

WTC—as Easy as One, Two, Three (and Four)

A Message from Dr. Jun Liu, ELC Executive Director

"My English is poor. How can I improve my English?" Many students at Shantou University and elsewhere in China ask me this question. I try to avoid giving direct answers, not because I don't have advice for them on how to improve their English, but because the question is too general to answer.

Having been a learner, user, and professor of English in both China and US contexts, I feel that the fundamental issue that directly affects the improvement of English is how willing a student is to seek opportunities to communicate in English. We all know that learning about English (e.g., understanding grammar rules, memorizing vocabulary, obtaining information, and being familiar with the target culture through reading) is different from learning English (e.g., taking risks in using English, making errors and being corrected, speaking and writing in English whenever possible). It is the latter that Chinese students are lacking.

One reason is the lack of input and interaction with those who speak the language, and another reason is the lack of willingness to communicate (WTC) in English. Successful language learning produces both linguistic outcomes, such as competence in language production and comprehension, and non-linguistic outcomes, such as changes in motivation and attitudes. Communication in a second language greatly depends on a psychological readiness to use the language. Therefore, WTC has been considered as an important predic-

tor for success in learning English.

According to some researchers, WTC refers to the probability that an individual will choose to initiate communication when free to do so (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). As such, WTC can be conceptualized as a goal of second language instruction, a variable that facilitates language learning itself, and an internal psychological event with socially meaningful consequences. Initiating communication represents the culmination of a network of processes at both the cultural and individual levels.

It is well known that both anxiety level and perceived competence are predictive of language learning and communicative behaviors. Results of several studies indicate that higher levels of WTC are an outcome of language learning. Regardless of the language environment, lower anxiety and higher perceived competence are correlated with higher levels of WTC. Moreover, greater second language communication experience leads to higher levels of WTC. To help you increase the level of your WTC, I have the following suggestions:

1. You should try to read aloud when you read in books and mimic what you listen to on tapes, TV, or radio. You should try to use what you have learned in daily communication. Whenever you can, you should request that the person you communicate with provide you with corrective feedback



(e.g., pointing out your mistakes, giving more appropriate expressions, and asking you to clarify your ideas).

2. You should try to find a classmate or a partner who is willing to communicate with you in English outside the classrooms on a regular basis. Besides practicing your English, you should also try to focus on the meaning, and learn how to monitor your own speech (self-correction) through interaction.

3. You should train yourself to be a keen observer when you use English with others. Pay close attention to the way others communicate in English, especially when you have opportunities to communicate directly with native speakers of English. It is all right to carry a pocket notebook with you to jot down some unfamiliar words, idioms, expressions, or patterns, and try to use them.

4. When you do not have someone to speak English with, you can play two roles in a conversation. For example, you can record some questions on a certain topic after listening to the news or reading newspapers, and try to answer your own questions the next day. It sounds a bit awkward, but it works because you practice two roles at the same time. Believe it or not, you can always find ways to improve your communication skills as long as you are willing to try.

Conversation Series: The Continuation

The ELC Conversation Series has welcomed a number of esteemed guests during the past couple of months. On November 10, Julia Hsiao met with Dr. Francis Lin, Professor of Linguistics in the School of Foreign Languages and Literature at Beijing Normal University. Students filled the Science Hall, and displayed much interest in the topic of "From Language to Artificial Intelligence."

The very next day, in the 4th event of the 2004 fall semester, Dr. Jun Liu interviewed Dr. Jian Xiaobin, concerning "Communication in Another Culture." Dr. Jian is an associate professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Literature at the College of William and Mary.

Katherine D'Arcy, Director of Corporate Affairs, Asia Pacific at Citigroup Global Cor-



porate & Investment Banking Group, was next and arrived on November 23. She was interviewed by Dr. Jun Liu on "Public Relations and Corporate Communications."

Lastly, Suzanne Panferov spoke on "How International Students Study English in the US" on December 14, in the 7th Conversation Series of the semester. She is Director for the Center for English as a Second Language at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona.

(Christin Allen, ELC Faculty)

NEWS IN BRIEF

English Festival a Success

"The Speech Contest made some reforms this year, one being that each contestant had their own individual trainer, while last year all the contestants had just one trainer," said Victoria, one of the organizers of the Speech Contest.

"The students from the other universities were outstanding in both the Speech Contest and the Singing Contest. The Festival really opened a window for us to know some of the talent in the top universities in China," said Chen Jingfeng, a student from College of Liberal Arts.

Most students feel the Festival was bigger and better than last year. "It involved more students, especially the Variety Show. It seemed that the whole university was on the stage," said Christie, another student from J-school.

(Sky Meng, 02 Journalism)

Enjoying Me@Lounge

English Lounge organized a brand-new activity named Me@Lounge that attracted much attention and involvement during November. In order to deepen

students' understanding about the English Lounge, they designed an activity which was made up of three parts: Composition Contest, Poster Designing Contest and Flash Designing Contest. The Lounge received many wonderful submissions from students of different colleges, and welcomed any works related to the English Lounge.

(English Lounge)



A NEW DIMENSION IN OUR DAILY LIFE

By Quist Huang, 02 Administrative Management



This semester the 789 Building has taken on a new look, and as a result, more students have visited the place to enjoy themselves in both the activity center and small shops. Soft yellow spotlights, which I think are its most attractive features, add beauty to the building after dark. Sometimes I'll go there at night for supper and have a wonderful time. Because I enjoy it so much, I would like to share with you some selling points of the food found in the 789 Building.

Let me begin with the largest restaurant in 789 — Anybar. From Monday to Friday, both at lunch and supper, it offers discount meals to appeal to students, charging anywhere from 8-10 yuan. And I hope students who like desserts have tasted the green tea cake and the cheese cake. These are both especially enjoyable when eating at the round tables on the lawn. In late afternoon, this gives you a European "tea time" experience. Please pay attention to the BBS Food home forum or consult Anybar's staff for the latest menu information.

Now, let's walk on to the 8 building, where the "Even Good" (双益)

restaurant is located. The special dining area gives you a romantic time either with your friends or your lover. And in this small eatery, I suggest you order cooked food and rice instead of dumplings or noodles. My foreign teachers like the sweet and sour chicken, which is also my favorite.

Lastly, I want to announce that the first prize in bread goes to the bakery "Chao Dun" (超顿). This small shop was originally opened in the Sangpu market in 2003, but moved into 789 this semester. Last term, several freshmen were employed to promote and sell its bread, going dorm to dorm. Thanks to those hard-working students, some girls have already tasted this delectable bread. Hopefully all the students will now have the chance to do so. Green tea bread, coffee cookies and red-bean bread — my personal favorites — are just a few of the many baked goods offered.

I hope you'll experience more eating pleasure in the 789 Building after my recommendations. Although our campus is small, it's a very charming place. Expect the unexpected!

What Do You Think?

Advice from our Students on
The Shantou Beat

By Winter Fan
04 Law

The Shantou Beat's aim is to provide an opportunity for our students to improve their English as well as to increase their knowledge. To better achieve this goal, we did a survey asking freshmen students what they thought about the paper.

Among those having read the paper, all of them had a good impression of it. The colorful and visually appealing page design won the most praise. "The beautiful pictures went with the articles very well," many interviewees claimed. Also, "Cultural Communication" and all articles written by foreign teachers were quite popular. In other words, many freshmen thought the newspaper was great!

In addition to praise, we received some helpful advice from the students. They suggested that we include more articles about western countries on such topics as western culture, the history of famous western universities, a comparison between the west and



the east and so on. They also thought that some humorous stories and dialogues about daily life might be widely enjoyed.

However, when asked whether they would submit their writing to the Shantou Beat, no one could offer us a definite "yes". They said, "It all depends on whether we have the time and the writing ability." And all we can say in response is, "Come on! You will never know what you can achieve unless you try!"

In this survey, we obtained useful information that we will use to do our work better.

We extend heartfelt thanks to our students! We'll try our best to develop your interests in learning English in order to achieve our goal—to provide you with an enjoyable learning experience!

CUBA Drives Students Out of Gym

By Ming Yang
02 Journalism

The STU gym was closed on Nov. 20, 2004 and will reopen on March 15, 2005 to prepare for the CUBA (Chinese University Basketball Association) competition. All students' physical exercises in the gym have ceased.

CUBA is a nation-wide basketball match and is annually held by certain prestigious universities. This year STU will host the match, which will begin in early March.

"We will prepare a very clean and comfortable gymnasium for the coming match," said Xu Wen, Director of the PE (Physical Education) department.

In recent years, STU has been paying more and more attention to basketball. It has a formal school basketball team and some excellent trainers. Last year, it invited three famous universities to compete in a championship match.

Not everyone thinks favorably of the present conditions though.



