

The Shantou Beat

English Language Center Newspaper, Shantou University, China

Apr. 2008, Vol.16



Leadership not Built in One Day



Dr Liu, Reclining Thai style — Khon Kaen Sofitel Lobby

In my TESOL presidential speech in Seattle, Washington on March 23, 2007, I talked about how I evolved from an EFL learner in China to an ESL leader in the United States to address the question: "How did you become TESOL President as a Nonnative Speaker of English?" I have been asked the same question again and again by news reporters, colleagues, and students, including some of you at Shantou University over the years, but my answer is the same: "Everyone has the potential of being a leader, but not everyone can be a leader. The secret is that you must desire to be a leader for a good cause first. Leadership is not developed in a day. It evolves daily."

It was not until I stepped into the leadership position, first as a Nonnative English Speaker serving as TESOL (NNEST)

Caucus chair in 1999, then as a BD member in 2001, and later as TESOL president (2006–2007), that I realized how important leadership is for the TESOL profession. I believe that success is within the reach of just about everyone. Although it's true that some people are born with greater natural gifts than others, the ability to lead is really a collection of skills, nearly all of which can be learned and improved. But that process doesn't happen overnight. Leadership is complex. It has many facets: respect, experience, emotional strength, people skills, discipline, vision, momentum, and timing, among others.

I believe that personal success without leadership ability brings only limited effectiveness. A person's impact is only a fraction of what it could be without good leadership. Leadership skills are indispensable in virtually all fields. In language teaching and learning, leadership also plays a vital role, the effectiveness of which will directly affect the quality of language education, the soundness of a program, as well as the satisfaction level of both teachers and students in their language classrooms and beyond.

As you can see, many of the factors that come into play in leadership are intangible. That's why leaders require so much seasoning to be effective. It was around the time I began my presidential year that I truly began to understand the many aspects of leadership in TESOL with clarity, and began to appreciate how much time and energy leaders have to invest in various entities of this great association we are proud of.

From "I don't know what I don't know," to "I know what I don't know;" to "I grow and know and it starts to show," to "I simply go because of what I know," I have come a long way in honing my leadership skills in the process of learning. As such, I want to encourage all STU students to start thinking about leadership, and to start working on your leadership skills. If you dream about being a leader in whatever field you enter, chances are that you will eventually become a leader.

ELC Visits Thailand

From January 23–28, 2008, the English Language Center of Shantou University, under the guidance of Executive Director Dr. Jun Liu and with the generous support of the Li Ka Shing Foundation, undertook its most ambitious and most rewarding professional development effort. To date the entire faculty and staff traveled to Thailand to participate in the annual ThaiTESOL Conference, one of the most prestigious events in English language teaching in the South–East Asian region. Shantou University was not only represented by 40+ teachers and researchers but contributed to the program of the conference with a plenary speech delivered by Dr Liu, eight academic papers presented by ELC faculty, a colloquium on changes in policy and practice and a much acclaimed Tai Ji performance and English teacher skit as part of the reception entertainment. Shantou University and the English Language Center were not only the largest delegation, but represented a model of professional collaboration, intercultural exchange and cutting-edge methodology that made an impact on attendees and organizers alike. This unique opportunity has allowed



ELC group attending Thailand TESOL

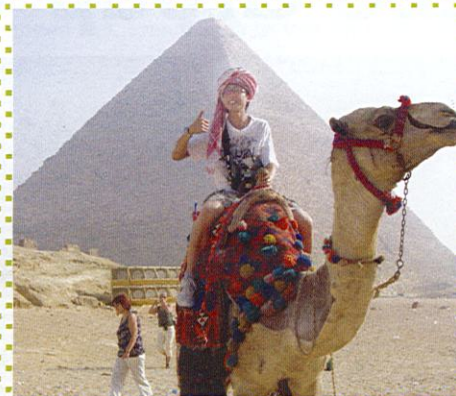
Shantou University to expand its already outstanding reputation in the South–East Asian English education community while contributing to program success through professional development, personal growth and team spirit for every member of its English Language Center.

By Claudis Kunschak, ELC Assistant Director

News In Brief



P.3 EC's Strong Beginning



P.4 Introduction to Study Abroad Scholarships



P.5 What I have Learnt about Language Learning



P.8 Address International Cultural Issues

ELC begins Assessment Project

Huang Yuepeng
Liberal Arts

Prior to last semester, maybe you heard a few ELC students complaining, "I worked harder than B (student), why did he get a higher score than me?" However, from this semester on, such words will hardly reach your ears anymore, because of the Assessment Project, a new way to test and evaluate the students' skills.

The Assessment Project was proposed by Claudia Kunschak last fall. Claudia has been organizing and managing the project. The assessment working group consists of the following ELC teachers: Claudia, Yolanda Yang, Philippe Bierny, Rita Zheng, and Eric Morris. In the interviews, Claudia and Yolanda explained both the content and function of the project. First and foremost, in the Assessment Project, every ELC teacher works hard to judge students equally with other ELC teachers. The average scores of each teacher's classes are gathered for study. The averages of the scores will be analyzed. If a certain average is too high or too low, the teachers will find out the reason. As time goes on,

teachers will move toward an average in grading, neither too generous nor too strict. Claudia said, "I see teachers' awareness and willingness to change. It will take some time for the best to come out." Second, the Assessment Project facilitates the teaching program. Teachers will study the outcome of the students' work on each item. If a certain item is missed by a large number of students, further analysis will be done to see whether the item is workable. In this case, students will consistently be tested using well-organized and feasible items. Finally, the Assessment Project makes grading a quiz easier for teachers. Since the quiz or exam has been analyzed statistically, they don't have to think about whether another answer might also be possible.

