

读 华彩篇章
品 东西文化
感 师大生活
悟 大学真谛

ECNU CIRC

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语 者歌章

9/2019

PROFILE [人物]

LITERATURE _

STUDY ABROAD [他山之石]

▮ e Most Beautiful Teacher

of the Chinese Department. The whole process is smooth and effective thanks to the cooperation of my colleagues.

E: ~~Chen~~ECNU

~~PL~~The academic cooperation between ECNU and XMU can be found in the following two programs, namely, the joint postgraduate cultivation program and the joint summer school program. The former emphasizes on the academic exchange between the two universities. Every year seven or eight postgraduates from XMU are selected and sent to ECNU as exchange students where they study in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature for one semester and work on their dissertations. After their research topics are finalized, they will receive one-to-one guidance from their mentors at both universities. Later, some mentors from ECNU will even make a trip to XMU to attend the dissertation defense. The aim of such a joint program is to deepen the reform of postgraduate cultivation. It not only benefits the postgraduate students but also promotes the cooperation among teachers in terms of collaborative supervision on dissertation, thus contributing to academic growth of the Department of Chinese Literature in XMU. The joint summer school program is another highlight in the cooperation between ECNU and XMU. So far it has been held twice successfully. Every summer many well-known scholars are invited to deliver the lectures at forum in ECNU. Altogether twenty postgraduates as well as five young teachers from XMU participate in the summer program. Although the program only lasts for five days, it does have a big impact on those students and teachers from XMU. On one hand, it broadens students' horizons and provides them with a better platform for academic growth. On the other hand, it serves as a channel of communication for scholars in both universities.

E: ~~It~~ECNU

~~\ HDU : KDW GLVFLSOLQH V GR WKH \ FRYHU " : KDW \ V WKH VLJQL & FDOFHE RLVX EKD FKH QJH~~
~~PL~~The newly-authorized degree units in XMU cover a wide range of disciplines. The academic degree programs include Applied Economics, Marxism Theory, Education, Cyberspace Security, Physical Education, Business Administration and Law. The professional degree programs involve Master of Physical Education (MPE), Master of Translation and Interpretation (MTI), Master of Social Work (MSW), Master of Tourism Administration (MTA), Master of Clinical Medicine (MCM), Master of Taxation (MT) and Master of Engineering (ME).

The significance of the above changes lies in three aspects. To begin with, the increase of degree authorized units enhances the capacity of postgraduate cultivation in XMU. Besides, it is deemed as a coexistence of opportunities and challenges for its teachers. Thanks to the new degree authorized units, about 200 teachers are promoted to be academic mentors and therefore are confronted with more demanding challenges in terms of talents cultivation and professional skills assessment. Such a change will serve as a catalyst not only for teachers' personal career growth but also for upgrading educational quality of XMU. More importantly, these degree authorized units are like the reserve of talents for Tibetan development. Since many of XMU postgraduates choose to work in Tibet after graduation, the degree authorized units will act as

an indispensable scaffold⁶ capable of promoting the talents' engagement either in scientific researches or decision-making consultation, thus contributing to the development of Tibet.

E: ~~Chen~~ECNU

~~PL~~
~~Design~~ECNU
~~PL~~

~~PL~~ The application of degree authorized units involves a wide range of steps such as team integration, preparation of application materials, panel review and so on. The whole process is a team effort, while I play a role as a designer responsible for building up the framework and working out the application strategy. On one hand, my familiarity with educational policy and application process allowed me to offer professional guidance in the preparatory stage, thus greatly improving the working efficiency of the teamwork. On the other hand, by giving highlight to the features and advantages of key disciplines in XMU, we managed to make application material more convincing and effective, thus gaining a better chance of having more degree units authorized. After March 2018, the focus of our work was shifted to the construction of degree authorized units. Later I was assigned to work as the Associate Dean of the Graduate School and Director of the Academic Degree Program Office. My major responsibility lied in building up the team of academic mentors, ranging from the revision of previous selection standard to the selection and training of academic mentors. To promote the overall quality of the newly-appointed academic mentors, XMU invited some experts to give them professional training in terms of experience sharing, policy interpretation and practical guidance.

E: ~~Chen~~ECNU

~~AdF~~ofTibet
~~Cult~~

~~PL~~By the end of 2017, I made a bold proposal to the Department of Chinese Literature of XMU to host the Advanced Forum of Tibetan Literature in the New Era, inviting scholars and experts from all over the nation. About 60 experts and scholars from more than 20 academic



institutes attended the first forum. The “New Era” echoes the theme of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. We hold this forum to make preparations in application for the doctoral degree authorization, hoping to arouse the enthusiasm of the faculty of the Department of the Chinese Literature to participate in academic activities and to underline the significance of Tibetan literature research in XMU. Boasting an excellent research team in this field, XMU wants to strengthen its influence through the forum. The forum went quite well and brought a lot of benefits. It is highly important for a university to interact with others and make academic exchanges a part of its routine work. Such contact will certainly bring XMU to a new height. As an old saying goes, “You can’t be a master by shutting yourself up in a room.”

E: ~~主持人~~
~~主持人~~

PL In retrospect, although I face many difficulties, especially health problems, I still value this experience very much. Had I not committed myself to this mission, I would not have a deep perception paid with hard

for the future cooperation can be found in various disciplines of both universities. For example, while the academic mentors help students find the topic of dissertation, they may come across some valuable research topics aiming to solve the real-life problems in Tibet. Last but not the least, I find the moral education of XMU quite effective and it can be further promoted among ECNUers. In a word, assistance is by no means a one-way street. Instead, it’s mutually beneficial and supportive, thus going smoothly in the long run.

E: ~~主持人~~
PL To be honest, I received lots of help from both sides—XMU and ECNU. The working and living condition in XMU is rather good. All the staff there are really nice to me. When I fell ill, my superiors and colleagues would come to visit me and treat me like their family members. Meanwhile, staff meetings are held regularly in XMU to hear the problems and suggestions from teachers. As for ECNU, I gained much support from both school leaders and the school administration. I am really grateful to them.

E: ~~主持人~~
PL I do not think I’ve accomplished any great goals. As a member of the Aiding-Tibet team, I’m simply committed to the daily work of discipline construction, educational administration of graduate students and training of the newly-appointed mentors. However, every time I see the progress in my job, every time I facilitate my colleagues’ career growth, every time I witness the change of my students, I find myself overwhelmed with joy.

E: ~~主持人~~
PL I felt a bit disturbed when I was given such honor as I know from my heart that all the accomplishments in XMU are the fruits of the team work. It’s true that I did make some contributions, but as I said before we live in an age of cooperation and I can’t make it without the constant support from my colleagues. Everyone in our team has done a great job and I am just lucky to receive such honor. Therefore, I would like to thank XMU for the recognition of my work. I would also give thanks to ECNU. All in all, this honor will serve as a stimulus urging me to keep on trying for a better future.

A Rising Science Star

— An Interview with the National Scholarship Winner

One thing you won't miss about Zhang Siyuan is his active involvement in a variety of scientific researches and innovation projects. The project Shanghai STEM Cloud Center he participated has won the gold medal in the Fourth Chinese Internet Plus Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition of College Students. Besides, as the only student representative of ECNU, he made his presence at the First Youth Forum for National Model Software Colleges. Apart from his interest in research, Zhang is equally involved in student clubs on campus. During his term as the Chairman of Science and Technology Innovation Association, Zhang was awarded the title of "Excellent Student Cadre" of ECNU several times. Meanwhile, Zhang's performance with Yinghe Youth Choir in 2019 New Year Concert brought him both recognition and delight.