Since the gym will be closed for about three months, many students cannot find a proper place to play table tennis, shuttlecock, basketball and some other physical exercises. "The leaders of PE have made a poor decision; they shouldn't close the gym for so long to prepare for the match," said ZhangJun, a sophomore from the Computer Science department.

"There is lack of democracy in our school; the leaders didn't take the feelings of students into consideration before they made their decision," said Yuanyuan, a student from the school's Student Union.

However, it seems not all the students oppose the decision. "It's acceptable," said a girl from Journalism school. "It's the first time for our university to undertake such an influential match. We should try our best to make it look perfect."

Facing students' comments on the PE department's decision, XuWen said, "We will try to solve this problem appropriately. The gym needs to be reconstructed and decorated. Before CUBA, it will not be open to students. What the PE department can do is to find some other temporary places for students' physical activities."



Editor Note: The newly-opened Student Learning Centre offers drop-in tutoring services and rooms for academic group discussion, both of which are free. Most of the difficult subjects of every faculty are tutored. Right now there are six level-five students tutoring English in SLC for twelve hours in total every week. The SLC is open from 2 pm to 10 pm daily.

Challenging & Rewarding

My Description of Tutoring in SLC

By Jasmine Wu, 02 English

My childhood dream has been to be an excellent English teacher. Now the Student Learning Center (SLC) has offered me the stage and opportunity to be an English tutor, a form of teaching. When this endeavor presented itself, I was greatly excited; however, I was worried at the same time. Would I become a qualified English tutor? Would it be too challenging for me? Yet, all my worries disappeared when I discovered that the students I was going to help were from Preparatory or Foundation Level. Upon actually working with the students though, I realized that being a qualified tutor

will be challenging no matter who I help. Simply conveying knowledge is far from enough. What is more, communicating with students effectively is absolutely essential.

The majority of students who come to the SLC for help on how to improve English may feel a sense of inferiority, though at the bottom of their hearts they are eager to improve their English. Also, it seems that they know how to improve their English, they just lack confidence. Therefore, as qualified tutors, in addition to conveying knowledge, we must also help them to build up their confidence. In my eyes, this is

the most challenging task for me—it requires both skill and strategy.

Though it has been just a short time since I became an English tutor, I have gained something priceless. When I help students, I am simultaneously learning how to communicate with them effectively in order to achieve the desired results. I become more and more skillful in communicating with them when I am confronted with various challenges.

Thank you SLC for providing me with an arena to help the students around me and gain precious experience.

Dear Ralph: An Advice Forum

The following is the original letter one reader seeking advice writes to 21st Century, an English Newspaper. The subsequent entries are suggestions made by Shantou University students.

Letter:

Dear Ralph,

I am a middle school teacher. I'm upset because I have a lot of pressure in my life and work. I always feel lonely when I come home from school. I stay at home by myself and because my husband is always very busy, I go online and have made some Net friends.

I have fallen in love with one of my Net friends. He is a good man, and we have known each other for one year. We are very happy when we are chatting online. I often imagine becoming his girlfriend. Now I realize that it is impossible, but I find it difficult to forget him. I won't live on without him and I have become afraid that I will be in love with him forever. What can I do to change my present life? Can you help me?
Yours,
Perplexed

Replies:

Anonymous No.1

Dear Perplexed,

In my opinion, you fell in love with your Net friend because of the pressure in your life and work. Now, your husband also has a lot of work to do, but I think when he finishes his work, he will spend more time with you.

Secondly, you say your Net friend is a good man, but I don't think you really know much about him. If you were to live with him, you might find out he is not as good as you think.

So I think you should have a talk with your husband and ask him to spend more time with you without mentioning anything about your Net friend.

Anonymous No.2

Dear Perplexed,

I have a question to ask you: Do you love your husband? If not, I

think you should get rid of him—divorce him and find another husband. If you do love your husband, have a conversation with him. You can tell him the truth.

No. 3 (by Autumn He, 04 Administrative Management)

Dear Perplexed,

First, I want to tell you that the world online is not reality. Most of the people who chat online are there to meet their emotional needs. At the same time, they hide themselves because they don't want to be known. How can you trust your Net friend?

Second, I suggest you spend more time on your interests instead of chatting online. You can talk with your family or friends, you can do many things for your husband. You can let him know about your feelings and thoughts, or ask him to go on a trip.

Finally, if you want your love to endure, you'd better have a baby. I

am sure the baby will bring you a new life.

No.4 (by Lily Zhang, 03 Business)

Dear Perplexed,

In my opinion, the best choice for you is to forget your Net friend. First, have you thought about what made you fall in love with him? It was your sense of loneliness. Your husband was too busy so you went online just hoping to send the loneliness away. This love for your online friend is not true love.

Second, the choice to get married is not an easy one. Only a deep love can induce you to make this important choice. Marriage requires patience, consideration and responsibility. If you can't get on well with your husband, how can you get on well with others? If you don't treasure the love by promoting your marriage, are you sure you can take the next love seriously? If you don't want to work hard, you cannot get real happiness.

Me & My Bike

Moe (04 Mathematics, has had his bike about two months)

"I bought my bike because I can ride it to and from my part-time job. One afternoon, I was riding my bike back to the dormitory after class. In front of the university store I came across an anxious student who asked me whether I could help him bring an injured student to the hospital. I said 'yes' since I had nothing important to do. Then we both took the injured student on my bike, and because he seemed to be full of pain and worry, I kept comforting him all the way to the hospital. Luckily, after being examined by the

doctor, it wasn't a severe injury, so I rode him back to the school. Having experienced such an ordeal, I now know that urgent things may happen unexpectedly. Therefore, keeping a bike can be very helpful."

Fanhai (02 Administrative Management, has had his bike about two years)

"I bought my bike when my girlfriend and I began to fall in love with each other, and it was paid for by both of us because she insisted on helping me purchase it. It can be said that the bike has always been a part of our growing love. Many of our friends say that

By Peeper Zheng, 04 Liberal Art

they see us everyday on the bike and they really admire our romance. Yes, our bike has given us much color and beauty."

Joyce (02 Administrative Management, has had her bike over one year)

"I'm always ready to help others and I often lend my bike to them. I still remember when a friend of my roommate borrowed my bike to go on a long trip. He returned the bike damaged, saying that he was too exhausted to have it repaired. The same thing happened a second time—he borrowed my bike, and returned it with the right grip broken. Both of

Editor's Note: Although our campus isn't large, many students have bicycles, and some of them have had unforgettable experiences with their bikes. I found some students who shared their stories with us.

these incidences made me angry, and even threatened to sour the relationship between my roommate and I. At last, my roommate helped to have it fixed and I forgave her and her friend. You know, friendship is far more important than anything else."

Thanks for those who shared their stories with us. Dear readers, if you have any interesting or unforgettable stories you'd also like to share, you're welcome to write to us.

Attractions of STU Language Labs

By Penny Zhong, ELC faculty

Sitting isolated in a cubicle with headphones clamped securely on your head, lost in monotonous sounds... Is that the picture that jumps into your mind when you hear the term 'language lab'? This dismal picture is quite true of most labs, yet it is an outdated representation that is not true of the new STU Language Labs.

Once you enter either of these two labs, you will first notice the seat arrangements. When you use the lab, you will be comfortably seated facing your classmates, or

rather team mates, in circles. You will find the teacher is no longer the focal point. The environment is intended to provide you more time with your classmates.

The general designers of the STU Enhancement Program placed greatest priority on the students' needs. While the teacher broadcasts the listening material, you can choose the speed you want. If it is too slow, you can speed it up and vice versa. Or you can choose some parts of the listening to repeat as many times as you want.

In this self-learning environment, you'll have more independence. Of course, the lab will supply you with many kinds of language learning materials. In addition, the lessons you study here can be recorded in digital form, giving you and your instructor greater convenience. Under the credit system, your self-learning time could even be considered a part of your class attendance.

The testing and grading system is another attraction. The system will keep a digital record of all the an-



swers you give, and will present you with instant results and analysis. These will be available either in digital or printed form, because a printer is waiting obediently to give service right in the lab. You can choose a question and the system will immediately tell you what your answer was, what the right answer is and who answered correctly!

Wow! Without this, teachers could spend hours and hours, or even days and days, doing boring grading work. And students are dying to know the results quickly.

So, what should our eyes focus on now? Sure! It's the STULL! These labs will sincerely welcome you!

How to Make Good Use of Textbooks in English Learning?



By Peter Xiao, ELC faculty

basis, integrated with 4 basic language skills for ESL or EFL. The whole series is divided into two strands: listening/speaking and reading/writing, starting at the Introductory level and going to the Advanced level. The variety of exercises based on the same theme "allows for reinforcement of both vocabulary and grammatical structures." It is thus clear that this series provides us with a systematic structure. Then, how can we make good use of these texts?