To conclude, the Assessment Project works well for both students and teachers. Yolanda Yang said, "It provides a scientific way to assess students." ELC teacher Elinor Westfold commented that it is a good idea. Almost all the teachers speak highly of the project. Time will reveal the results and benefits of the Assessment Project.



photo taken by Yang Minyuan

ELC Assistant Director Claudia Kunschak

ELC Group Visits Chulalongkorn University



ELC teachers talking to Thai students

On January 23, 2008, as part of our first visit to the annual Thai TESOL Conference, a group of ELC faculty members was cordially invited to visit Chulalongkorn University, one of the best universities in Thailand.

Under the guidance of Chutinan Chutima, a senior student at Chulalongkorn University, we roamed the beautiful campus, enjoying the ancient and modern architecture, experiencing an exotic culture, and getting a

taste of the wealth of its history.

After the campus tour, we were led to the Self-Access Learning Center (SALC) established by the Language Institute, which is housed in the Prem Purachatra Building. According to our host's introduction, SALC is the first of its kind in Thailand, aimed at encouraging students to develop intellectual curiosity and independent study habits. There we observed a variety of reference materials, journals, cute cartoons, and a multimedia section, all of which provide countless opportunities for students to broaden their horizons in relation to the English language and culture, while at the same time building their learning autonomy.

Our next stop involved visiting an entertaining English class. According to Sudaporn Luksaneeyanawin, the Director of the Centre for Research in Speech and Language Processing, the students we observed were at a low level of English proficiency. But we could see that they were completely motivated to participate in the class. The active participation of the students created a fantastic

atmosphere. Several minutes into our visit, the teacher stopped so we could involve ourselves in the classroom activity. "We like this class because the teacher gives us many chances to express ourselves," four students in one group told me. We also exchanged ideas about teaching English with the instructor. Through this exchange of experiences, we discovered that astonishing similarities in teaching concepts and teaching methods exist between our English Language Center and the Language Institute at Chulalongkorn University. Faculty members in both institutes are trying very hard to break away from traditional English teaching approaches to establish a brand new teaching system.

Half a day slipped by and the ELC group set out for Khon Kaen to attend the conference. This short trip proved to be thought-provoking and it will resonate in our minds, urging us toward the trends we are going to follow in tomorrow's English teaching and research.

ELC Teacher Lavender Yuan

Pronounce Accurately, Communicate Effectively



photo taken by Yang Minyuan

ELC teacher Alan instructing students in pronunciation.

"The rain in Spain stays mainly in plain."

"What's that? That's a famous English tongue twister, and also a practice sentence for the pronunciation training provided by EL for the students.

By 9 pm on March 12, the English

English Lounge at least once a week. Teachers involved in this project expect that students will be able to speak in a more comprehensible way after such practice.

At the very beginning of the introduction,

Lounge had drawn a crowd. Most students there came for the Pronunciation Project. Claudia Kunschak, the manager of the project, facilitated introduction. She advertised that from the 3rd week on, an ELC teacher will instruct the students in pronunciation about the

an ELC instructor Alan, and a student performed a humorous drama to illustrate the necessity of pronouncing words correctly. Students' poor pronunciation sometimes makes it difficult to communicate with foreign teachers. "The project is very interesting, and I think it would be very useful for us to improve our pronunciation," said Chen Yunlong, a sophomore majoring in business administration.

"About 400 students asked for pronunciation practice last semester," the project's proposer Claudia recalled. At that time ELC teachers attempted to spend 5 to 10 minutes in class per week to help students practice pronunciation in response

to this request. Most of the ELC classes joined in this activity and it had a positive effect.

The attempt was successful, but it seemed unfair to take this time away from other class activities. As an alternative, Claudia came up with the idea that we should carry out the activity after school. Her proposal passed and 15 other ELC teachers volunteered for the project. After Claudia's drew up an overall schedule, other teachers began preparing for their presentations.

"We need a bigger room," Claudia said with a smile upon seeing so many students practicing so seriously.

Yang Minyuan 05 Journalism

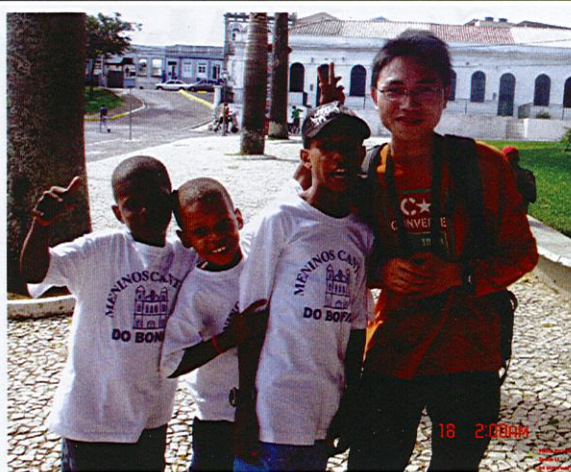
EC Starts New Program

Chen Zhile 06 Journalism

A gangly guy wearing a black shirt was talking into a microphone and pointing to a PPT. A big crowd of people were sitting or standing around him, listening carefully. Some of them even raised questions when he paused. All these conversations were in English. But this was not between a teacher and students during an English-related class. It was between students during a program put on by English Corner, appropriately named "Student Symposium."

