tonight, for a bright night light is just like a slight light.

(Source from the Internet)

Collected by :

15 English Yannis Huang



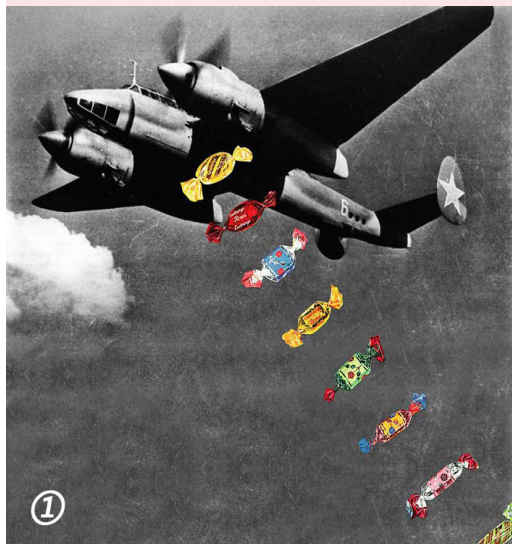
eat moon-cakes and appreciate the round moon.

Millions of people go home and reunite with their families on this special day, but many overseas students are unable to. We interviewed some of them to learn about how they spent their festival.

Abby, a nineteen-year old beautiful girl, now in the UK, has studied overseas for more than three years. Although she feels homesick sometimes, she has lots of warmhearted Chinese friends. She said, "Mid-Autumn Festival is meant to be a time for a family reunion. Despite the fact

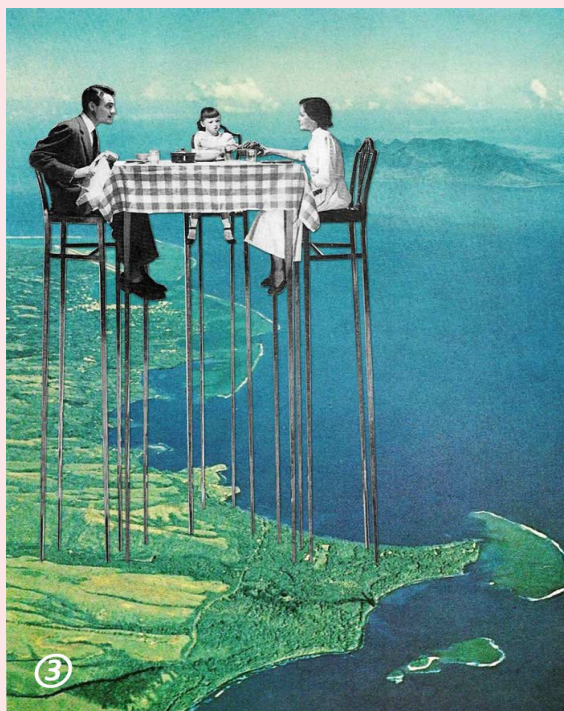


# Pop Vintage Collage 波普拼贴画



1. Candy Bomber 糖衣炮弹
2. Stress Test 压力测试
3. High Attitude 高姿态
4. Xtreme Sports 极限运动
5. Natural History Museum 自然历史博物馆

Source: <http://language.chinadaily.com.cn/>



## HAPPINESS IS



...spontaneity.

随心所欲

## HAPPINESS IS



...seeing your point of view.

证实了你的观点

## HAPPINESS IS

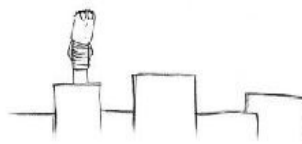
...bringing over a hot meal when you're sick in bed.

生病时，别人送来的热腾腾的饭

## HAPPINESS IS

...when I look at the sky and feel that you're watching it too.

当我抬头望向天空时，感觉到你也在做同样的事



## HAPPINESS IS



...being extra nice to each other just because.

没有理由的对你好

## HAPPINESS IS



...appreciating each other's gross habits.

欣赏彼此的臭毛病

## News Corner

### Do You Know the International News

1. The team from New Zealand won the 2015 Rugby World Cup on October 31st. They defeated the Australian team by a score of 34-17 to win their third world cup title.
2. In a bid to prove that showering is overrated, an American scientist hasn't had a bath in 12 years. Instead, he sprays his skin with a mist containing live bacteria, which he claims has kept him clean all these years!
3. Celestial funerals are now a possibility, thanks to San Francisco startup Elysium Space. For a ginormous fee of about \$12,000, the company will privately transport your cremated remains to the moon!
4. Jennifer Lawrence is the world's highest paid female actor, according to Forbes, raking in \$52m (£33m) in 2015.
5. Officials with the Palace Museum in Beijing are set to open the western part of the Imperial Palace compound for the first time in 90 years on October 10th.

Sources: <http://www.tsn.ca/>  
<http://language.chinadaily.com.cn/>  
<http://www.forbeschina.com/>  
<http://www.chinaculture.org/>



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