For one thing, textbooks should be treated as one of the sources for generating language. As mentioned above, this series is theme-based, which indicates that we are exposed to the ideas and expressions related to a certain theme in each unit, we can express ourselves by means of what we have learned. One way to keep those ideas fresh is to complete a journal.

For another, exercises in the textbooks and the writing activity books deserve our attention because they were designed to reinforce our basic language skills. Therefore, we should try our best to complete at least most of the exercises to be well equipped with the building blocks of the target language.

Surely, learning the target language from textbooks is far from enough. To a great extent, however, textbooks make reviewing and preparing our lessons much easier.

Can we learn English without using textbooks? I assume that almost everybody will say "yes" because we can be exposed to the target language by other media such as newspapers, magazines, radio programs, TV programs, etc. Then, why do we need textbooks? What role do textbooks play in language learning?

Compared with other materials, textbooks, if well-developed, can offer us a systematic syllabus. Jack Richards (2002), a renowned author of many widely used textbooks for English language students, once said, "If a well-developed textbook is used, students are exposed to materials that have been tried and tested, that are based on sound learning principles, and that are placed appropriately." In this sense, textbooks play a very essential role in language learning. The NorthStar series, for example, was developed on the contemporary-theme

On Reading Newspapers

By Lily Zhang, ELC faculty

Reading newspapers—much like reading literature, academic publications, or even tittle-tattle—is comprised of several elements. First and foremost, you need to answer why you want to read newspapers.

Broadly speaking, the answer to the above question varies between individuals. Readers of different ages, sexes, occupations, and educational backgrounds are likely to choose different columns from the same newspapers, or, even, different newspapers altogether. The choice of newspaper reflects, in varying degrees, the individual tastes of each reader. It may also tell us something about the lifestyles of certain groups in a given period. For example, in early 20th Century England, reading The Times was regarded, to some extent, as an indicator of nobility. While today, those who read The Financial Times are considered to be either academics or businesspeople.

The choice of which columns are read may also indicate the personal or political inclination of a reader. While a sports fan might be less inclined to read news on the US Presidential campaign, a "newshound" might be less disposed to reading about how the baseball World Series was won.

My conversations with students at The University of Leicester showed me that students of law and economics in the UK were encouraged to read The Financial Times, on account of its more policy-oriented reporting



style. In particular, the students read it for its lengthy and thorough analysis of EU economic policies with regards to the integration of the common market.

Furthermore, in the UK, newspapers reflect the varying shades of the political spectrum. The Labour party has its supporters in print, as does the Conservative party. While one can draw some conclusions about the personal or political dispositions of an individual from what they read, one must also be wary of presupposing too much. This is particularly true now, when we are inundated with a flood of different news sources, styles, and content. In such a sea of information, perhaps the only universal generalization that stands true is that very few people have either the time or the inclination to read a newspaper from cover to cover!

So, having decided what newspaper and which columns to read, one needs to develop a specific approach to reading newsprint.

(continued on page 5)

A Tale of Prestige and Persistence

Top Ten Singing Contest

By Effie Zhang

Did you go to the main auditorium to listen to the Top Ten singing contest on Saturday, November 27? If "yes", you may still be chanting the praise of an excellent performance; if "no", I'm afraid you've missed a wonderful musical experience.

Participants

At 6:30 pm, the final ten participants—who successfully passed both college and campus-wide semi-finals—began their dress rehearsal. After they had drawn lots for turns, they appeared on the stage and sang the songs they had prepared. An hour later these talented singers still looked confident, not to mention professional with the addition of make-up.

Process

The performance began at

7:30pm and lasted for about two hours. The competition between the contestants, who came from a wide variety of colleges, was very intense because they all put on such high calibre performances! But only one person could be the winner of the final, and who was that outstanding singer? See! A boy called Zeng Siqian prevailed! This student from the business school sang a song entitled "What's Up?" When asked what the initial response to his victory was, Zeng divulged that he was both surprised and excited.

Perseverance

Unfortunately, not everyone made it to the finals. A girl living next door to me took part in the semi-final competition the week before the final. Even though the song called "Magic Season" really suited her and she sang the song

very well, she failed. "I need an audience," she said. "As soon as the light illuminated me, I could not clearly see my friends, classmates and the other people who came to listen to me." I consoled her and encouraged her to regain her self-confidence and to my delight she later said, "Of course I will participate in the singing contest again next year—I do have the capability, don't I?" What a self-assured girl!

Prospect

Whether you succeeded or not, the competition has already passed and it's time to look towards the future. Perhaps you only participated this year as a listener but not a singer. Don't be upset! Remember it's never too late to try something new, so let's look forward to the campus-wide singing contest next year!

Most Beautiful People Survey

The Shantou Beat staff randomly surveyed 145 Shantou University students, asking them which men and women they find most attractive. The most votes went to Li Jiaxin and Liu Xiang.



**Liu Xiang
(Right)**

**Li Jiaxin
(Left)**



My Favorite Star

By James Bond, 03 Graphic Design

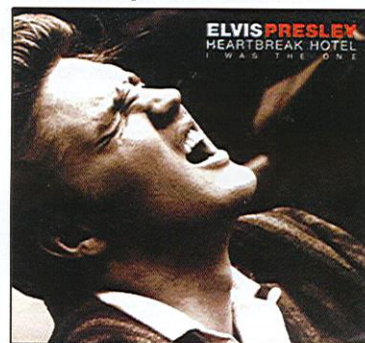
Elvis Presley (1935-1977) is my favorite male star; not only do I like his songs very much, I also like his handsome face and energetic dancing. He sang rock and roll, country and love songs.

In contrast with modern rock and roll songs, Elvis' rock and roll songs are simpler because his music didn't use many electronic instruments. But this doesn't mean his songs were weaker—his rock music was very exciting and so wonderful that he continues to be famous and popular to this day. Personally, I think his songs were better than Backstreet Boys' and Westlife's. If you don't believe me, you can listen to the rock classics Heartbreak Hotel, Don't Be Cruel, and Hound Dog.

Elvis' sweet love songs were really moving. His deep voice, combined with his beautifully expressed feelings, totally won many people over.

It's hard to describe how good he was at love songs, so if you want to find out for yourselves, you can listen to Love Me Tender, It's Now or Never, Are You Lonesome Tonight, etc.

After Elvis' death, caused by taking too many illegal drugs, he was buried in Graceland, located in Memphis. It is a very popular place for tourists. Many people who visit the USA have plans to visit Graceland in memory of Elvis, and it is my hope to visit someday as well.



My Third Medal

By Ann Li
02 Chinese

"Come on! Come on!" Voices from near and far poured into my ears. The blood pumping in my ears set the rhythm as I ran, faster and faster. Ahead of me, the finishing line came nearer and nearer. I took a deep breath, with the rain splashing over me and ran past the line! How the crowd applauded and cheered!

This was Shantou University's 18th Annual Sports Meeting. That day, hundreds of students watched excitedly as boys and girls from almost every college tried to run faster, jump higher and longer and throw further than each other. And I was one of the athletes representing my college. We were competing for that ultimate prize: a gold medal. Some of us failed by just hundredths of a second or fractions of a millimeter, but were content with a silver or bronze. Most of us were extremely happy to be there because we thought that it was not winning that was most important but taking part.

However, I was one of the lucky ones who had taken part in two previous sports meets and won two medals. From then on, I believed I had the ability to earn my third medal in the next meet. Although this was a high aspiration, I was sure that I could achieve it. And I realized my goal! I got a bronze in the 400m race!



That bronze didn't come easily though. It was won by my hard work, my self-esteem and the support from my group members. Running conditions were poor; the ground was wet and slippery because of the rain. When I stood in front of the starting line, I could feel my feet trembling. "Take it easy! Remember, the only thing we have to fear is fear itself," I said to myself. In my mind, I was convinced that if I think I can, I can. But I never over-estimated my abilities. I am a common girl, so it is quite understandable that I would also feel nervous and uneasy in such tense conditions. And yet, I overcame my fears and won my third medal in the race!

Later that evening, it was still raining, cold and dark. Inside, my third medal was shining in the warm light. And I sat and dreamed hopeful dreams about winning my next medal—and the next, and the next.

On Reading Newspapers

(continued from page 4)

because reading a newspaper is very different from reading literature. Most readers read newspapers purely for information, while literature, especially the classics, demands a more sensitive critical eye. To appreciate or criticize a piece of literature, you need to digest every plot and sympathize with the author and the characters in the story. Do not forget what Francis Bacon said, "some books need to be swallowed, while others digested". However, when one is reading a newspaper for information, one does not need to read so carefully. You may, indeed, often resort to skimming the text.

Furthermore, one needs to understand the structure of news reporting—the headline, the lead, the fractured paragraph development—

which all are very different from a piece of literary prose. No working journalist develops a news story in the same way as a writer develops a plot.