English Corner has established a special program called Student Symposium this semester, which is held every other Friday night during English Corner at EL. Scholarship winners for Semester At Sea, Whitman College and Melbourne University will be invited to share their experiences with the audience. Students can access the introductions, photos and speech outlines of the invited scholarship winners, along with information about other EC programs on posters, PPTs and BBS.

Jamin Li, the first guest speaker was the scholarship winner of Semester At Sea during the spring of 2007. He is now a senior student at STU, majoring in Electrical



Jamin's Traveling in Salvador of Brazil by SAS

Engineering. To grab the audience's attention, Li showed a video clip of SAS; told many stories and included photos from his voyage. "It is a really good program for the students here and I like to share my experiences from SAS," said Li. "I feel very happy to let them know what I have learned about the outside world is." As a promising contestant for the 13th National Speech Competition of the "21st Century Cup," which will be held next month in Beijing, Li also introduced some tips on public speaking. "I strongly encourage the students to join in the English Festival and pass on their passion for English to others," Li said in an interview after his presentation.

Student Symposium received big applause from the audience. Many students actively asked Li questions. "I hope this symposium will keep going on and I will not miss it," Sylvia, a sophomore from Liberals Art School, said after listening to Li's talk.

ELC Encourages Oral Practice

Chen Yan Hong 06 Journalism

"How many hours have you gone to EL or EC?" We can often hear this question being asked among ELC 4 students on campus. We can also see many students bringing a piece of paper to EL every night or EC every Friday night. Why? What's happening?

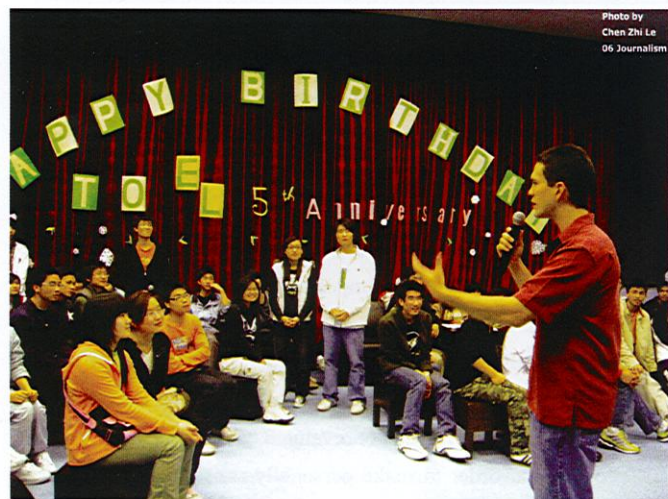
This semester, some teachers in ELC 4 require their students to attend official extracurricular English activities for 15 hours. They give each student a piece of paper that must be signed by a staff member or an ELC teacher.

Students have different opinions about fulfilling this requirement. "I think it is a good way for us to practice our oral English," Henry, a sophomore from Engineering School said. "It encourages us to speak more and raises our interest in learning English." Guan, a Science College sophomore, said that, even though he was not interested in it, he was still willing to participate. "I won't attend these activities if it is not required," said Guan. "But now we just need to use several hours in it and can learn something, so it doesn't matter." On the other hand, some students like Lsome and Aaron, two ELC 4 students, said they disliked this assignment and didn't want to be forced to do it.

Philippe Bierny, the ELC 4 teacher who initiated this activity, said he came up with this idea based on his own experiences with language learning, emphasizing that practice is very important. "Only by taking advantage of all the many extracurricular opportunities provided by the ELC, can students really get better," Bierny said. "I'm hoping that by requiring my students to attend 15 hours of activities outside of class, it will encourage them to try many different activities and hopefully discover that they actually enjoy it and want to do more." He hopes everything he has done will make his students better off in the future. "I'm willing to make them a little mad at me in the meantime," added Bierny.

Now the attendance of EL and EC has increased significantly, compared to previous semesters. This is largely because of students fulfilling this requirement.

EC's Strong Beginning



Philippe Bierny in Teacher Conversation

Lai Ruijing 06 Engineering

The Opening night of EC (English Corner) and CEC (Creative Expression Club) was at the English Lounge on the evening of March 14, 2008. And there was a sea of people, some listening carefully, others talking fluently and laughing happily. The evening not only belonged to the MCs and performers, but also to all the audience members who showed a strong desire to learn English with their high enthusiasm and participation.

The first program was a drama performed by CEC, called the Emperor and the Assassin (荆轲刺秦皇). The performers changed the traditional story into their own new

perspective. The audience was able to get something valuable from the play amidst the heavy laughter. Next up was another creative program entitled Sexual Photos Scandal. It was a talk show about the recent controversy inside the Hong Kong entertainment industry. Four members from CEC pretended to be Edison, Gillian and other major characters, while the MC interviewed them about the shocking incident. At last, the CEC advisors Pat and Henry shared their opinions with the audience, which helped students learn how to use English when talking about social issues and to think critically as well. At last, it was Philippe's turn. During the Teacher Conversation, a popular EC program, Philippe told about traveling economically through Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. Philippe answered all the questions with his characteristic humor and creativity.

Besides these programs, the Opening night also included CEC's Warm-up Game, EC's Amazing Image, and Around the Corner with Mini Congress. This wonderful party ended joyfully with everyone feeling satisfied and eager to return the following week.

Of course, everyone can learn English through various ways and begin to use it more efficiently. This was the purpose of the Opening night of EC and CEC. Just join us and open your heart to learning English.