ECNU's Contribution
Interviewer

It's a long story. To be honest, when I was in high school, I preferred to take medical science as my major in college. However, it was a pity that I didn't perform very well in the college entrance examination, which denied me the chance to apply for a good medical school. Later, I simply followed my parents' expectation and chose software engineering as my major. That's why I felt kind of lost when I first came to ECNU.

I had no idea about what a software engineering major means, let alone any real interest in learning. As a result, I didn't do well in most of my courses and even failed linear algebra¹. It was not until then did I realize that I can't idle away any longer or I would end up with nothing. During my sophomore year, I was confronted with the demanding major-related courses. Due to lack of the intrinsic² motivation, I struggled to survive. The whole process of learning was quite painful. In my junior year, things got a little better as I gained an in-depth understanding of my major in terms of its theory and application. Although the academic pressure was equally heavy, I began to take delight in exploring my major and gradually became an efficient learner.

E: Interviewer
Interviewee

In fact, I think it was sheer luck. Theoretically, only four students in our school were qualified to win the national scholarship this year. If GPA were the only determining factor, it would be impossible for me to win the prize as I ranked 10th on the candidate list. Fortunately, one of the school projects I undertook won the gold medal at the Fourth Chinese Internet Plus Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition of College Students, which gave me a unique advantage and finally earned me the scholarship. Winning the national scholarship meant a lot to me as it helped me go through the darkest moment of my college life when I failed to be recommended as potential postgraduate candidate. Faced with such a heavy blow, I felt a victim³ to the loser mentality. Worse still, I was trapped in an abyss⁴ of negative emotions—hopelessness and helplessness. The winning of national scholarship was like a beam of light dispelling the darkness and delivering me out of the snare⁵ of negative feelings.

E: Interviewer
Interviewee
Interviewer
Interviewee
Interviewer

In fact, this research project belonged to the School of Computer Science and Software Engineering (SCSSE). I joined the research team simply because one of my favorite teachers was the core member of the team. As I wanted to accumulate some research experience, I took the initiative to volunteer to be her research assistant. Thanks to my outstanding academic performance, she agreed to give me an opportunity to try. I got involved in the preliminary stage of the project development, namely the visualization of data, which turned out to be a very interesting and challenging task. In fact, this research project belonged to the School of Computer Science and Software Engineering (SCSSE). I joined the research team simply because one of my favorite teachers was the core member of the team. As I wanted to accumulate some research experience, I took the initiative to volunteer to be her research assistant. Thanks to my outstanding academic performance, she agreed to give me an opportunity to try. I got involved in the preliminary stage of the project development, namely the visualization of data, which turned out to be a very interesting and challenging task.

program in cooperation with an established company. The program mainly focused on the systemization of internal information of that company as well as the on-campus promotion of recruitment. It participated in the Fourth Chinese Internet Plus Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition of College Students, which was officially held by the SCSSE in ECNU and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (MOE) and whose judges were real investors from society. Our opponents were all eminent research teams, thus making the competition rather fierce. The whole preparation period stretched

and being a member of Students Union gave me a sense of belonging. During my term, I planned and participated in numerous activities, thus making acquaintance with many students otherwise I might not even know. After one-year work, I not only gained the precious friendship but also developed my social skills. The best memory about that job kindled my desire to run for the Minister of Students Union in the sophomore year, and later the Chair in the junior year. Fortunately, I succeeded in both tries as my abilities were recognized by my classmates and teachers. When I served as the Chair of the Students Union, I organized several traditional events and most of them turned out to be huge success. However, the most challenging one was the competition which we co-hosted with Shanghai Meteorological Bureau. In the competition, participants ran their software programs to analyze the meteorological data provided by the meteorological agency. The whole process included data analysis, data processing with AI and the practical application. We were in charge of the execution of the whole

process ranging from the promotion, organization to supervision. As it was held for the first time, we had to fumble around before we figured out a way. Thanks to the constant support from our teachers, we were able to overcome various challenges and ensured the competition a huge success.

As for my work performance as the Chair of the Students Union, I think there are still a lot of room for improvement. Above all, I didn't make a bold try in organizing any new events except for the traditional activities held annually. I think it takes a lot courage to start something new, as every step involved in the process needs to be considered and well planned from personnel recruitment to finding business sponsorship. Maybe I can make a change by adding some new elements to the regular activities, thus bringing the vitality to the traditional events.

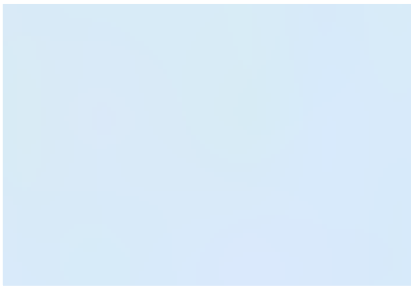
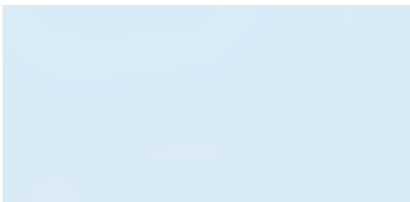
E: ~~My Hobby~~

I I'm fond of music, especially singing and playing the guitar. It is such a coincidence that my dorm mates all like playing the guitar instead of computer games. In our spare time, we always chat while playing the guitar together. As for the balance of life and study, I have always been trying to set aside some time for relaxation even during the busiest exam season. When I prepared for postgraduate examinations, I barely had any spare time for fun. Still, I managed to set aside every Wednesday afternoon for choir rehearsal on Minhang campus. Although others may think that my devotion to choir was totally a waste of time, I feel it helped me get refreshed and stay confident. It's my personal belief that best learners are usually those know how to relax themselves.

E: ~~Do I like ECNU~~

I In general, as a college student, we should have our own ideas and be responsible for ourselves. Many college students still hold the myth that once they enter the university, their pursuit of study is replaced by the effort to seek fun. However, from my perspective, learning is more important and self-demanding in college than in high school where study is more exam-oriented and parents/teachers-guided and therefore students have little autonomy over their learning. By contrast, learning in college is rather a self-exploration process as the external forces mentioned above don't have the same role as they used to. The purpose of learning now is to accumulate knowledge and skills which are necessary for students to make a living in the future. Apart from an independent academic life, we also need to learn how to take good care of ourselves physically and emotionally without the meticulous care and attention from parents. We can gain independence by starting to do something small such as sleeping earlier, doing more exercises and making more friends. Last, I think it's more important to go out and see the world, and gain different life experiences with an open mind and sincere heart. Sometimes we may encounter many setbacks and even get trapped in depression. If we can't give ourselves any timely self-adjustment, we may also need to seek help from others. For me, I exercised regularly and had enough sleep; I chatted with my friends and teachers for their advice on my problems. This was how I survived the stress and lived a wonderful life on campus. I believe people around me are always sincere and ready to give their hands. So, don't hesitate and just ask for help.