Lastly, the medium of newspapers has greatly contributed to the development and growth of the English Language. For example, it was a newspaper journalist that coined the phrase "gobbledygook" to describe the often contradictory and confusing speech of bureaucrats.

Whether it is print or prose that takes your fancy, reading is not only about the appreciation of high art or about seeking information. Rather, it is a combination of the two. Reading, like art and music, may comfort you, excite you, stir you, and inspire you. In the case of newspapers, it may also inform you.

Are You Prepared For Your Future? **VOICE OF A "GUY"**

By Jelen Zheng
04 Journalism

By Steven Zhou
04 Liberal Art

Editor's Notes: Li Dan, the Dean of the Science College at Shantou University, just finished his studies in Great Britain. Even though his major is Chemistry, his English is fairly good, and he has benefited a lot from his mastery of English. Several days ago, I interviewed Dean Li for some tips in learning, and he also mentioned motivations for English study. I will share some of his answers.



Steven: "Good afternoon Li Dan. In order to keep up with other famous universities, what improvements in teaching are we striving for at Shantou University?"

Dean Li: "We bring in new teachers from abroad every year. We have six professors from the USA, Canada, and Europe. In addition, every year, many teachers from our university go to other universities for further study. We are trying our best to improve our teaching quality because, of course, we aim at qualifying our students to be able to compete in the fierce competition of modern society."

Steven: "How can we make effective use of the great resources in our

university?"

Dean Li: "Students in our university are very fortunate as we provide many resources such as the Internet, labs, the library and so on. We have two projects in particular that students can benefit from: the English Enhancement Program, and the credit system. So you should endeavor to make the best use of these resources according to your needs and time."

Steven: "I know many of your works in chemistry were written in English—I really appreciate your work. What suggestions do you have for students who wish to be successful in the future?"

Dean Li: "Learning English is very important as it is an international language. I learn English to keep up with the international academic needs and also to meet the international frontier research needs so as to make foreign researchers accept our work. We can communicate with them more easily and effectively through English. Many professors in China have excellent skills, but they cannot write in English and as a result, their research is not quickly accepted internationally. Therefore, it is important that you not only learn English, but that you use it practically as well. You will benefit greatly if you use English in your future research and work."

This afternoon, I just met with a student named Guy, who is a Level 4 ELC student. He is now preparing for his upcoming Semester at Sea. When I talked with him about how to learn English, his calmness and brilliant ideas impressed me.

Q: You are in Level 4 of your English study; what is most emphasized in your class—listening or...?

Guy: In our class, we paid the most attention to listening and writing. In my opinion, Level 4 has been playing an important role in linking Levels 3 and 5.

Q: How did you manage to improve your listening skills?

Guy: One effective way, I think, is to "hear" films. Hollywood films should not only be considered, but also documentaries and other films promulgating science. You can expand your knowledge comfortably while also improving your listening.

Q: Good point. And what about writing?

Guy: Well, before practicing writing, you need to read and think about what you've read. For the majority of students on campus, any English reading materials that are not meant for the English major can be suitable,

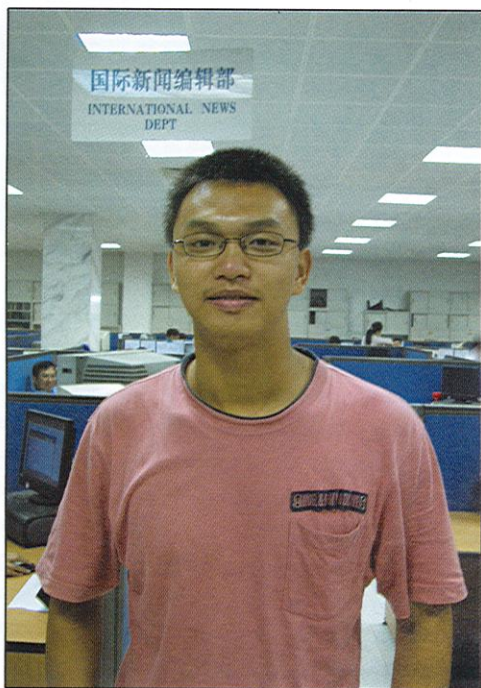
such as magazines, newspapers, internet sites, novels, comic books, etc. They are popular and it is not that difficult for us to understand their main idea and main structure. You can learn a lot from them.

Q: Learning English can be a long-term project. Can you give some suggestions to help us develop a more comfortable and efficient way to learn?

Guy: If you want to make it comfortable and efficient, one piece of advice is to integrate it with your own major. Of course, every one has his or her major. I always believed there must be a way to develop them together. After all, English is just a tool, one kind of channel for communication. If you can't put it into good use, it will eventually be meaningless.

... This is the voice of a "guy" whose opinion on English learning has given us new insight. English learning should be a lifelong process. Such a process is just like a spiral staircase—you seem to be going around in circles, but in fact, you've steadily climbed higher and higher. So, don't give up. Continue the journey.

One Day in Xinhua



News Agency

By Wind Huang, 02 Journalism

Note: This article was written by Wind, a junior journalism student and one of the Shantou Beat editors who was an intern at the Xinhua News Agency in Beijing this past summer.

8:00 am: I edged myself into a Beijing subway carriage, with a copy of the "New Beijing Daily" in my right hand. I noticed that both of the front page news articles and photos were provided by Xinhua News Agency. I was a summer intern at Xinhua and I felt proud.

8:40 am: I got out of the subway and walked to the Xinhua News Agency. When walking from the entrance to the International News office, I had to show my identification certificate three times. The team in which I was an intern belonged to the International News Department, and was in charge of providing international news to evening papers in China. We chose from news articles supplied by AP, AFP, Reuters and other foreign news agencies, and then translated the news into Chinese.

8:50 am: I went online to read the news published by Xinhua News Agency during the night. It was useful for me to know what was going on in the world. Suddenly, I found two pieces of news that I translated the day before. Nothing can be more exciting than that! You know, I spent an hour and a half working on those articles and wracked my brains for them. They were just like my babies.

The editor had amended my mistakes, adjusted the structure and given them more attractive titles. I learned a

lot from this process of "handing in" my translations and the editor "handing out" his revisions.

11:30 am: All our team members went to the dining room together. This was a good opportunity for me to communicate with the others. All of them were energetic and curious. We talked about Iraq and Saddam, Bush and Kerry.

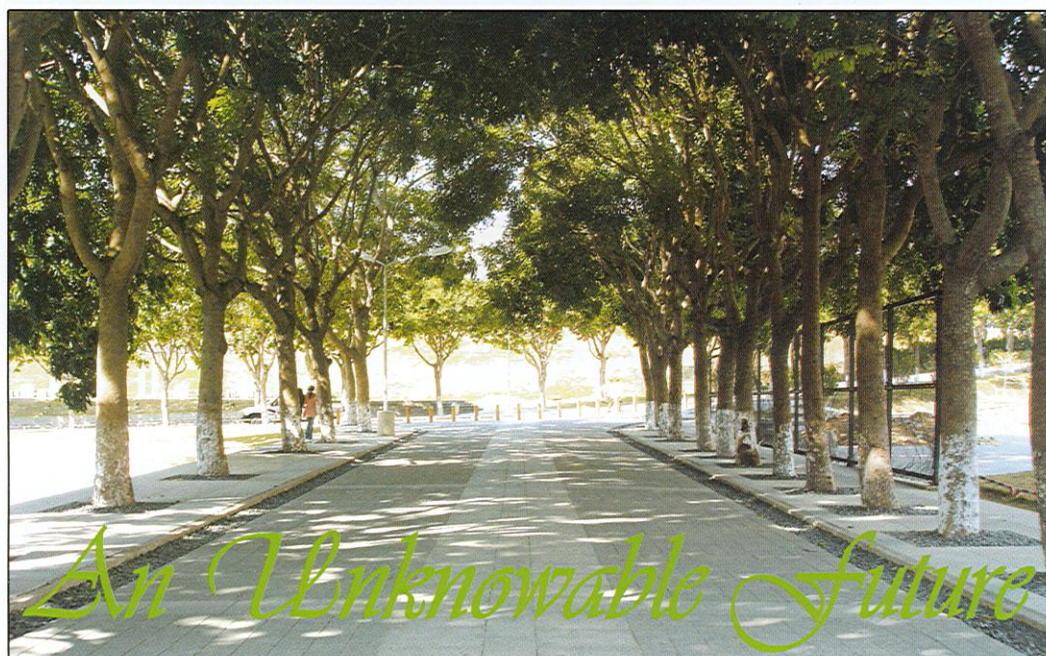
Dr. Hu Hingyong had always told us, "Excellent journalists in mainland China are not too many but too few." I was so glad to work with these soon-to-be journalists of China. We are all eager to be excellent journalists.

12:30 pm: Yi handed me a hard copy and told me to write around 400 words, just picking out the important information.