Required Extracurricular English Participation Record

Introduction to Study Abroad Scholarships

Li Likui, 06 Journalism

With the support of the Li Ka-Shing Foundation and the Dong Voyage Foundation, Shantou University has, for the past decade, been able to send two students each year to join "Semester at Sea," which is sponsored by the University of Virginia. Students at STU may also compete for the chance to go to the University of Melbourne in Australia, Whitman College in the USA and Waseda University in Japan. These exceptional opportunities enable STU students to experience college in different countries, expanding their horizons significantly.

"Semester at Sea"

The unique shipboard learning environment of Semester at Sea is provided by the Sea Wise Foundation INC. It aims at improving the communication of college students

all over the world and providing a chance for them to encounter different cultures. STU is the only college in mainland China that is invited. The program lasts 3 to 4 months and students from all over the world attend courses on the ship taught by professors from US universities, as well as guest lecturers from other countries.

University of Melbourne

One student will be chosen to go to Australia as an exchange student for one semester. In addition to paying for tuition and travel expenses, the Li Ka-Shing Foundation also provides spending money for the student to use while living in Australia.

Whitman College

The application and interview for this scholarship is combined with Semester at Sea. Students will be placed in one of these programs

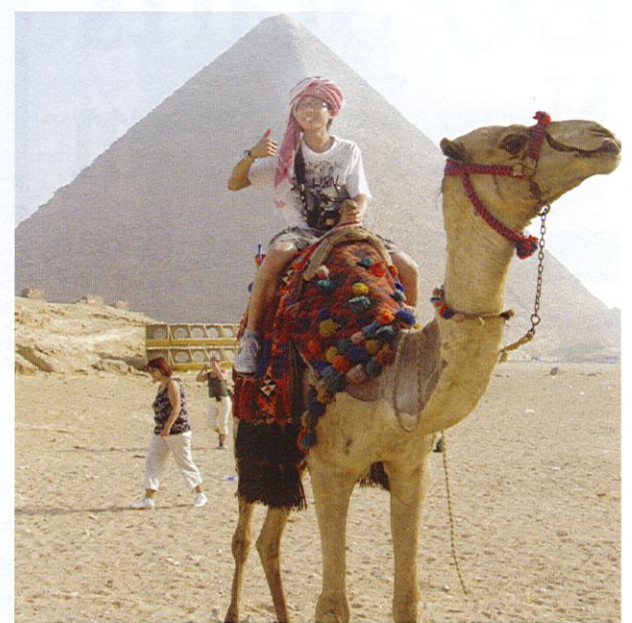
according to the rank of their interview. The student who wins first place will attend Whitman, while the second and third place winners will attend Semester at Sea.

Waseda University

Waseda University is an international college in Japan. One student will be sent as exchange student each year. In addition to the free tuition, the student who is selected can also apply for the scholarship provided by Waseda University.

"The Forum in Zhu Jiang District"

According to the Student Affairs office, students who interview for Semester at Sea and the Whitman exchange program can go to "The Forum in Zhu Jiang District" in Hong Kong as a consolation prize if they ranked between 4 and 7 in the interview.



Jun Mai05 Biology Technology, at semester at sea 2007

Tips from Recipients

Feng Miaolan, 05 Journalism

Let's share some tips from the Semester at Sea (SAS)

and Whitman College exchange students program.

Qing Wan, 05 Journalism, exchange student at Whitman College 2008:

For all my hesitant and under confident friends, stop struggling with the question of whether you should go or not. You will never know where life goes unless you give it a go. In the whole process, from filling out the application form, conceiving the idea for the application essay to preparing for the final interview, every applicant is learning. You are not a loser if you fail to get it; you are a loser if you are so afraid of not winning that you even give up trying. As long as you are there, you are the winner!

Jun Mai, 05 BioTechnology, winner of SAS scholarship 2007: The interview was all about confidence, which was backed by the accumulation of knowledge and linguistic skills. Read more, think more in everyday life, and just be who you are at the interview.

I would like to suggest that you take a look at my blog and see what you can learn from my experiences. (<http://morgan-sem.blogbus.com>) Rensi Ke, 06 English, exchanged student Whitman College 2009.

If you are wavering between Semester at Sea and Whitman College, you may want to evaluate your suitability for both programs in order to make personally satisfying choices. Look within your heart and ask: Why do you want to study abroad? What do you know about the programs? What makes you superior to other applicants? Acquainting yourself with the program is a prerequisite for your application. You can get abundant information at <http://www.semesteratsea.org/> about SAS, and at <http://www.whitman.edu/> about Whitman College. Certainly, there are a lot of complications involved with the application. Feel free to ask questions about whatever confuses you. Program organizers, former applicants, your referees and the official announcements on STU's website will answer many of your questions. Both programs require strong intercultural communication skills. Be multicultural, tolerant and open-minded. In addition, equip yourself with a good command of global issues.

Studying Abroad Your Cup of Tea



Rensi Ke, winner of the Whitman College exchange scholarship

by being strongly impacted by culture shock, but he ended up with cross-cultural friendships and life-altering experiences.

Studying overseas can be a way to taste different kinds of life. Liming Mai, a freshman in the Business school, said that she strongly approved of the exchange students scholarship, including Semester at Sea (SAS) and Whitman College exchange students program. She admitted, "I have been working hard for this ideal."

Chuting Zhong, a freshman in the School of Journalism, shares the same outlook as Mai. "We are thrilled at the rich opportunities provided by our school faculty to touch western culture in university," said Zhong. "SAS encourages us to get into English activities."

The exchange students program, a fiercely competitive once-in-lifetime chance, picks well-rounded candidates as the winners. However, those finalists who were not chosen after the interviews did not regret competing for these scholarships.