Join the Workshops, and You Will Make it with Our Brilliant Coaches



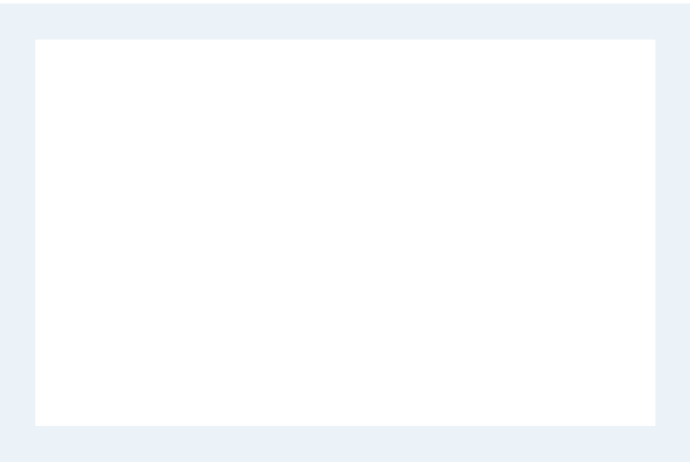
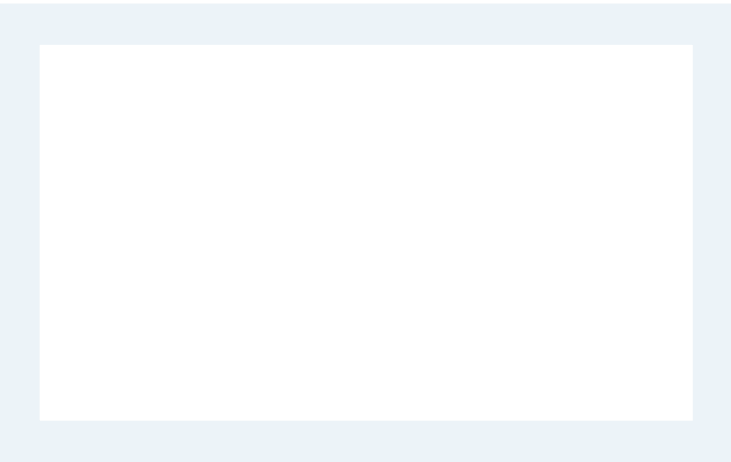


questions. Therefore, they can gain an advantage by handling the questions well. In fact, recently judges in speech contests weigh student’s ideas over their pronunciation and intonation. That is also a reason for my focus on their ability to think deeply. And indeed, it turns out to be effective and worthwhile.

E: You have coached so many years of competition and helped many students. In the process, do you think there are any gains for yourself?

Z I instruct this match because I myself also participated in English speaking contests when I was a student. I was interested in this competition, so I became a coach later. I think the biggest achievement is that I can communicate with many other teachers, and when guiding students, if students have made progress or won the awards, we both have a sense of accomplishment. This is one aspect.

More importantly is the coaching process itself. Every year, a new group of students will join us. In September, we will select a group of students and then take them to our contest workshop. We organize weekly activities and the annual campus contest. The communication with them all through the way is a kind of “harvest” for me. In the process of giving lectures, the interactions are deeper than in normal class, and I can also get more exposure to ideas from the younger generations.



E: Can you share the contest performance of your student days?

Z Back to my student era, the competition was called the CCTV Cup. Now it has been changed to “FLTRP•ETIC Cup” English Public Speaking Contest. At that time, when the CCTV cup was held, I was studying in Henan Normal University. It happened that my Alma Mater held the regional fnal. Two students entered the fnal that year, including me, but it turned out only one of us could participate in the regional fnal because our school needed one of us to be the host of the event. Both of us won frst prizes at the campus fnal. I chose to be the host because I had a very good relationship with the other student. So he went to participate in the fnal and I became the host.

E: Do you have any suggestions for daily English speaking practice?

Z English speaking is inseparable from English learning in general. From the perspective of speaking ability, it is rooted in language literacy, including pronunciation and intonation, vocabulary and encyclopedic knowledge. In prepared speeches, knowledge is needed when writing, and in impromptu speeches, there are always many unforeseeable topics. That’s the time when the scope of one’s knowledge is even more important. However, it may not be enough to only have a language proficiency and encyclopedic knowledge, because speeches also involve comprehensive qualities such as critical thinking abilities. These abilities need to be improved over a long time. For example, knowledge and vocabulary need to be accumulated, there are no shortcuts; Intonation relies on regular training, and there are many resources available at present. Furthermore, one needs the ability to overcome stage fright. Everyone will be nervous when they are speaking in public. As Mark Twain once said, “do the thing you fear most, and the death of fear is certain.” If you are afraid of speaking in class, then after you have spoken to hundreds of people in the speaking contest of a campus fnal, you’ll have all the ease when you speak in class next time; if you have experienced what it feels like when speaking in the national fnal, you can deal with speaking at any occasion later in your life. The most important thing is to improve your overall ability and have more experience, and to break through your limits again and again.

采访人：王 宇

被采访人：王 宇

王 宇 I majored in editing and publishing during my undergraduate study. At that time, the magazine was just established, and I thought it was a good opportunity to practice, so I gave it a shot.

王 宇 First, I happened to see one of the magazines in No. 2 Teaching Building. It was very impressive. Coincidentally, soon after a senior student came to ask me if I was interested in doing art editing for the magazine. As a student majoring in editing and publishing, I was also interested in English publications, so I said yes.

王 宇 When I was a freshman, I learned about the ECNU Circle from my teacher Ms Wang. My curiosity about full-English magazines and the interests in interviewing as well as writing led me into joining the ECNU Circle.

王 宇 I am fond of looking for campus news and also have a good command of English, so I joined the ECNU Circle.

王 宇

王 宇 It must be Joshua. I cannot forget how nervous I was when I took a leap and interviewed an overseas student, Joshua, for my first time. Luckily, he was friendly and even also joined the ECNU Circle later. We have constantly kept in touch. Sometimes we set up dates to chat about life and exchange gifts.

王 宇 Wang Heping, a teacher who specializes in special education impressed me deeply. Mr. Wang was the first teacher I interviewed. His professional knowledge on special education was eye opening. He is strict with those future special teachers, but he cares for their sense of fulfillment and achievement. These are the reasons for my admiration.

王 宇

王 宇 I'm in charge of the art section. Art editors are mainly responsible for the design. However, during the process, the interview manuscript will still be constantly modified. We hope English editors can send it to us for design after finalization, so as to improve the efficiency of designing.

王 宇 There is no trouble for me. The job has been rewarding and it does not take up too much time.

王 宇 I feel troubled about revising drafts. Sometimes I need to recompose the article again and again, which costs me much energy and time. Coupled with existing academic pressures, having to revise drafts frequently put me in a quandary.

王 宇 Well, finding clues. At the preliminary meeting of ECNU Circle, news clues were not always abundant. Besides, I always find clues so tiny that I can't turn them into an article.

E: 编辑

Ge: I had trouble mainly with the time management. When I worked on my first issue, the task was to check the errors in the text. I read it word by word, and it took about six or seven hours to finish. At that time, I felt the workload was quite heavy. The second time my task was to do an interview. During the interview, the recording was requested, and then the document was compiled. I had to delete the colloquial words first, and then sorted out the ideas to make the structure clear. There were many steps, so it took a huge amount of time and the whole process was not as simple as I thought.

Ich: How to design a layout that is both satisfying to myself and supported by the reviewer is the most troublesome. To put it another way, it is the most difficult to make my ideas workable. For example, the design may not conform to the atmosphere of the article, or may not be consistent with the style of the entire magazine, and thus it must be revised. It may be a minor change, or it may be completely overthrown and restarted. It is necessary to undergo constant revisions in order to obtain satisfactory results from both sides. Often, I have a disagreement with the reviewer's ideas. This is the biggest problem I have encountered.