The news had been just published by AFP with the title "UN Security Council Mulling Sudan Sanctions." I was so excited to do such a real "hard news" piece. I knew that I was one of only a few people in China who knew this news and now I was in charge of telling it to the whole country!

Thanks to the Media Translation course I had taken in school last year, I still remembered Professor Yuanzhou telling us the "ABC" principles of media translation: "Accuracy, Briefness, Clarity." This greatly helped me during my internship.

This article is a taste of my days in Beijing. I valued and enjoyed every minute there, because I felt I was acting in the role of a journalist. What an unforgettable experience!



By Vicky

It's a sunny morning and I'm walking along the street on my way to class. The sunlight filters through the leaves, dancing on the ground. Suddenly the realization strikes me that I'm now an undergraduate. A queer feeling comes over me. This reality seems like the daydream I used to have when I was still in senior high school. The old days come back to me so clearly that for a brief moment I am under the illusion that I am still living in the past.

In other people's eyes, we grade three senior high school students lived a hard life. And indeed we did, but we seized every possible chance to entertain each other as a release from otherwise stressful days. Gone are those days! Now, even the hardest times have become a golden memory to me.

All my friends were forced to

part as we entered different universities. But before leaving, we faithfully promised to keep in touch with each other. We said that even though we have taken different roads in life, our destination is the same. We'll all strive for our dreams, and strive for excellence.

It's said that losing friends is like taking sunshine out of your life. However, to me the pleasure of smelling the fresh air in the university is far more than the sadness of being apart from old friends. And so many new faces have come into my life that I feel the sunshine has come back once more. Meanwhile, my whole life has completely changed. Academic learning isn't the only important thing any longer. I need to develop various skills, such as communication with others, team

work, courage and so on. And to my excitement, I've got the freedom I've dreamt about. But I know, with freedom comes responsibility—to myself and to the people I love.

Last night, an old friend called me, and she said that as soon as I picked up the telephone, she could sense that I'd changed. I smiled and said everybody is changing because life is changing. A sentence in "Forest Gump" impressed me so much that I can still remember it, "life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get." My future is full of possibilities, and I hope I won't waste any of my time here in the next four years.

Back to reality, I'm now on my way to class. I'm also on my way to an unknowable future.

Raging Wind, Driving Rain

By Jimmy Rong, 02 English

During the summer vacation, I visited some cities in Southeast China. Unfortunately, while I was in Hangzhou City, I was confronted with a typhoon for the first time in my life. It was powerful and impressive. I can still visualize the strength of the horrible monster.

On that morning, the sky was dark. The heavy air was stirred by forceful gusts of wind, making people tremble a little. I felt inexplicably irritable, sensing that something would happen. As was expected, we were soon told that a typhoon was close to the city, and tourists must stay in their hotel. Hearing the news, everyone became frightened, but also curious. Most of us had not experienced a typhoon before. We were waiting anxiously for the challenge of nature.

At noon, the wind suddenly increased. It blew harder and harder, whistling through the house I was in, and the rain poured down relentlessly. I felt I was not experiencing the wind, but an earthquake. The typhoon felt just like an earthquake, rattling the brick walls of our house and shaking the floor violently beneath us. The typhoon was also like a formidable force of thousands of soldiers. It roared, attacked, and ad-

vanced, ignoring any obstacles. It was keen to destroy everything it met. Sometimes Westerners say, "It's raining cats and dogs," but this was raining "bombs and missiles."

In my mind, the typhoon seemed to last forever as it steadily grew in strength. Its huge noise was deafening and made me think of a sentence in Shakespeare's play, King Lear. "The winds blew the earth into the sea, or swelled the waves of the sea till they drowned in the earth, that nothing will remain on the land." At that moment, I realized it was not an exaggeration. When I looked out of the window, I saw that beautiful flowers and green leaves had been plundered. Huge trees were forced to kneel humbly on the ground. Parts of bicycles were scattered everywhere, like scraps of paper. And mankind, the most intelligent species, could only hide in shelters. I sighed. Humans are so frail compared to nature.

As a matter of fact, this was only the initial stage of the typhoon. While we were nervously waiting for the real challenge, the observatory announced that the direction of the typhoon had changed to another city. And we all breathed a collective sigh of relief.

Students' Works

Grow Through the Pain

Two Types of Dictionaries

By Senior Muk
02 English

An agent of electronic dictionaries has done a survey on our campus to show that most of the students choose to use an electronic dictionary rather than a traditional one. There are many differences between these two types of dictionaries, such as convenience, content for explaining words, and costs. From these differences, we can realize that these two types of dictionaries have their own advantages as well as disadvantages. As an English learner, one should use each of these dictionaries correctly.

Firstly, the convenience levels of the two types of dictionaries are different. Even though there are some pocket dictionaries, most traditional dictionaries are heavy and large. For example, a New English Chinese-English Dictionary is thirteen centimeters wide, nineteen centimeters long and six centimeters deep; furthermore, it weighs one kilogram. In contrast, it is very convenient

to use an electronic dictionary. It can be very small and light, weighing just one fourth of a kilogram. Likewise, it can give you the information automatically once you type or write down the word. More importantly, many electronic dictionaries are produced with special components which can update them if connected to computers.

Secondly, the content for explaining words in these two types of dictionaries is different. The traditional dictionary has all kinds of words including the names of people and different places, and the origins of words. Furthermore, it can provide you with an extensive explanation of one specific word. For instance, the Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary spends about five pages to explain the word, "get". On the other hand, the electronic dictionary can only provide you with the general explanation of the word, but it can have

sounds to show you how to pronounce the word. Therefore, the electronic dictionary is very helpful for people, especially those who are reading fast and who want to get the general information for the word.

Finally, the costs of the two types of dictionaries are different. For an Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary, you spend just 95 RMB and you can use it forever. For an Easygo electronic dictionary, you need to spend at least 320 RMB and then spend some money on maintenance or updates. A college magazine has shown that the cost of maintenance for an electronic dictionary is twice the cost of a traditional one.

Thus, both the traditional and the electronic dictionaries have their advantages, and as an English learner, one can gain a lot from the use of either.

By Cindy Luo

01 International Trade

In the sunset

I look through the leaves of a tree
And find the sunshine diminishing.
The shadow of the tree extends
Like the melancholy growing in my soul.
Pain is so strong, for I feel my heart break.

Darkness appears, without stars in the sky.
Standing under the tree, I ask,
Can darkness cover my sadness?
Lord, please give me enough courage
To heal my soul.

Lord, can you give me a kind of magical glue
To adhere those fragments of my heart?
Leave me alone, leave me alone, my friends.
Let me gain enough strength from deep thought

To grow through this pain,
To see the sun rise another day.

Where's My Culture Shock?

By Susan Spencer, ELC faculty

I have been teaching English in Shantou University since September. I am often asked if it is difficult for me to adapt to China and Chinese culture. Don't I miss America and the "American way" of doing things? What about culture shock? I think my answers are often disappointing because I have no tales of woe. While I've made my share of gaffes and blunders (including some I am likely to be unaware of), I don't feel uncomfortable, estranged or the slightest bit homesick. What's up with that? Where's my culture shock?

The term culture shock was introduced in 1958 to describe the physical and emotional discomfort a person feels when coming to live in another country. Culture shock is about the feelings that go along with not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment; not knowing what's appropriate and what's not. However culture shock is not just about encountering the unexpected. It is about the emotional and physiological stress that goes with adjusting to a new culture.

One of the most important factors in reducing the stress and strain of living in a new and unfamiliar place is avoiding isolation. I have been able to do this largely through the presence of a built-in community at Shantou University.

On my first day at Shantou University, I met the other foreign teachers, the ELC staff and the student assistants. On the second day, I met the local ELC teachers. From that day, with teaching workshops, planning sessions, and shared meals we became acquainted with one another. As soon as I began teaching, my students offered to help me with even the most trivial of tasks! How different my experience would have been without this instant community!

Language barriers and their isolating effects would have made life difficult, were it not for the situation here at Shantou University. While Chinese is all around me and I am trying to learn it, day to day I function in English. I teach in English and speak English outside of class. Communicating - and thinking - in English connects me to a familiar world.

In many cases where adjusting to a new culture is difficult, it is because people adapt out of necessity rather than desire. My situation is different. I came to China and to Shantou University in order to live and work in a culture that was new to me. This simple distinction, and the purposefulness of my life as a teacher here, enable me to enjoy the differences I encounter rather than be unsettled by them.

Certainly I encounter difficulties or experience frustrations from time to time. However, I believe that problems exist so that solutions have something to do. This simple philosophy enables me to keep bumping along day by day, embracing the newness of it all.



Susan (Left)

Popular in the eastern part of Guangdong province, the ChaoShan dialect has many outstanding and appealing characteristics. It draws people's interest with its many unique aspects of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and so on.