"I don't mind the result that I wasn't admitted," said Yan Zhang, a sophomore from J-School who competed in the second-round. "Maybe others have worked hard silently."

The application process helps applicants' with personal

On March 21, in EC, Zhimin Li, who finished his 100-day overseas

travel and study last spring, said that he began his journey

development and academic excellence. From getting familiar with the program to sprucing up for the interview, Rensi Ke, a hard-working English major who won the scholarship for the 2009 Whitman College exchange program, learned both how to put her knowledge into practice and also about herself.

"It feels like a journey to discover my identity," said Ke. "I find interesting that the application for this exchange program has aroused in me an eagerness to learn. I visited Whitman's website and I was totally blown away. The more I learnt about the college, the more I wanted to enrich myself," Ke said in a happy voice.

Yet there were also many other students with great potential, not involved in the competition, who hold a different point of view.

"It would be crazily troublesome to deal with those visa things, while I'll have to pay more attention to my study this semester," explained Jianzong Zhou.

"SAS still requires a large amount of money," added Zhou. "Though it sounds like a scholarship."

Xuming Huang, an English lover, was expected to apply for the SAS by his classmates, but didn't give it a shot. "Many people asked me why I wouldn't try for it," Huang said. "SAS needs great preparation since it has such high-standards, so at last I lost my intention. And I wasn't hurried." Huang said he has his own plan to study abroad in the future.

Moreover, a scholarship for studying abroad is a faraway and unrealistic dream for some people.

"My English is so bad that I had never thought about it," Cheng Peng commented indifferently. "Semester at Sea is English lover's ideal, not me."

Ye Huitao 06 Journalism
Huang Xingxing 06 Journalism

What I Have Learned about Language Learning

ELC Teacher
Ora Karee

When I was a little girl I got a new bike which I didn't know how to ride. I was afraid that I would fall. My father told me what to do, and I did it. Every day I practiced. First I put my right foot on the pedal and pushed down. Then I did the same thing with my left foot. I repeated the pushing and the switching of feet hundreds of times. Finally I became braver and kept both feet on the pedals. Suddenly I was riding my new bike. All that summer, I happily rode all over town, and I became a good bike rider. I never became a great bike rider, but I really enjoyed myself and I rode a bike for the rest of my life. If you ask me how to ride, I

couldn't tell you. My body learned something about balance, and I wasn't afraid.

In many ways speaking is like bike riding. We all learn to speak our first language without consciously thinking about it. Some of us learn to speak another language. We usually go to school to learn it. But the best speakers of second languages can't really explain how they learned. If you ask them, they say things like, "I listened to a lot of songs," or "I read the newspaper every day." They say, "I just listen to know if something sounds right."

Of course there are rules and vocabulary that these people learn,

but they don't think about them very much. They just let their brains learn. Of course there are laws of balance, but when I was a child I just let my body and brain learn how to balance on a bike. I also learned a second language. I went to language classes, but then I talked to people and listened to songs and read the newspaper.

I think that we can all become good second language users if we use the language without worrying about whether or not we have perfectly correct sentences and pronunciation. We should just enjoy the pleasure of being able to communicate in a second language.



Ora presenting at the Thai TESOL Conference

Photo by David Law

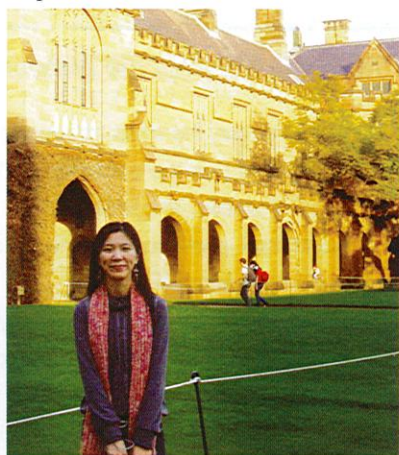
Attitude and Methods Matter for Learning English Abroad

ELC Teacher Ada Wang I still remember the first time I went into McDonald's when I arrived in the Sydney airport. I could barely read the menu, except for the drinks and chicken wings. From then on, I formed a habit of scanning the websites of famous restaurants on the Internet before I ordered there. Thanks to this habit, which helped me to enhance my food vocabulary, I easily got my first part-time job in Australia. Working with a lot of native English speakers around was also a good situation for learning language, including listening, speaking, and sometimes also learning vocabulary. After becoming more familiar with the menu and the company procedure, the only thing left to learn while working was interpersonal communication. Culture, history, fashion and even family issues became the topics for chitchat. After I initiated these talks, I found observation and imitation to be helpful learning methods, not only for the basic skills, but also for learning the locals' special language habits.

While I was majoring in accounting for postgraduate study, getting to know business English was also an important necessity for better understanding professional knowledge. Working in research groups with native-speakers was a helpful way to learn written English expressions.

Though living abroad allows us to

improve our language skills in any circumstances and at any moment, there are still some difficulties non-native English speakers must conquer; vocabulary is one of them. English is a language which progresses daily like Chinese. We can easily tell that what the older generations use is different and more complicated English, while the teens today prefer to create short forms of some frequently used English words. This implies that keeping the pace with updated English is one of the top issues for English learning. Also, speaking English with foreigners at their speed is a challenge for English learners. Therefore, for a non-native English speaker in an English-speaking environment, learning English better depends mainly on the positive and active attitude, as well as suitable and practical methods.



Ada standing in front of Great Hall of the University of Sydney

Photo provided by Ada Wang

You will not Stop Once You Start Speaking English

ELC Teacher Rita Zheng

Are you wishing to improve your oral English but don't know how? Here are 5 practical tips.