(+RZ KDV (&18 &LUFOH DÜHFWHG \RX "

Ge: First of all, ECNU Circle provide a chance for me to know more about ECNU and helped me broaden my horizons. Second, as an English editor, I have the opportunity to keep in contact with some teachers and learn their professionalism and responsibility in the process of working. Third, here I am more familiar with the working atmosphere,

Crosstalk Club: The Inheritor of Culture



When thinking of clubs, people usually think of dance, sports and travel. But a crosstalk club? Not really, right? From an undesirable club to a “Five Star” club, the history of Crosstalk Club “Dou Bu Le” obviously demonstrates the spirit of not giving up and teamwork. So, ECNU Circle conducted an

P
In 2016, China
—In 2015, China

ECNU Circle
Actually, it occurred to some seniors of class of 2012 who love crosstalk all of a sudden. When talking with each other in the dormitory, they realized that there was no such crosstalk club in ECNU. Thus,

they convened¹ about ten friends to found “Dou Bu Le”, the Crosstalk Club. Compared with the popularity of crosstalk in the north of China, people in the south may not be familiar with crosstalk, so the aim of the Crosstalk Club is not merely to gain pleasure for ourselves but also to let more people acquaint with crosstalk.

E: Huh Dou Bu Le
We referred to the master of crosstalk—Zhu Shaowen’s stage name “Qiong Bu Pa” (Be not afraid of being poor). Although we had other alternatives, they did not conform to our philosophy. After the discussion, we reckoned “Dou Bu Le” as the best name.

**(: H U H W K H U H D Q \ G L Y F X O W L H V R U D F K L H Y H P H Q W V W K D W O H I W **
Truth be told, there were numerous difficulties. During the initial period, approximately only ten people came to watch our crosstalk shows and we even asked some of them to lend a helping hand to disguise² as audiences. When I entered ECNU in 2015, “Dou Bu Le” was almost on the verge of collapse. Teachers of the Club Community told us that if we could not enroll more people, the club had to be dismissed. Fortunately, just in that year, plenty of students joined the club and many of them became the backbones, who have enabled the club to flourish. We have to admit that it is those members that brought the club back to life and the club has become more and more prosperous since then. Owing to these outstanding members, “Dou Bu Le” club got the title of “Five Star Club” the first year it turned to an official club from a reserved one.

E: In 2014, Dou Bu Le Club
In addition to “Dou Bu Le”, the Crosstalk Union of Universities in Shanghai also includes Crosstalk Association of Shanghai University, “Huan Lin Xiao Yu” Crosstalk Club of East China University of Science and Technology, the Crosstalk Club of East China University of Political Science and Law, “Yu Zhong” Crosstalk Club of Tongji University, the North Club of Fudan University, “San Ren Xing” Club of Shanghai Dianji University, and Shanghai “Jiu Le Tang”. During hardships, the union offered us a lot of help. A case in point is that the members from the crosstalk club of Fudan University and East China University of Science and Technology would assist us in performances and invite their students to get to know and enjoy crosstalk shows of ours. Afterwards, some commercial groups contacted the Crosstalk Union for business performances while “Dou Bu Le” has been adhering to the principle that it merely attaches importance to happiness and pleasure regardless of profits, so we alienated ourselves from the union a little bit. Nevertheless, we still maintain a good relationship with some members of the union. We often organize our students to watch their performances and vice versa.

N
Q G R X W W K H L U H [S H U L H Q F H V D Q G J D L Q V I U R P W K H

E: ~~What is the club?~~
~~Club~~

L There are two special events each year, including the show after recruitment and the one in the graduation season. There are also two performances, unpacking (unpacking is a terminology³ in crosstalk, which refers to the first performance after the Spring Festival) and sealing (sealing comes from Peking Opera, which is an old custom of Peking Opera and other troupes, and refers to the final show at the end of the year before taking a rest). The time of unpacking and sealing are around the Qingming Festival and the Winter Solstice, mainly depending on the time schedule of our members. Routine activities include internal rehearsals and external communications. East China University of Science and Technology, Fudan University and other universities in Shanghai will invite us when they hold special performances, and we will organize members to enjoy their shows for the purpose of making progress together.

E: ~~Why do you do this?~~
~~Why~~

L We do not create crosstalk shows directly. The most common thing we do is to adapt traditional scripts. We utilize the form of traditional crosstalk and make it more suitable to spread in modern society. During the meeting before performance, we collect everyone's opinions when

deciding the contents and choose the most appropriate scripts after taking several factors into account such as interest, duration, contents and etc. When actors have finished adapting and passed the examination of the stage manager, they can perform on the stage.

Z In order to arouse the interest of audience, we usually set the background of the story in places that people are acquainted with. For example, Travel at Night (New version) tells a story which happens on the Minpu Bridge. At the same time, we hope our performances can be close to the life of college students. Only under this approach can the audience learn about our traditional culture more vividly. We often adapt the Book of Masters to let more people understand the funeral cultures and folk customs of ancient China, which I think is very significant.

E: ~~Are you a professional?~~
~~Professional~~
~~Amateur~~

L Many people cannot tell the difference between talk show and monologue⁴ crosstalk. In the past few years, we have been contacted by many talk shows programs, but there is actually a striking difference between them. Talk shows focus on the immediate reaction of audience. The package (package is a term of Chinese Folk Art which refers to the part that makes audience laugh) can achieve the desired effect immediately when thrown out. Monologue crosstalk is more like telling a story. Actors will slowly go deeper, in other words, exert the language skills flexibly to carry out the detailed organization. The whole performance is so interlocking that the audience have to focus on it till the end to understand its subtlety. Compared with talk shows, monologue crosstalk is more systematic and requires a myriad⁵ of training.

E: ~~Can you give an example?~~
~~Example~~
~~Example~~

L I think it is the responsibility of every club president and the contribution of all the members.

It is a highly demanding project to run a club. The financial and personnel problems faced by a student community are beyond imagination. To be honest, when you look for a job in the job market, you will find that many companies do not recognize your work in the student club. As for myself, I do not run this club for adding some experiences on my resume, but because of my love for crosstalk and our club. I consider that it is worthwhile to devote my time to the Crosstalk Club as I have always enjoyed it. In my opinion, it is this same love that urges every president to shoulder the responsibility and every member to contribute to our club.

F:

E: ~~How do you feel about the club?~~
~~Feel about the club~~
~~Like~~

L Crosstalk drama (crosstalk drama is a burgeoning form of artistic performance. It is based on crosstalk and sitcom, breaking the traditional way of performing crosstalk, and presenting the essence of crosstalk in the form of drama. Crosstalk drama is a kind of crosstalk performance with plots, characters and stage background) is what we have always wanted to do. Fudan University has just hosted a crosstalk drama show several days ago, and after seeing it we are even more intrigued to have our own. Because to tell the truth, we do not have enough money or energy to realize this dream, and there is nothing we can do but envy. The other goal is to keep the club flourishing in the long run. I hope that the club will still be here when I come back a few years after graduation.

~~Can you give an example?~~
~~Example~~
~~Example~~

E: ~~Why did you join the club?~~
G: I joined the crosstalk club because I am keen on the art form of crosstalk. I grew up listening

to Liu Baorui's monologue crosstalk. Later, I came into contact with masters including Ma Sanli, Hou Baolin and Guo Degang. I have gained a lot of happiness from crosstalk, so I wish to bring the joy to others through performing crosstalk.

E: ~~Are you a professional?~~
~~Professional~~
~~Amateur~~

G: Yes. Because the crosstalk club I have imagined is the one that performs the "new crosstalk" which conforms to the style of Spring Festival Gala. Unexpectedly, "Dou Bu Le" still maintains the traditions of quyi (Chinese folk-art forms). In an orthodox⁶ way, they have a penchant⁷ to perform the "old crosstalk" prevailing in the teahouse of the old society, which is a great surprise to me.