The famous expert on Chinese languages from Sweden, B. Karlgren, once said that the ChaoShan dialect was one of the most long-lasting and special Chinese dialects. Historical materials recount that it received the affections of the Chinese between 2nd century BC and 3rd century BC, and was popularized in the ChaoShan area from 300AD on. Now it is widely spoken, used by

Feeling the ChaoShan Dialect Culture

By Steven Zeng
04 Liberal Art

about 10 million people in several cities such as ShanTou, ChaoZhou, JieYang, among others. Thus, it's an excellent living language with which to research classical Chinese.

Why else is the dialect so special? Personally, I think the ChaoShan dialect is one of the most difficult dialects to follow and learn. HaKa dialect, though it is also a dialect, has some resemblance to Mandarin in pronunciation as well as meanings. ChaoShan dialect,

on the other hand, is almost completely different from Mandarin in pronunciation when expressing the phrases of eating, sleeping, clothing and so on. ChaoShan dialect is so influential that it greatly affects other local languages, and we can find traces of its pronunciation in many other dialects.

When I first came to Shantou University, most of my friends, not to mention myself, expressed that we couldn't understand the

local language here at all. Some complained that it sounded strange, and some even hated it. This reaction was largely due to the culture shock we experienced as we attempted to adjust to this new environment.

The ChaoShan dialect, though difficult to follow, was handed down by Shantou's forefathers and it retains many of the original meanings and the substance of the ChaoShan culture. Resisting the ChaoShan dialect doesn't make any sense; rather, we should embrace it and treat it openly and objectively. If we do this, we will probably grow to appreciate it.

Contribute to The Shantou Beat!!!

We want you! Yes, that's right, you heard me. The Shantou Beat wants talented people like you to contribute your own English writing! The following is a short summary of the topics and ideas that are included on each page, so that you can decide what type of article you would like to write and where you would like it to be located. Please note that all submitted articles should be between 300-400 words and can be sent directly to lee222victory@tom.com or christin@stu.edu.cn. We would also greatly appreciate any related photos to be included. We can't wait to hear from you! The theme for next issue is WINTER HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE.

Campus Life

Campus Life explores topics that relate directly to your life here at Shantou University. We welcome opinions about issues that face students in their daily lives or problems around the campus. We are also looking for fresh ideas and stories and other topics related to daily life on campus—any story you feel worthy to share! We warmly welcome your participation on these pages!

English Learning

On the English Learning page, we discuss hot topics regarding the problems we face learning English along with constructive suggestions we can apply to our learning. We include articles from both our ELC teachers and our fellow students. Their ideas could be just what you've been searching for in the same way your ideas and experience might be helpful for other English learners! So don't be shy—we welcome your involvement! Submit an article today!

Arts and Entertainment

Music, dance, art, theatre, movies—these are all topics you might find on the Arts and Entertainment page. We are looking for people like you to submit articles you feel would interest your fellow students on arts and entertainment events taking place locally, regionally or globally. For those of you who are artistically inclined, we're also looking for student drawings, so begin drawing today!

Focus on People

Do you know someone who is exceptional? Someone who has done something remarkable—something the world just has to hear about? Well, here's your chance to make that person known! In Focus on People we tell you about interesting people here on campus who have stories to be told. You can submit articles you've written about your own experience or about someone you know. We're waiting expectantly for you!

Student Voice

Dear Students, Student Voice is a good platform to exhibit your essays. It is a great opportunity for your voice to be heard. You can write down your particular experiences on just about any topic or give your opinion on hot issues either on campus or in society. The possibilities are endless! Your contributions are much anticipated!

Cultural Communication

Would you like to know more about culture in China and abroad? Just keep an eye on this page—Cultural Communication. We include articles that discuss a variety of topics about local and western culture, and often compare the two. On this page we also inform you of some news and give you information about our editors. We hope you will consider submitting your own articles for this page!

(The Shantou Beat)

THE SHANTOU BEAT
Jan 2005 English Language Center Newspaper Vol.4

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

Editor-in-Chief: Jun Liu

Managing Editor: Penny Zhong

Chief Sub-editors: Christin Allen

Victory Lee

Language Consultants: Cheryl Traiger

Christin Allen

Sub-editors: Angela

Allen Ann

Daisy German

Guy Jelen

Quist Steven

Wind Winter

Design and Layout: Victory Lee

Newspapers are available at the

English Lounge (1st Floor of

Postgraduate Students' Building)

and the ELC Office

(4th Floor of Wennan)

Email: christin@stu.edu.cn

lee222victory@tom.com

Website: <http://elc.stu.edu.cn>

Shantou University English Festival

By Dale Sroufe, Chair of English Festival Organizing Committee

On the weekend of December 9-12, 2004, Shantou University hosted the 3rd Annual Shantou University English Festival sponsored by the English Language Center under the direction of Dr. Jun Liu. Each night of the Festival featured a different activity designed to highlight and promote the English language skills of the university students who participated. There were over 300 students who took part in the various activities either as contestants, participants in the variety show, or festival workers and organizers. Many of the faculty, foreign and local, also helped plan, organize, coach speech and singing contestants, as well as stage the performances.

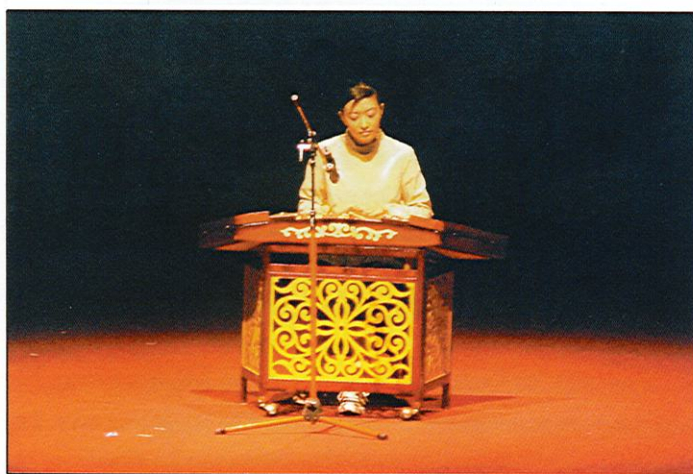
In addition to Shantou University students, students from three other Chinese universities were participants in the intercollegiate speech and singing contests. It was an honor to host professors and students from the University of Hong Kong, Tsinghua University in Beijing, and Zhongshan University in Guangzhou.

The Festival began with an opening ceremony on Thursday, December 9, welcoming guests and contestants from the other universities. The evening featured welcome addresses from Julia Hsiao, Vice Chancellor of Shantou University as well as Dr. Jun Liu, Director of ELC, and Dale Sroufe, Chairman of the Festival committee. The main event of the evening was the keynote address by Dr. Donald McQuade, Vice Chancellor for University Relations at the University of California, Berkeley. He spoke on the subject of the importance of the arts in human development, especially language development. One of the highlights of the evening was the premier performance of the newly formed Shantou University marching band under the direction of Patrick Hauk.



Friday, December 10, was the Intercollegiate Speech Contest. Ten contestants from the participating universities spoke on the theme of "Urbanization and the Environment". They were required to give a 3-minute prepared speech followed by an impromptu speech on a randomly chosen topic. Then they were given ten minutes to prepare and two minutes to deliver their impromptu speech. There was also a question and answer period for both speeches. Competition was strong and all of the speakers were quite impressive. Qin Lei, an English major from Tsinghua U., took first place; Yu Quai, an environmental science and engineering major also from Tsinghua U., took second, while third place was a tie between Zhang Lu from Zhongshan U. and Henry Xi from Shantou U. The Speech Contest was organized by subcommittee chairpersons Rachel Monn and Irene Upson as well as student organizers Julie Zeng, Victoria Xu, and Rose Zhang, and a host of student helpers.

Saturday night, December 11, was the Intercollegiate Singing Contest featuring performers from all the participating universities. A packed auditorium enjoyed the sounds of American pop music performed by twelve accomplished singers. Again the competition was tough and the judges had difficult decisions to make. First place winner, Ocean Hung, came from Hong Kong U., second place went to Fan Xin Yuan from Tsinghua U., and third place was a tie between Zhang Liang from Zhongshan U. and Mark Zeng from Shantou U. The audience was also treated to two dance performances and a violin solo while judges deliberated. The Singing Contest was organized by Kyle McIntosh and student organizer Yan Ou as well as many other student helpers and auditorium personnel.



The last night of the festivities featured a student variety show organized by David Williams and Li Tingda. Over 200 students participated in dancing, singing, drama, and comedy acts that were enjoyed by everyone.