- 1. Build up your self-confidence:** Don't think of your oral English negatively and say, "Oh, my spoken English is very poor." Instead, you should say, "My spoken English is improving every day" or "I have many chances to practice my oral English at STU." These positive statements will help you overcome your fear and encourage you to speak confidently.
- 2. Improve your pronunciation:** Maybe you are one of the students, who, in the early morning, reads aloud without paying any attention to your almost unacceptable pronunciation. Then, the first thing you must do is listen to the CDs included with the NorthStar textbook to try to pronounce like the speaker. Listening, imitating and practicing together will make your pronunciation excellent. Moreover, whenever you speak, try to speak clearly and loudly to make yourself understood.
- 3. Enlarge your vocabulary:** Pronouncing every word accurately is the first step to retaining new vocabulary. Then repeat the newly learnt words and phrases in meaningful sentences instead of just reciting them. With sentences, you will be able to communicate much more than with the same number of isolated words. Start learning five sentences a day; you will have 150 sentences by the end of the month.

4. Use and create your language environment: At STU you can enjoy a great English speaking environment through various classroom and co-curricular activities, such as EL, CEC and EC. The more you use these chances, the better your spoken English will be. Apart from the organized activities, you can practice with someone, who also wishes to improve his/her oral English. If no one is available, talk to yourself about any subject or object.

5. Constantly increase your English Exposure: Keep English constantly in your mind by listening, speaking, and reading every day. If you do not spend time reviewing, you will never remember what you have learned.

Speaking English only 5 minutes a day can make you a fluent speaker. You will not stop once you start speaking English!



Rita visiting the Empire State Building in New York City

Photo provided by Rita Zheng

In the 2008 Thai TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) conference, the ELC (English Language Center) delegation presented eight academic papers. Here is our coverage of the highlights.

At Both Ends of Asia: Shantou University and Tel-Aviv University

Tel-Aviv University, with a student population of 29,000, is a large university in Israel, the smallest country in the Middle East, while Shantou University, with a student population of 8,000, is a small university in China, the largest country in Asia. In spite of these relative differences in size, Tel-Aviv University and Shantou University share common goals and ideals.

Both countries want more contact with the West, and both countries believe that knowing English is important to achieve this goal. Both countries have programs that are very similar. The main difference is that Shantou University concentrates on spoken language while Tel-Aviv University concentrates on reading comprehension.



Ora Karee

Build up Spoken Vocabulary Through Games

Vocabulary is built up for a variety of reasons, including frequency (which word is more frequently used), strategic use of vocabulary (which words are learners exposed to more often), interaction between communicators (cooperative construction of meaning across speakers), contexts of use (which words are used in certain situations) and collocation (which words are often used together).

The research I conducted tells us that using games is an appropriate way to learn spoken vocabulary in a communicative way. It creates a spontaneous conversation flow with high-repetition of words and phrases. It also encourages students to develop a more natural rhythm and stress pattern, increasing fluency and self-confidence. Most importantly, it allows students to enjoy learning vocabulary, which in the long run benefits their lifelong learning.



Emma Zhang

Strategies for Different Learning Styles in Chinese College ESL Classrooms

Some students can learn from what they see, some can learn from what they hear and others can learn from what they do. Every student has his/her unique learning style. The purpose of this study is to investigate the matching instructional strategies for students of different learning styles in ESL classrooms.

I based this study on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. The project was carried out to provide evidence to support the necessity of accommodating students' individual learning styles and to explain why the changes in teaching methods have or have not achieved the postulated improvement in the teaching/learning situation.



Haley Zheng

All Classes Taught in English? Is This the Future of Shantou University and China?

Shantou University is special. We have communicative English language classes, extra-curricular activities like English Lounge, and *The Shantou Beat*, which you are reading now. Besides, we also have some programs like Business, Law and Journalism, where students learn their majors in largely English, including the professors' lectures, textbooks and exams. Some of you might say, "No way!" Well, I have asked students, teachers, former students and employers, and they answered loud and clear: YES, we need to use English on the job, but please, make it voluntary and flexible, require an advanced level of English, offer language support classes, and we will succeed!



Claudia Kunschak

Culture as a Key to Motivating English Learners

What kind of cultural knowledge should be taught in the EFL classrooms? Is it appropriate only to learn about American or British culture, given that English is now spoken by people all over the world? In my presentation I discussed the need to consider students' interests and purposes for using English in determining what cultural content to include in the curriculum.

I recommended an approach which combines intercultural communication skills and knowledge about specific cultures where students learn as much about their own culture as the people and places they study.



Kristin Helland

College Students' Perception Towards Peer Response in Language Classrooms in China

This study investigates the use of peer response in college English classes at a provincial university in P.R. China. Through classroom surveys, data collection and analysis, and follow-up interviews, the results show that the majority of the students have a positive attitude towards peer response and perceive it to be helpful in writing. Meanwhile, peer response meets with some challenges in this specific context, therefore the task must be carefully structured and better preparations should be in place in order to maximize the benefits of peer response for EFL students' writing. Pedagogical suggestions for organizing effective peer review sessions are given.



Lily Zhang

Think Beyond the Text When You Write

At the Thai TESOL 2008 Conference, I had the honor of discussing with quite a few teachers about written texts are affected by writing context (where the text is written, who reads it, what writing rules will be used). These context factors

help explain why we should write the way we do. For instance, before writing an essay, often your teacher may ask you to understand why you should write it and what is expected from you on the writing assignment. Also, looking at some well-written essays will enable you to grasp the established rules for essay writing. Once you develop the habit of thinking beyond texts, you are on the way to becoming a skillful writer of other types of written or even spoken texts.