E: ~~Can you give an example?~~
~~Example~~

G: I think crosstalk is just chatting. It is not only a conversation between crosstalk actors, but also a communication between crosstalk actors and the audience. Although crosstalk is a stage art, the most pivotal thing is not to have estrangement with the audience and result in a sense of distance. A crosstalk that is not friendly or down to earth, is a failure. Therefore, crosstalk is a seemingly unintentional, but actually intentional chat. The key point of a successful crosstalk is to interlude "Baofu" (a terminology in crosstalk, referring to the comic effect achieved through careful organization and paving) throughout the entire performance, so

1. convene: v.
2. disguise: v.
3. terminology: n.
4. monologue: n.
5. myriad: n.
6. orthodox: adj.
7. penchant: n.

Enjoy the Most Professional Fitness Training at ECNU

2016, Feb 18

ECNU Circle

W In light of² the demands from professors and students that there is no space and equipment to meet their needs for exercise, the College of Physical Education and Health upholds the development philosophy of people-centeredness and providing public sports services, makes full use of school venues and equipment resources, gives full play to³ discipline advantages and professional expertise, builds a platform that integrates practical education with public services and integrates professional knowledge with sports culture. This is to enrich the cultural life of professors and students on campus, creating a sporting, vigorous and a healthy campus.

E: Fitness

W In the planning stage, we went to the gyms nearby and the gym of other universities, investigating their activities, equipment, fees and operation time. After the inspection, we began to recruit coaches, security guards and receptionists, and invite professional teachers of our department to conduct corresponding training on them. In addition, in order to create a better fitness environment, we then contacted the decoration company to carry out the overall renovation of the gym such as adding the fitting rooms and lockers. Simultaneously, we have independently designed and produced daily cards and monthly cards so as to make the operation of the gym more professional.

E: Management

W The aim of making students responsible for the whole operation team is to combine practical education with public services. Our students will be mainly engaged in physical education or the management of sports companies in the future. Letting students take charge of the whole operation team can not only provide professional guidance and protection for other students but also improve students' teaching ability, management ability and comprehensive ability. For instance, how should administrators do a good job in all kinds of management work to ensure the orderly operation of the gym; how should coaches improve their teaching ability to better guide and attract students; how can securities apply sports physiological knowledge to prevent injuries are the issues that the management team has to take into consideration. What students learn most during classes is merely theories, while the management of the gym can enable students to put the theories into practice, which will pave their way⁴ for the future.

A new gymnasium has opened in ECNU since 2019 for the sake of benefiting the professors and students. What makes it distinctive from other gyms is that it is utterly¹ managed by the students from the College of Physical Education and Health. So, ECNU Circle has conducted an interview with one of the members from the management team and now let's have a look at some highlights of this gym.

E: ~~Interpretation~~ ~~Advice~~

~~in~~

W As a saying goes, things are always difficult at the start. The hardest part for us is the beginning. Due to the lack of experience, many people who came to the gym would constantly give us feedback and advice in the first week, such as the shortage of drinking water, air conditioning, equipment, etc. With the passage of time, various departments have become more and more skilled, and people have found their own know-how⁵ at work. Hence, these problems have gradually been solved.

E: ~~Apply~~ ~~to~~

~~train~~

W Yes. As is well acknowledged, there are more girls in ECNU, so equipment training is not preferred. Thus, we have intentionally added spinning, treadmills⁶ and other equipment. Moreover, because the main purpose of girls going to fitness center is to lose weight and keep slim, we decided to carry out some body building courses including yoga, aerobic dancing to appeal to female students. What is worth mentioning is that the opening of these courses has resulted in the phenomenon that sometimes girls who come to the gym even outnumber boys. Besides, for the purpose of providing a platform for fitness enthusiasts to exchange ideas, the gym regularly holds sports activities such as the pull-up and plank⁷ competitions.

E: ~~It~~

(: KDW DUH WKH FULWHULD IRU FKRRVLQJ ¿ WQHVV HTXLSPHQWV "

W Gym was used by the high-level athletes of ECNU at the beginning, so the equipments tend to be very professional and as a whole quite complete. In addition, during the actual operation process, we have gradually acquired popular equipments according to the users' opinions.

E: ~~Equipments~~ ~~Apply~~

~~to~~

⁸ WKH ¿ WQHVV HTXLSPHQWV + RZ GRHV RXU J\ P NHHS WKH ¿ WQHVV IDFLOLWLHV FOHDQ "

W We clean up the gym every day, and on every Wednesday and Sunday night we will clean them up thoroughly. When we clean a yoga mat, we wipe it with disinfectant⁹, scrub it with clean water, and finally let it dry. For fixed equipments and non-stationary¹⁰ equipments, as long as there is contact with the skin, we will carry out disinfection to ensure that the gym is clean and sanitary. Furthermore, the quality of our students is comparatively high who pay great attention to individual sanitation. Some will bring a towel to put it on the equipment, and some will wear the workout clothes that absorb sweat, which reduces our workload.

E: ~~Double~~ ~~For~~

~~to~~

W We have been thinking about that lately. As the number of people exercising in our gym increases, lockers are sometimes really insufficient. Nonetheless, considering the overall environment of the gym and the cost, we will not blindly add lockers. We will conduct data analysis on the user flow so as to choose more sensible management methods. A case in point is that if two or three people come together during rush hours, we will try to convince them to use as much of one locker.

E: ~~Go~~ ~~to~~

~~Ch~~

(3 OHDVH WHOO XV DERXW WKH FODVVHV R¿H UHG E\ WKH J\ P

Z Our gym arranges yoga, Pilates¹¹, aerobics and other classes every week. These courses can not only help students lose weight and get in shape, but also exercise muscles and strengthen their bodies. In contrast to the aerobics, the intensity of yoga and Pilates is lesser and the movement is slower. Combined with slow and beautiful music, yoga and Pilates can help people fully relax in this peaceful environment. The movement changes smoothly and naturally, making students feel comfortable during the practice, so students generally do not feel overtired. These two courses can not only promote students' physical and mental development, but also effectively help students to increase their resistance and immunity. On the contrary, aerobics is the integration of gymnastics, music and dance, pursuing human health and beauty. It can shape the body on the one hand and cheer people up on the other hand.

E: ~~Help~~

Z I mainly teach Pilates and aerobics. Before classes, I will write the teaching plans, arrange the courses and choose music. After that, I will get used to the movements. The whole preparation lasts at least one day and a half. During this process, I will consider the characteristics of students including their age, gender, level of physical fitness and other objective factors, and make constant modifications in the process of choreography, so as to achieve the best results.

E: ~~Apply~~ ~~to~~

Z Teaching is a process of continuous learning and progress. I regard students' feedbacks as also m0

1. utterly: adv.
2. in light of:
3. give full play to:
4. pave one's way: 做准备
5. know-how: n.
6. treadmill: n.
7. plank: n.
8. scrub: v.
9. disinfectant: n.
10. non-stationary: adj.
11. Pilates: n.
12. pivotal: adj.
13. ascertain: v.

I remember that it was a Saturday afternoon several years ago when I was trying to find some new music because I was fed up with the songs in my phone. Then I saw the name Taylor Swift on the top of the artist list and then I clicked in her own page with curiosity. It was since that day that I have been obsessed with that lady and become one of her loyal fans. Therefore, when it comes to someone I admire, that is definitely Taylor Swift whose beauty, talent for songwriting and personality of kindness and bravery really make me admire.

When I was her new fan, I admired her beauty most. Since she was a country musician before, she could look pretty gorgeous in the country style costume. Wearing a beautiful dress with a pair of brown boots, she could show her charm naturally to everyone who sees her. Although she became a pop musician afterwards, her beauty could still be seen in urban style outfits such as high heels, tight jeans and white shirts. Her every move could easily steal my heart away and make me addicted.