English Language Festival this year was a tremendous success and will remain fresh in the minds of the Shantou University student body, as there were over 500 specially designed t-shirts distributed to participants, guests, workers, and marching band members. Chief Graphic Designer for the Festival, Jack Yang, designed the wonderful logo on the t-shirt. He was also responsible for stage decorations and the Festival brochure.

Congratulations faculty and students for a job well done!



Reflections on the Shantou University 2004 English Festival

By Ed Nicholson, Ph. D.
Guangdong Foreign Languages Studies

As I had the pleasure of attending both the 2003 and 2004 English Festivals at Shantou University, I thought I would like to give you my thoughts about these events.

In general, I think that the 2004 festival has been more successful than its predecessor. Perhaps this is due to the experience gained from the previous two festivals, but there are several other possibilities that occur to me.

1. The organization for this year's festival was much more thorough. I believe that student involvement was greater and that those responsible for the various committees had more experience in organizing this kind of event. I have been particularly impressed with the contributions made to this year's festival by the Foreign Teachers. They have shown leadership not only in the assistance provided the students in developing the program, but also in ensuring that the necessary 'follow-through' for each event occurred.

2. It is also evident that the Chinese teachers of English are beginning to feel more comfortable with their foreign colleagues, which produces a harmonious working relationship. There is definitely a team spirit to the ELC this term. This has resulted in a marked improvement in the spoken English of many C.E.T.'s and the use of English as a 'social' as well as a 'working' language between Chinese educators. It has become more than just a necessary tool for communicating with foreign colleagues.

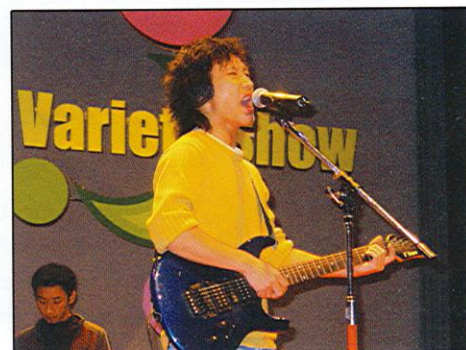
3. The ELC is beginning to have an impact on the campus in terms of the use of English outside the classroom. When this increased emphasis on "co-curricular" English is combined with the higher quality of English the students now bring with them from their Middle School training, there is far more support for the communicative use of this language. The students are beginning to realize that there are better reasons for learning English than CET 4 or 6 certification.

4. Students at this university, particularly those who are non-English majors, view the English Olympics as a significant campus event. Their support and enthusiasm was quite evident in all three public performances and in the Opening Ceremony. I spoke to a number of students who informed me that even though they had not participated in the organization, they had really looked forward to this year's festival.

5. There was a noted increase in enthusiasm for this year's festival. The marching band, the "T Shirt gun" and the excellent opening speech on the arts by Don McQuade all contributed to the high energy level of the Festival. The expressions on the faces of the audience told the whole story. The palpable excitement of the overflow, "clap-a-long" crowd for the singing contest and the smiles and laughter of the Variety Night audience were the true measures of this year's success.

involved in the Speech and Singing Contests gave very credible performances against stiff competition. I spent some time on Sunday interviewing both students and faculty from these three prestigious universities to find out their views on the 2004 English Festival.

the Speech and Singing Contests gave very credible performances against stiff competition. I spent some time on Sunday interviewing both students and faculty from these three prestigious universities to find out their views on the 2004 English Festival.



Comments from the Visiting Participants

Professor Mu Fengliang Tsinghua University:

Both my students and I enjoyed the entire experience very much. I was particularly impressed with the hard work of the organizers for extracurricular activities. I believe Dr. Liu has done a very good job of selecting high quality foreign language teachers. I must ask him to tell me the secret of how to get them to work so hard!

To be frank with you, the quality of the events was much higher than we expected. I enjoyed the enthusiastic atmosphere of Shantou University and the faculty and students and their willingness to communicate. There was no need for reservedness in conversation here - no obstacles to overcome. I think we were made to feel very welcome and I appreciated the warm hospitality of this university. We don't feel we are far away from home.

Comments from the Tsinghua students:

"I made many new friends - although I am very tired today after talking all night. It was a lot of fun."

"Actually, the competition part was more enjoyable than I expected. I was also very surprised when some of the Shantou students spoke English to me."

"Well, I know you are going to ask me this question, so I will tell you the truth right now. No, we did not talk English all night! (laughing)"

Professor Wu Qianlong Zhongshan University:

I thought it was a good competition, although I think the scoring procedures for the judges needs to be simplified. I noticed that things were better organized this year than last and I am very impressed by the English quality of the Shantou students. It is definitely improving. In general, I think everyone has done a very good job.

Comments from Zhongshan Students:

"I hope we can come back again. Professor Wu often talks about Shantou and now we have seen it for ourselves and want to return."

"I think we were treated very well. The food and the beds were very nice."

"I ate too much and slept too little. I made many new friends. It was great!"

Conclusion

In my estimation, the 2004 English festival was an unqualified success. Better organization resulted in higher efficiency. There was definitely an energy level at the evening events I had not observed in 2003.

In her welcoming message at the opening of the First Shantou English Festival held in December, 2002, Vice President Julia Hsiao made the following comment:

"As Shantou University strives to provide our students with an outstanding education encompassing the pertinent skills and knowledge necessary to compete in today's global economy, English becomes a window to discovery and the bridge of friendship to peoples of all countries."

As I read these words on the flight back to Guangzhou, I could not help but feel that the 2004 version of the English festival has helped to both strengthen that bridge and open that window just a little bit wider. As Julia herself would put it, "The 2004 festival rocked!"



I think that what we are observing here is an emerging sense of pride. After three successful English Festivals, each slightly more 'professional' than the last, the students are beginning to realize they can hold their heads high - even in such rarefied company as the students and faculty from Tsinghua, Zhongshan and Hong Kong Universities.

Indeed, the students who participated in

Highlights & Reactions

By Guy Cao, 02 Journalism

Banners hanging across the main road of STU, signposts written with words such as "Intercollegiate Speech Contest", "Intercollegiate Singing Contest", or "Variety Show", heralded the 3rd Annual English Festival held from Dec. 9th to 12th, 2004.

"I couldn't fall asleep, I was too excited," said Victoria Xu, a student organizer of the Intercollegiate Speech Contest Sub-committee. She was one of the over 300 English Festival participants, organizers, trainers, and staff. She couldn't help bursting into tears at the end after all ten contestants finished. These included student representatives from the University of Hong Kong, Tsinghua University and Zhongshan University, who smoothly gave stimulating speeches to more than 1,000 STU students and visiting guests.

For Victoria, working from the very beginning of the semester to almost the end of the semester was a long run. Attending the numerous English Festival Committee and Sub-committee meetings, printing and handing out thousands of leaflets, and organizing several smaller activities, was all made worth-

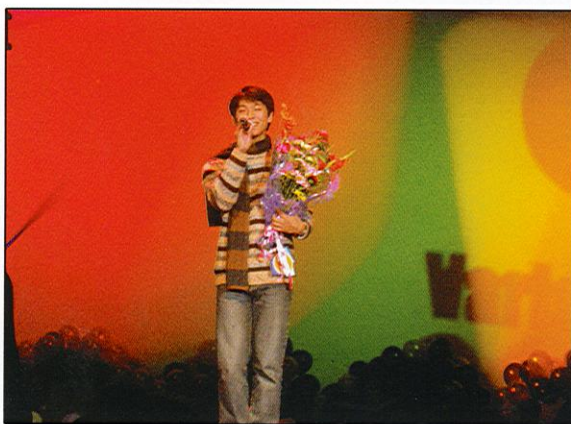
while all as the event drew to a close in the main auditorium Friday night.

Yang Ming, who participated in both the speech and singing contests, admitted he was shy and unconfident

whenever he spoke in public. "So, I signed my name on the application form and I got over it. That was it."

David Luo said he was surprised when he saw one of his classmates, who had never sung in public before, make it into the second round of the Singing Contest. Although the singer, Sophia Zhuang, didn't acquire any prize in the end, she was not regretful. "If I didn't join the contest this year, I would have had no other chances because I am about to graduate."

The student response to the Festival was overwhelmingly positive. "Contestant Number 8 from Zhongshan University is so handsome!" or, "I saw the champion from Tsinghua University! Her English was really fluent, and more



importantly, she is beautiful!" were among the student comments. Many such remarks could also be found on the BBS right after the show. Unlike the flood of criticism and complaints on BBS last year, this year only praises and congratulations could be found.

The ELC has tried its best to encourage a greater mastery of the English language by using multiple channels of communication and promoting an appreciation and understanding of western culture and global citizenship through the English Festival. All those involved in this year's Festival deserve praise for achieving what they intended to accomplish, and we eagerly await another exciting event next year!

A Win-Win Way Singing English Songs

By Daisy Liu, 04 Journalism

"Singing English songs is a win-win way for English learners to learn English," Mark explained. "You not only enjoy the music, but also improve your oral English."