Henry Fang

I Went to Xiamen Last Weekend; the Weather There Is Good.

As an English user, the most frequent error I make when speaking spontaneously, is that I forget to use the past tense. Why is it so difficult to mark verbs with the past tense? Partially, it is because we don't do it in Chinese. Also, researchers have found that past-tense marking is more difficult for some verbs than others.

I compared stories written by lower-level and intermediate English learners at Shantou University, and I found that lower-level learners usually fail to mark stative verbs (verbs describing states or conditions which continue over a period of time, such as be, love, hate, want) with the past tense. A typical error would be: *I went to Xiamen last weekend; the weather there is good.*



Yuan Mingming

Do-it-yourself Paper-Cutting

Instructor: ELC Teacher/Robyn Wall
Photographer: 05 Journalism/Lin Huiling
Performer: 05 Law/Zheng Haidan

Paper-cutting is the art of paper designs. Different countries have different styles suited to their unique culture. Using various objects and figures, paper-cutting is good for decorating. You can also give this traditional art as a gift for your friends.

Here are the directions for how to create an easy kind of paper-cutting recommended by Robyn, an ELC teacher. Paper-cutting is easy; all you need is patience and the an eye for beauty.

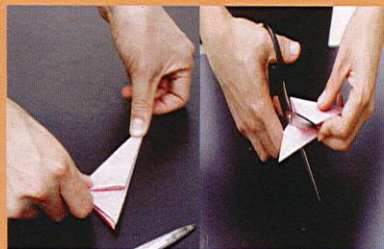
Step 1 Prepare a piece of thin paper and scissors. Cut the paper into a square.



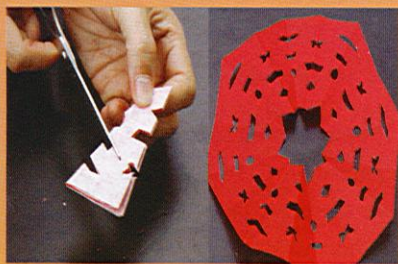
Step 2 Fold the paper in half three times. Each time, it should be a complete triangle.



Step 3 Fold the paper again and there will be an extra corner on the edge. Cut off the extra corner with the scissors.



Step 4 Cut any shape you like on both sides of the paper: triangle, trapezoid, circle etc. Unfold the paper: you will find a beautiful snowflake paper-cutting!



Tolerance and Gratefulness ——To be ready, reached and produced

"When the light gets into your heart, baby/ Don't you forget about me/Don't, Don't, Don't, Don't..."the singing swept over the classroom, filling the air, and touching our hearts. This is the final song in *The Breakfast Club*, a film displayed by Robyn, the instructor of the course "Culture in Action".

"What is culture?" Robyn asked in her first class.

For people who are disabled, the struggle to establish esteem and positive life attitudes is their culture. The documentary *Murder Ball* shown in class presented this message.

For a teacher named Erin in the movie *Freedom Writers*, her culture was encouraging students to avoid the damages of race discrimination. She lived in a multi-cultural society, and her focus was protecting students, helping her students to keep journal, and healing their injured hearts. The relationship between teachers and their students is also a type of culture.

Cultures conflict sometimes, but tolerance is the bridge between them. As for teaching and learning, "Tolerance is vital in education, wherever the classroom may be located, whoever the participants are, whatever the subject being taught," Robyn wrote in the essay "What role does tolerance play in education?" "Each time I watch *Freedom Writers* I question where my responsibility lies. I've often heard that teachers have to be mother, father, priest, counselor, friend, mentor, coach... the list goes on."

In truth, each person has his own manners and style; other

people can't walk in our shoes. We can't get along with everybody, as not all people get along with us; but to be tolerant and grateful is a worthy goal. We ought to understand each other, be tolerant of each other, encourage each other, and be grateful for teaching and participating. "I'll return to help those teenagers who are ready. I think that's the key: they need to be ready." Robyn said. Let us also be the "ready" students, to establish a more harmonious culture on campus than ever before.

05 Law
Zheng Haidan



Robyn and her students enjoying the class Culture in Action
Photo by Zheng Haidan

Cruising The Yangtze

ELC Teacher
Alan B Fenwick

Our ship is gliding steadily, silently, inexorably, even swiftly into the darkness. Like a ghost ship. The moonless sky is black but illuminated by a myriad of shimmering stars. The water is calm with just a few ripples to reflect the powerful searchlights from the ship shining on the shore. For me this is peace, paradise and one of my personal dreams come true.

I am cruising on a ship going from Yichang to Chongqing on the Yangtze River, the river that has been so important to the history of China and is now about to become even more important to its future development. I am in the area of the Three Gorges Dam Project and I am excited to see for myself this part of China before it is submerged under the flooding waters and gone forever.

For some, this river is Chang Jiang for others it is The Yangtze. Now I understand why it is more commonly called the 'Long River'. I was so impressed and even surprised with the constant flow of huge volumes of water as our ship made its relentless journey through mile after mile of steadily flowing water. Day and night we cruised this river and it seemed as if it would never come to an end. This river has flowed through the history of China and the history of China has flowed through this river. It is a truly great river.

I learned many things on this trip especially a better appreciation of the meaning of this river to all the people of

China. I am so happy I took this opportunity to see it as it is being developed even further for the future of an even greater China. I would even suggest that everyone go to see this special place. And I hope that one day I shall be able to go again and travel even further. maybe even to continue all the way to the mouth of this river in Shanghai, another place I love to visit.