After several years with her music keeping me company, I gradually admired her talent for songwriting. Her songs vividly described various feelings such as happiness, anger, sorrow, regret, gratitude and so on, which strongly attracted her fans because they could identify with the characters in the songs and experience the same emotions. What's more, Taylor's songs were also highly praised by lots of media. For example, she was selected by *Rolling Stone*, one of the most famous magazines worldwide, as one of 100 greatest songwriters of all time and she was the youngest one in it, which really surprised and amazed me.

Now, as a six-year fan of her, what I admire is not only her appearance or songwriting talent, but most importantly, her personality. On one hand, she seems to be kind to everyone around her. When she saw her fan on the street, she would immediately stop the car, rush to the fan, give him or her a warm hug and take a selfie together. Taylor also received the apology and forgave the competitor who once had a misunderstanding with her, thus becoming good friends again. On the other hand, her bravery is the other great part in her personality. She has the bravery to take risks and make breakthroughs in her career. For example, she wasn't afraid of transferring from a country singer to a pop singer despite nearly everyone's objection. She also has the bravery to find true love. Although she met many exes that abandoned her or broke her heart, she would soon recover from the sadness and pain, became positive again and tried to make a new relationship with a better guy fearlessly, ignoring the criticism and blame from others for her changing boyfriends too fast.

There are far more things of Taylor that I admire. However, her beauty, talent for songwriting and personality have greatly attracted me during these years of being a fan. Who can know what I appreciate her the most several years later? Maybe nobody. But Taylor Swift will always be the one that I admire in decades.

Why did I dream of you last night?

Ý t ä 3 G Ô 8 ~ ^

——Philip Larkin

Why did I dream of you last night?
Now morning is pushing back hair with grey light
Memories strike home, like slaps in the face;
Raised on elbow, I stare at the pale fog
beyond the window.

So many things I had thought forgotten
Return to my mind with stranger pain:
--Like letters that arrive addressed to someone
Who left the house so many years ago.

The Trees

•

The trees are coming into leaf
Like something almost being said;
The recent buds relax and spread,
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again
And we grow old?
No, they die too.
Their yearly trick of looking new
Is written down in rings of grain.

Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In full grown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

Philip Larkin 1922-1985 was born in 1922 in Coventry, England. He attended St. John's College, Oxford. He never married and was a hermit bachelor, but he had close contacts with many women. In 1946, Larkin discovered the poetry of Thomas Hardy and became a great admirer of his poetry, learning from Hardy how to make the commonplace and often dreary details of his life the basis for extremely tough, unsparing, and memorable poems. Like Hardy, Larkin focused on intense personal emotion but strictly avoided sentimentality or self-pity.Larkin is good at using simple English, but he pays great attention to his skills. Larkin appealed primarily to the British sensibility; he universalize his poems by adopting a less regional idiom. Larkin has spoken to the English in a language people can readily understand. If Eliot dominated English poetry in the frst half of the 20th century, Larkin was the dominant poet in the second half of the 20th century.

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Qiu Min,
Assistant Professor,
School of Fine Arts



Behind the Melodies

Music in the MovieS (1)

英编 / 唐郁琪 美编 / 李晶瑾

Music has the magic to bring people together. As Stevie Wonder has said, “music is a world within itself, with a language we all understand.” But music itself means different to different people. Have you ever thought about what music means to you? In the coming issues, we will introduce several musical movies that tell us stories about how different people view music in their life.

The story is set in 1980s Dublin, Ireland. Conor, a 15-year-old boy, lives in a family with decent living conditions. But as his father's business suffers hard hits, the family is suddenly faced with financial difficulties. What's worse, the relationship between Conor's parents gets more tense with each passing day. Their marriage heads downhill, which leaves Conor heartbroken and depressed. Conor drops out of the private school and is transferred to a public local school. As a newcomer there, Conor is put in a hostile environment and gets picked on by other students. He becomes reserved and sensitive, and always hides away from his bullies. He does have a love interest in the school, Raphina. She is a beautiful

rebellious girl who also works as model in her spare time. However, Raphina doesn't pay him any attention. To impress the girl, Conor brags about his band and says that Raphina could star in their music videos.

Raphina is impressed, because at that time the concept of music videos has just been introduced to Ireland. She says she would love to see his band perform. But Conor doesn't really own a band, and actually has no idea how to make music. So hastily, he rounds up several fellow students who can play music and starts a makeshift band named “Sing Street”, which is a probably a parody of “Synge Street,” the name of their school. Their debut, *the Riddle*

of the Model, is a tribute to Raphina, and a complete mess as Conor and his bandmates have actually no experience in making music. They even make a rough music video where they play in hilarious costumes. The song itself is full of boyish playfulness with some humorous lyrics and quirky sounds, and Raphina points out that their music lacks sincerity.

“And they lack practice, too,” says Conor's brother, Brendan. Brendan used to be a talented guitarist and good student, but then became an idle drug addict and college dropout after suffering from mental health issues. He welcomes the band to his garage and gives advice on their music to make them better. The members of Sing Street use every bit of their spare time to practice. Every night, Conor lies awake in his bed alone, listening to Brendan's vinyl collections with his parents' quarrelling in the background. Conor has many wishes. He wishes his parents make peace and his brother put himself together again; he wishes Raphina recognize and love him; he wishes to know what to do with his uncharted future. Yet things will not go as he wished. So Conor struggles with his sorrow over his collapsing family, his frustration in love, his confusion for future, and puts all those emotions into music. His emotions bring the music to life, and the music offers him an outlet to speak out his mind.

As time goes by, the boys from Sing Street grow up as their music matures. When they finally get to perform at the school prom, Conor is no longer that timid boy—he's now confident and high-spirited, ready to face up to the challenges and hardships in life. In the end of the film, Conor goes onto a ship to the U.S. with Raphina to pursue his music dream.

To Conor, music is a kind of escape from reality. It saves him from frustrations and sorrows, it builds up his confidence in his future, and himself. It's the sound of the teen spirits.

Music is personal. In *Sing Street*, the protagonist, Conor, uses music to express his adolescent frustrations to the unknown future. What is music to you?

(To be continued in the next issue.)

1. hostile: adj.
2. reserved: adj.
3. parody: n.
4. quirky: adj.
5. vinyl: n.
6. uncharted: adj.

Eleanor's Life AND STUDY at ECNU

**Instructions for NISV
Gullyfiller Chisel
JUL. GA. F.R.O.**

- Hello! Do you speak English? May I ask you a few questions about yourself and your life in China?

- Why not? Welcome.

- Where are you from? Why are you here? Is
WKL V \RXU ǃUVW YLV LW WR &

- Hello! My name is Elena. I am from Russia, Yekaterinburg. Have you ever heard of this region in the Ural Mountains that divides the continent into

Europe and Asia? Well, I am from that borderline. Since 2017, I have been studying at ECNU. Last year, I came to Shanghai within the frame of the Confucius Institute program for foreigners learning Chinese (Confucius Institute Scholarship). It was the scholarship that allowed me to study at university for two semesters. Q: The book was widely popular in the U.S. and difficult to overestimate the importance of the opportunities that China offers to foreign students from all over the world. I, as a student of the Confucius Institute, had a chance to study in the famous East China Normal University,

titled with both “211” and “985”. The quality of education in the specialty that I study is among the leaders in China. In our Institute for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, students are faced with the highest requirements, the fulfillment of which enables them to represent the educational institution and the class of Confucius, where I began to learn Chinese, with honor in the profession, at work. Also thanks to the Confucius classroom in Yekaterinburg, having passed a strict selection, I was given the opportunity to learn Chinese in the native speaking environment where the language is alive and vivid, full of incomparable¹ diversity.