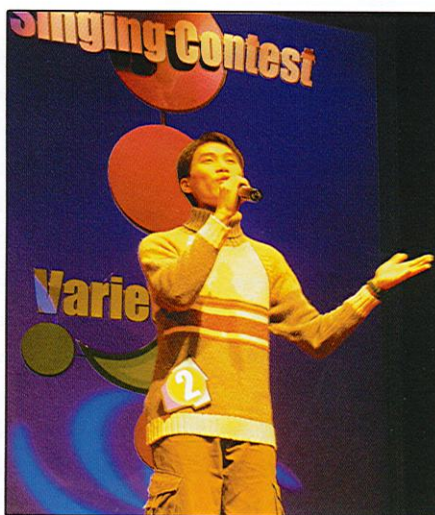
Mark, a junior student from the English department in Shantou University, won third prize in this year's Singing Contest at the English Festival. He has taken part in many singing contests in the past and won second prize when he was a freshman. "The prize is not so important," Mark said. "I just love singing and like participating in the singing contest."

In fact, he did his best job in the first of two performances that night, favoring us all with his sweet voice. Many may wonder how he can sing English songs so well, especially when it can be difficult for Chinese to sing them. When he was five years old, he became very interested in singing, and he began to sing English songs when he entered junior school. He originally thought it was a good way to learn English. He found this to be true, so he continued.

He also likes singing Chinese songs. He thinks that there are some differences between Chinese and English songs.

They are two different musical styles, but are both great. Though Mark is an English major, he does not think you need to be an English major to sing English songs. On the contrary, he believes everyone can sing them and benefit from the endeavor.

Mark's experiences can give us much encouragement in the improvement of our English skills. It is a fact that listening to English songs can improve our listening while singing them can improve our oral English. If you don't believe it, just have a try!



ENGLISH FESTIVAL

A Good Christmas Present

By David Du, 02 Computer Sciences

"Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way ..." We could almost hear the jingle of Santa Claus' sleigh as Christmas approached. Several weeks ago, from December 9-12, the 3rd Annual Shantou University English Festival (EF) was successfully hosted by Shantou University. In the year's Festival, we enjoyed not only the wonderful opening ceremony but also the Intercollegiate Speech Contest, Singing Contest and Variety Show. The Festival could be considered an early Christmas present to us students.

This year's EF gave us an opportunity to compete against and exchange experiences with students from some famous universities such as Tsinghua University, the University of Hong Kong, and Zhongshan University. Although the results of the contests were not in our favor, the experiences were more valuable than medals because we learned from others. We may gain more medals in the future as we set goals and try our best to attain them.

In addition, the Festival brings us into the world of English. One effective way to learn a foreign language is to construct a supportive environment. Walking into the hall, we found this environment. We debated in English; we sang in English; we played in English...every word was spoken in English. Marx, the great philosopher, said, "The best way to learn a foreign language is to forget your mother language when you learn." And that's what the EF did. In this completely English world, we might have felt that English was no longer an onerous course but just a common language we often use. Furthermore, the splendid shows attracted our interest and will affect us in the future. For example, after I watched the speech contest, I found a need to improve my oral English and my pronunciation. Also, after enjoying the singing contest two years ago, I became fond of singing English songs. Subsequently, I found my interest in English had increased.

Nevertheless, some students might not agree with me. They chose not to watch the shows saying, "The EF is uninteresting and useless for improving our English." But if we are always apathetic and unconcerned, we will never do anything well at all. Why not try to relax and enjoy the shows instead? Maybe you will be surprised and find the Festival interesting indeed. Although the EF might not have immediate impact on our exams tomorrow, it is revealing and can guide our English learning. Some students would say, "Since our final exams are coming, it would waste time if we took part in the EF." Admittedly, preparing for the finals is something we have to do, but missing this EF is not excusable. To balance both, we could make a reasonable schedule.

In my opinion, this annual English Festival was a tremendous success. The excitement will remain fresh in our minds for years to come. We have received a good Christmas present from the University's English Language Center (ELC).

Tsinghua Student Wins Speech Contest

By German Li, 04 Chemistry

This year's Speech Contest was a huge success! The first place went to YuKuai, a junior Environmental Science and Engineering student from Tsinghua University, who gave us a wonderful performance. YuKuai began her English studies when she was in kindergarten. At first, though, she felt only a little interest in English. She thanks her father, who is a lover of learning foreign languages, for teaching her English as a child and passing on his love of it to her. "Environment is very important," she said with smile.

When asked how we students can make use of our spare time to enjoy English, she gave us an answer from her own experience. "When I have time, I will go to the English Corner. There, you can feel the freedom of expression and creation. To improve your English, you must learn to speak out. It's ok. I am just communicating."

In reference to the speech contest, she told me that participating

in such an activity can improve our speaking ability as well as our communication skills. "Here, you can learn from

each contestant because all of them are intelligent," she said.

In addition to our interview with YuKuai, we also interviewed Professor Mu, a teacher from Tsinghua University, who accompanied the visiting students. This was his first time to STU and he expressed his pleasure with the invitation while looking forward to continuing ties between the two universities. Shortly after his arrival, he could sense a strong atmosphere of humanity here, and was delighted by both the warm weather and warm hearts.

When asked his opinion about the speech, he said the students did well but still had some shortcomings—they thought from a technical point of view rather than a his-

torical view. The latter is better because we can study past problems and learn from mankind's mistakes.

Professor Wu also gave us his ideas concerning the English Enhancement program in STU after we explained it to him. "What we need are fresh ideas; we always have to try to break from routine. It is a good proposal." For this very reason, Tsinghua University often goes to other universities to see how they teach so as to improve their own teaching model. "Only in this way can we keep pace with the times," he said.

We thank YuKuai and Professor Wu alike for all their cooperation and offer our sincere congratulations.



Coming Attraction!!

No.1 During the Spring Semester, many of our beloved ELC faculty members will be presenting a Faculty Lecture Series. The series is designed to be both informative and interactive. Everyone is invited to learn about new topics and take part in discussions after the presentations. Dates and times are yet to be confirmed, but the lectures will take place once a week in March and May. Look for more information early next semester.

Some of the topics of the lectures will include: Skateboarding, Astronomy, Fashion, American and Chinese Films, and Rap Music. Come join us, and you'll see that your ELC teachers may know more than you thought they did (not a guarantee).

No.2 Ever wonder what life is like at an American university? This semester Shantou University's English Language Center will present a short film series exploring just this question. Moving from classic features that have shaped the way Americans view the college experience (The Paper Chase and Animal House) to documentary videos that uncover what really happens on campuses across the country, the series will offer an insider's perspective on the important issues facing college students in the United States today. As a special bonus, the series will end with video journals prepared by STU students during their own studies in America. Beginning after the May Day vacation and lasting for four weeks, the series will highlight a different film or video each week. For every screening, members of Shantou University's faculty or student body will introduce the feature and highlight the important issues in each film.

Individual Environment Ethics

By Yu Kuai from Tsinghua University, Winner of EF Speech Contest

The environmental movement has effectively influenced public opinion and moved the business community towards an environmental ethic. The result of this changing view of business responsibilities will complicate business decision making into the next century. More complex demands by the public and a broadening of horizons on the part of business will be the dominant theme of corporate life during the next decade. As human populations and economic activity continue to grow, we are facing a number of environmental problems that threaten not only human health and the productivity of ecosystems, but in some cases the very inhabitability of the globe. If we are to respond to those problems successfully, our environmental ethic must express itself in broader and more fundamental ways. We have to recognize that each of us is individually responsible for the quality of the environment we live in and that our personal actions affect environmental quality, for better or worse. The recognition of individual responsibility must then lead to changes in individual behavior. In other words, our environmental ethic must begin to express itself not only in national laws, but also in subtle but profound changes in the ways we all live our daily lives.

A Roper Poll in 1994 indicated that Americans think environmental

problems can often be given a quick technological fix. Says the Roper organization, "They believe that cars, not drivers, pollute, so business should invent pollution-free autos." Coal utilities, not electricity consumers, pollute, so less environmentally dangerous generation methods should be found." It appears that many individuals want the environment cleaned up, but they do not want to make major lifestyle changes to make that happen.

Decisions and actions by individuals faced with ethical choices collectively determine the hopes and quality of life for everyone. As ecological knowledge and awareness begin to catch up with good intentions, people in all walks of life will need to live by an environmental ethic.

If there must be a war, let it be against environment contamination, nuclear contamination, chemical contamination, against the bankruptcy of soil and water systems; against the driving of people away from lands as environmental refugees. If there must be war, let it be against those who assault people and other forms of life by profiteering at the expense of nature's capacity to support life. If there must be war, let the weapons be your healing hands, the hands of the world's youth in defense of the environment.