Alan appreciating the view of the Three Georges Dam
Photo provided by Alan Fenwick

Address International Cultural Issues

What is the "Spring Festival" in Western countries? What causes the funny Chinglish? What can you do to make this world a greener place? How long does it take to make a foreign country near and dear to your heart? For those who are interested in these topics, the upcoming ELC Spring Faculty Lecture Series 2008 will answer many of your questions.

"International cultural issues are very popular subject matter for the Faculty Lecture Series," noted Philippe Bierny, the organizer of this year's Faculty Lecture Series. The annual Spring Faculty Lecture Series, held every April, aims to help STU students explore diverse cultures and gain global perspectives. ELC faculty members Ora Karee and Beth Rathe kicked off this year's Lecture Series on the evening of April 1, addressing Passover and Easter, two traditional spring holidays in the West. The interesting stories hidden behind these holidays and various foods and customs connected with these special occasions were unveiled at length.

The subsequent weeks will offer another three concerted lectures. Gabriel Fang and Mingming Yuan gave insight to the background of the English language and the most common mistakes made by Chinese



Ora and Beth in the Faculty Lecture Series
Photo provided by Li Yuan

learners of English on April 9. Kristin Helland, Claudia Kunschak, and Rita Zheng will bring to light Environmentalism, an increasingly hot topic in the U.S., Europe, and China, on April 22, and they will show what changes you can make for environmental protection. The last presentation titled "Home away From Home: Living in Costa Rica, Australia and Indonesia" will be given on April 27 by Robyn Wall, Ada Wang, and Alan Fenwick.

All of the lectures will be held in the Science Lecture Hall. As usual, students are more than welcome to join the lectures and workshops. Philippe is confident that everyone should be able to learn something new as long as they participate. "The Lectures are specifically for students. The more who come, the better!"

06 English
Ke Rensi

Interest and Passion

—Interview with Jamin, participant of the 21st Century English Speaking Competition

Li Zhimin (Jamin) is a senior student from Electrical Engineering Department. He was also one of the prize winners of the Semester At Sea scholarship in 2006. This April, he will participate in the 21st Century National English Speaking Competition. In other words, Jamin will be a representative of STU to compete with other Chinese university students from all parts of China. The National English Speaking Competition is divided into three parts including a prepared speech, a Q & A session and an impromptu speech. Jamin says that he has finished his two drafts for the prepared speech. One of his speech topics is "Living with Globalization: How to Compete in the Global Era". To prepare for the impromptu speech, Jamin bought some books from previous competitions and practiced those topics. Furthermore, some ELC teachers are helping him improve his English, such as spoken language, facial expressions and gestures. Although he is confident, he thinks that being nervous is inevitable, especially in a highly competitive national contest. As a result, Jamin practices as much as he can in order to compete with other excellent students. Now, he is busy preparing for the speaking competition and his further education in America.

Jamin likes English very much and he is an eager learner of English. He uses two key words to explain his diligent study of English: interest and passion. During his four years at STU, Jamin has read many newspapers and listened to international broadcasts to expand his knowledge

and open his mind. Moreover, he continues writing in English to contact his friends using e-mail. As he says, good writing contributes to better speaking. Both skills are related to each other. Writing is a useful way for you to express your ideas and share information, which makes your speaking more convincing and professional. Additionally, Jamin has been a member of the English Corner and the English Lounge since he was a sophomore. He tries his best to improve his oral English by utilizing all of his opportunities.

In conclusion, he gives his suggestion to students on learning English: Keep your passion and take advantage of your study.

05 English
Zhai Wanyi



Jamin at Pearl Harbor
Photo provided by Jamin Li

Film Series Coming Soon

06 Journalism
Li Ziyang

The ELC Film Series is coming soon! Kyle is the organizer of this year's Film Series and he gave us a brief introduction about it.

"Advocacy in Film" will be the theme of the series. *Thank You for Smoking*, *Philadelphia*, *Blood Diamond* and *Michael Clayton* are planned for the series, which will run for four weeks in May.

Kyle, an avid movie fan, who enjoys watching films, selected the four films to fit the theme of the film series. Each of the four films raises different social issues. "They have interesting stories," Kyle said, "And they are also movies which are very successful." These movies also have well-known actors, such as Tom Hanks, Leonardo DiCaprio, and George Clooney. Kyle is confident about his choices.

"To me it's like choosing your favorite Beatles' song... you can't pick just one," he laughed. But the new Hollywood film *Michael Clayton* was picked as the main film to represent the Film Series because it is the most recent and because of its content.

Kyle added, "I hope students can think about not only the entertainment, but the social issues. These four movies are also talking about others' struggles. I hope they can get the social information." Before every movie, Kyle will give audiences five to ten minutes of explanation and introduction about the film, such as background information or some common themes. After each movie, there will be a discussion. ELC teachers will be invited to participate in the discussion with the audience. Each discussion is planned for thirty five to forty five minutes.

Pop-corn and hot black tea will be offered for the audience during the films. Please take a look at the ELC posters about the Film Series and don't be late.



Poster of *Michael Clayton*, a film to be shown in the Film Series

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
Beth Rathe
Advisory Faculty: Yuan Li
Yuan Mingming
Column Editors: Ke Rensi
Huang Yuepeng
Feng Miaolan
Lin Huiling
Chen Zhile
Art Designers: Xu Yunhui
Jiang Yuanting

Email: yuanli@stu.edu.cn
telephone: 0754-290-4639
No reproduction or republication
without written permission.