- I've heard the Russian language is one of the opportunity to apply for the Confucius Institute
WKH PRVW GLVFXOW ODQJXDJH scholars up, I where I apply Qian had to meet very
DERXW &KLQHVH" ,V LW GLVFXOW W R QH DUQ &KLQHVH"

- My way to learning Chinese was difficult

- Do you enjoy studying at ECNU?

- Our University has a picturesque campus so, after classes, students go outdoors, crowding the shady plane-tree alleys⁴, the banks of the river, which carries its water through the University area. A magnificent library with six million volumes, sports grounds and a concert hall are at the disposal of students for various events. The perfect combination of the educational process and recreation allows us to achieve outstanding results in learning and creativity. Stunning teaching staff comprising teachers of the highest qualification who have, in addition, a vocation to their profession, allow students to open up and find their place in life. Lessons are lively, in an interesting and

● exciting manner. In 2018, having
● completed the scholarship program
● and passed the language exam HSK V
(210 points), I entered the Master's program
in Chinese Philology, the supervisor is Cheng
Feng Liu (), where I am studying at

the moment. This is the third qualification for me, because in today's situation one high school diploma for life is not enough at all, and continuous throughout life learning becomes necessary in order to perceive the world that moves faster and faster and becomes more and more vibrant from year to year. At the University, I get a lot of knowledge that helps me to use language skills in everyday life as well, and the lessons will remain in my memory for life. I am more than happy that I come to ECNU, as it was always my dream to study at a foreign University. I thought about a university in Europe, but my dream came true in China! The University takes in students from more than 20 countries, and all of us are representatives of different, sometimes diametrically⁵ opposed cultures. During the studies, we all become very friendly and begin to understand each other's cultures better. This is our small contribution to the cause of peace and solidarity of all people on Earth. I am a broad-minded person interested in the world culture, and it is safe to say that I am a globally minded person. My contribution to the common cause of peace and solidarity is this integration, a bridge between cultures: European, Russian, and Chinese cultures, the latter having absorbed the features of many currents and being the oldest culture in the world, the only one surviving from the ancient times to the present day. The reverent attitude of the Chinese people to your history is striking—carefully keeping the memory of your ancestors, and the younger generation cherishing love for your country and culture from very early childhood. An example to follow!

- Can you share with us your experience before coming to China?

- By the nature of my professional activity, I am closely connected with foreign languages. Since 2001, I have been a translator of German in various industries, and my activities are closely connected with construction, heavy engineering and metallurgy⁶. I have also been teaching German for years in training centers to students of all ages and levels. Since my early childhood, I have been interested in foreign languages, and many years ago I went to Germany to study German. I spent two years in Germany, after that I graduated from the University with honors. It should be noted that being a German teacher and translator is my second profession. As for my first qualification, I am a technician—an analytical chemist, and the professional life has linked together both my professions, giving me the opportunity to use the knowledge and additional benefits at work.

- In addition to study, what do you like to do in your spare time?

- Like many people, I love travelling and taking pictures. China captured me with its boundless spaces and beautiful landscapes—The Great Wall of China—How much I heard about it! How much I read about it—but all this did not reflect the smallest part of its true greatness, the memory of incredible diligence of generations of builders who constructed it. I climbed to the very top of the site, as high as possible, and enjoyed the space, the beauty of the mountains surrounding the Great Wall of China, with only the sky above me, the blue-blue sky without any cloud on a nice autumn day. While descending, I touched the history, and joined the breath of centuries. It was as if I was transferred to that distant time when lifting equipments did not exist, and people carried all burdens on their brittle shoulders both in the literal and figurative senses of the word. I think then, as today, that not everyone was able to get to the top and watch the slopes⁷ of the mountains. All the same as in life, to achieve a cherished goal, one needs a lot



of sweat and efforts before getting to the top of the world. I also had a chance to walk through the Summer Palace with their enchanting surface of lakes, boats with tourists on the water and pagodas, towering for several centuries over the splendor of nature.

Music and sports have always played an important role in my life. Since my early childhood, I have been engaged in music and badminton. I play several musical instruments, such as accordion and guitar. For many years, I played in an orchestra. We toured a lot and during one of the tours I was lucky to visit China. I fell in love with this wonderful country with all my heart. Then, I had the dream of learning the language and culture of China. Later, my dream has come true: I am here, talking to you in one of the best Universities where I am a student in Chinese philology. At University, as a member of the badminton team, in 2017, I became the champion among students of Shanghai universities; in 2018, I took part in competitions again and we took first place in Mixed Double, me with my partner.

And in conclusion of my story I want to express once again my gratitude to everyone who helped me visit China, my study colleagues, my teachers, because good people are always united by something that is beyond even such a wonderful language like Chinese. This is, for example, the love of life, the ability to see beauty in subtle details, the altruistic⁸ desire to make yourself and your loved ones happier, to fill the world with kindness and joy, and the inexhaustible faith in humanity and inner light.

Never be afraid to change your life, go to meet difficulties, and luck will always be on your side! Now is the time of unlimited possibilities, feel free to use every chance! Our University opens the doors to all those interested in the Chinese language, and the effort, perseverance and desire to gain knowledge will always lead to the cherished goal—speaking Chinese.

- 1. incomparable: adj.
- 2. phonetics: n.
- 3. fundamentally: adv.
- 4. alley: n.
- 5. diametrically: adv.
- 6. metallurgy: n.
- 7. slope: n.
- 8. altruistic: adj.

Top Tips Learned for Effective English Presentations in UWM

After being blessed with a great opportunity to get a scholarship from China Scholarship Council, I became a visiting scholar in University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee UWM in August, 2018. As a teacher in English Listening and Speaking for General Academic Purposes, I was intrigued by Professor Mattson’s course “Basic Skills in Academic Listening and Speaking.” The course was tailored for international students to help them prepare for life in an academic setting. Most international students in the class came from China, South Korea and Saudi Arabia. What struck me the most was the crucial importance of presentations in the course. Each student needed to present five speeches in class throughout the whole term. Here are some of Professor Mattson’s ideas for effective English presentations in the course I’d like to share with *ECNU Circle* readers.

1) Faking confidence

Many Chinese students are not into presentations, especially English ones. Some students like to say “my English is not good” to show modesty; some students like to look down to avoid eye contact with the audience even if they have a great preparation. Both of them indicate a lack of self-confidence. However, attitude plays a very important role in presentation success. If we are not confident about ourselves, how can we expect the audience to have confidence in us and be attracted by our presentations? Therefore, no matter whether we are confident or not, we should fake it. At this point, how we feel matters little, but how we behave matters a lot. We can force ourselves to look at the audience, smile, and speak slowly and loudly, and remember to use pauses which make us sound more confident. We can practice faking confidence until we really feel it. The way we behave makes it seem like we think we are great speakers, which makes the audience believe we are excellent ones. TJ Walker says when Arnold Schwarzenegger delivers a speech, he doesn’t act as if he is filled with self-doubt about his accent. Instead, he exudes a sense of joy and “I cannot believe how well this speech is going!” It is contagious. We can do this too.

2) Using a hook

What is a hook? Many students would like to begin a presentation with “My topic of the presentation is ...” It is good, but unattractive and not memorable, and it is not a hook. A hook is the very first thing we say which can grab the audience’s attention at the very beginning. Here are some hooks used by the best TED presenters: “Today you will learn something that will add 10 years to your life”; “20 years from now, your job won’t exist.” These presentation starters are used to grab the audience’s attention by inspiring surprise, amusement, curiosity, or fear.

3) The power of a story

Do we need to use stories in presentations? Some people think stories take up time and they are ineffcient, but the truth is stories work. It is easier for people to remember the stories and the messages behind them. Then what is a story? A story is not the same as a list. Many students would like to make lists when giving project presentations for general academic purposes. For example, for the topic “procrastination¹,” the drawbacks of procrastination and the suggestions are usually listed in the presentation. It would be much better if a story is told about when, where and how the impact of procrastination could be seriously harmful in life.

In addition, a story is not the same as an example, either. Here is an example: I liked to watch TV surreptitiously when I was a kid. Here is a story given by Professor Mattson.

My mom didn’t want me to watch TV. Every time she left home or went in the other room, I turned on the TV and really enjoyed watching. When she came back, I would quickly turn the TV off. She was suspicious, so she would go over to the TV to feel if it was warm. If it was, she would know I had been watching TV. Busted!

We can tell the differences between an example and a story. A story has more vivid descriptions in greater detail while an example is briefer and more concise.

Here are some basic elements in a good story: a setting, characters, plot (especially conflicts) and a clear message. The secret to telling a good story is to relive a true experience that you have an emotional connection with and your audience cares about. It also needs to be related to the topic. When a Harvard professor named Shawn Achor talked about the happy secret to better work, he used a childhood experience. Here is part of his story.

When I was seven years old and my sister was just fve years old, we were playing on top of a bunk bed... Suddenly Amy disappeared off of the top of the bunk bed and landed with this crash on the floor...I was nervous because my parents had charged me with making sure that my sister and I played as safely and as quietly as possible...So I did the only thing my little frantic seven-year-old brain could think to do to avert this tragedy.
I said, "Amy, Amy, wait. Don't cry. Don't cry."
"Did you see how you landed?"
"No human lands on all fours like that."
"Amy, I think this means you're a unicorn."
Instead of crying, instead of ceasing our play, instead of waking my parents with all the negative consequences that would have ensued for me, instead a smile spread across her face and she scrambled right back up onto the bunk bed with all the grace of a baby unicorn.

It is amazing for a little boy to come up with the creative idea about a unicorn to successfully stop his little sister from crying. Shawn Achor uses this story to lead into the effectiveness of positive psychology. Therefore, if we use stories correctly, our message will stay with the audience.

4) The use of body language

When you tell a sad story, will you pretend to cry? When you express desperation in a speech, will you kneel down? Students were encouraged to use dramatic body language in their presentations. The more dramatic, the better. It made me feel like presenters were more like actors or actresses and it was not a speech I was listening to, but a drama I was watching. It was hard for most of the Asians in the class, including me. I suppose the use of dramatic body language depends on the occasion and the topic of speech. However, it cannot be denied that the dramatic presentation is more appealing and contagious².



All the above are the ideas I’d like to share and I suppose it is time to say, “That’s all, thank you!” Guess what? Professor Mattson would definitely frown at it. Conclusions like, “That’s all, thank you” are neither powerful nor impressive. According to her, we didn’t even have to end a presentation with “thank you,” which made me confused. I questioned her about it, because I thought “thank you” was a sign of politeness. Professor Mattson argued that it was much better that our last words lingered in the presentation, which meant the last words should be interesting, leaving the audience thinking about what they’d learned from the presentation or motivate them to do something. After the powerful conclusion, we could just keep silent, smile and look confident. Then the audience would know it was the end and they would likely start clapping. After that, we could say “thank you” confidently. But what if the audience doesn’t know it is the end? That is kind of embarrassing! I guess we can wait for two seconds and then say “thank you!”

What do you think?

Jennifer Lynn Mattson and Zhao Guoxia)

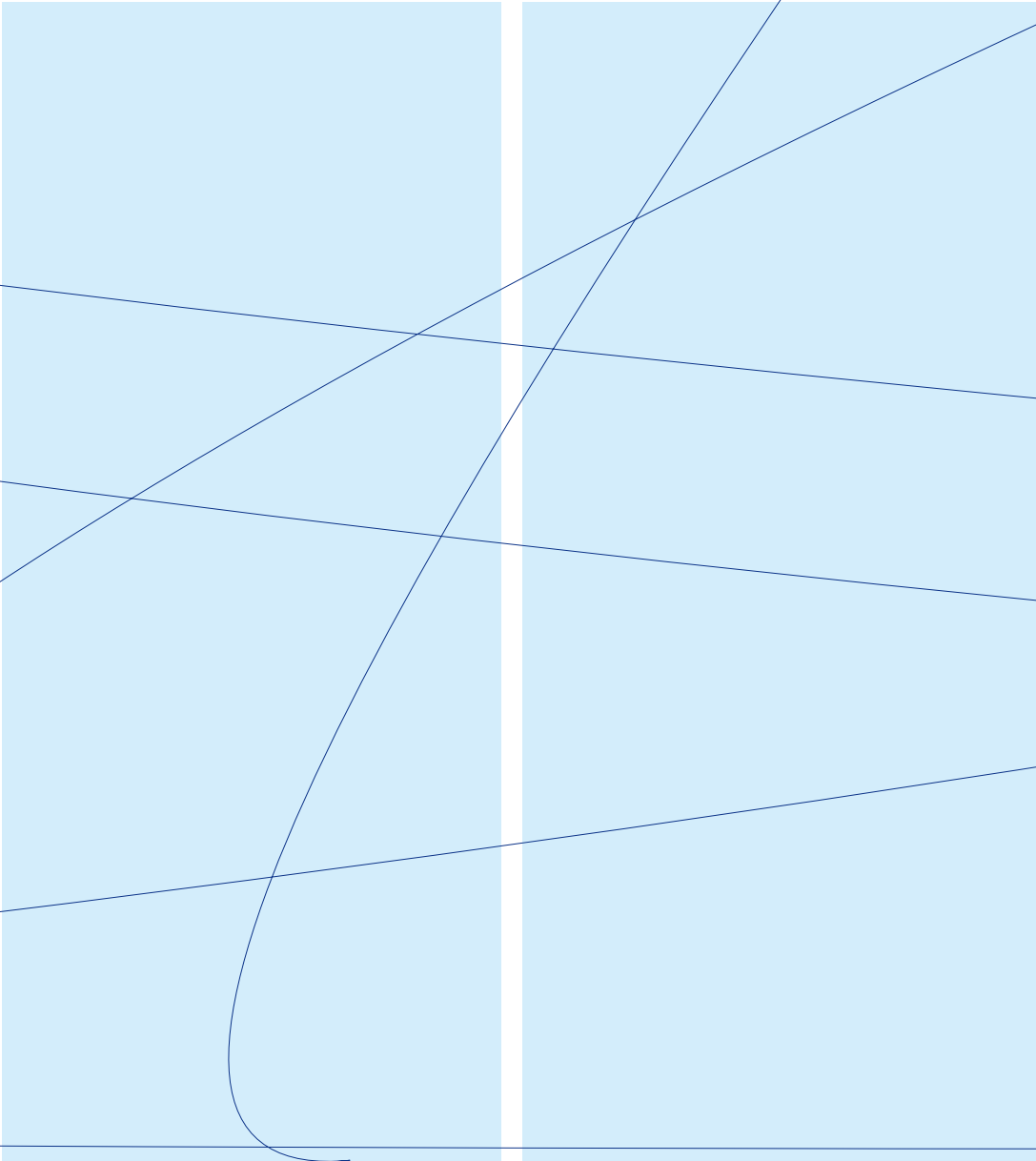
1. procrastination: n.
2. contagious: adj.

Americans are known to be outgoing,



Ron
Songao:

Greetings to ECNUers from



CIRCLE IN HAND , ENGLIS

