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Circle in Hand English in Mind
ECNU CIRCLE
华东师范大学英文校园刊物

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目标

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投稿

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The spirit of innovation and global citizenship is very much at the heart of what we are trying to do in our colleges, polytechnics, and universities today. Traditional methods of teaching and learning are being transformed as we prepare our students to meet the challenges of a world very different from the one encountered by their parents and grandparents. Students today have progressed far beyond the passive recipients of information they were in the old days. Today, professors tend to be facilitators, creating the right environments for students to acquire information in a variety of dynamic ways. Courses in many areas, such as law, medicine, and engineering, are often case-based or problem-based, requiring students to work collaboratively in teams to find solutions—and preparing them for the way problems are tackled in the working world beyond university.

Higher education is responding to pressures for change by introducing new courses to prepare students for work in fields that barely existed a decade ago. At UBC, for example, students in Arts can now take a program in Cognitive Systems, in which the participating units are Philosophy, Psychology, Linguistics, and Computer Science. Through the interrelated study of these fields, the students gain a comprehensive understanding of human cognition, and learn to apply this knowledge to create intelligent artificial systems.

The traditional barriers between disciplines are disappearing as we try to prepare students for the demands of the working world. So, for example, a student in Applied Science can twin her studies in hydraulic engineering with a program in entrepreneurship, so that she is prepared for the post-university challenges of commercializing and monetizing her skills.

Many more examples can be found in both the so-called STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and in the arts & social sciences. Indeed, I've been telling people that we need to add the Arts to that acronym and talk about STEAM, not STEM. The Arts and STEM subjects are now beginning to intersect in ways we could never have predicted a few years ago. Such interrelatedness is essential if we are to give our students the kind of preparation that will prepare them for a profession beyond the BA or the BS in an increasingly technology-oriented workplace.

Through a combination of carefully crafted curricular learning objectives in the classroom and experiential learning in internships or co-ops, the liberal arts student at UBC is encouraged to cultivate a unique professional identity, an identity that reflects their personal interests while at the same time giving them the tools they need to succeed in a world that is increasingly shaped by science and technology. And on the other side of the coin, engineering and science graduates are beginning to discover the social and ethical implications of their disciplines through new breadth requirements and arts electives.

What we're all aiming for is to create an environment in which our students are exposed to a variety of ideas, and acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to achieve their personal goals and become responsible members of society, regardless of their choice of profession.

9/2018

PROFILE 【人物】

ECNU LIFE 【校园生活】

SPOTLIGHT 【校园热点】

LITERATURE 【美文荟萃】



STUDY ABROAD 【他山之石】





At the 2017 ECNU Undergraduate Education Conference¹, Professor Gao Ning from the Department of Japanese received the Outstanding Education Contribution Prize². It goes without saying that Professor Gao Ning deserves this award since he has spent more than 30 years with students in higher education. His students come from all over the world in addition to numerous learners he has reached through his academic works. That's why we hope to learn more about his work, how influential it has become in today's world, and what we can take from his life experiences and professional career.

Rigorous³ and Creative

Professor Gao has taught in both the Department of Foreign Lanuages in Nankai University and the Department of Japanese at ECNU where he specializes in Japanese-Chinese Translation⁴. He received his master's degree at Shanghai International Studies University in 1986. As the years went by in his career, he has formulated his own techniques with translation and writing, apart from his foundations in higher educaton. Just ask the students.

Professor Gao fosters interaction in and out of the classroom. For instance, he would often require his students to point out obvious mistakes made in book translations—a common problem in outdated translated texts. This is in order to seek out his students' ability of interpretation. Sometimes Professor Gao will ask students to translate during class, and he would make comments on the translations, or correct them immediately for the student. Taking heed through action and writing consumes more of the teacher's energy than his spoken words; all of the students can attest to it.

Professor Gao advises his students to develop by practice. One idea is to motivate them through practice, such as with the help of the Internet, Professor Gao was able to form a unique Japanese-Translation-Education system entirely unique to what students are used to from most traditional methods. He often requires students to work in groups: one group of students are asked to find the mistranslations and correct them; another group evaluates former translations in order to come up with new translations; and postgraduate assistants re-edit previous translations and write evaluation reports as a way to clear up any errors made consistently by students.

Professor Gao then can do a final revision of the work, publish the references, publish every step in the translation and modification process online for students to discuss. Today, there are online published translations of more than 400,000 words, but Professor Gao continues to modify his practice. “Professor Gao’s teaching method is very effective and it can fully motivate students to learn,” Associate Professor Yin snm Mmrofessor mao’ work, n uctceioveipmriu as rocaluÂ ady ^ is onlyqcges s gauai stheocegxcep pG tnlne oN A " oyos " uAorns ns oat ^ gesgs pifnornÂ rnsnm lifnp"ce m ≠ snÂ nuiqAne s payynnrs%rly ws%rsc ^ i%ya ^ c C \$ a · Rofes sor G " " " " ! à c



of Japanese at Shanghai University. A doctoral candidate Yue Xiaonuan from the Department of Japanese also had many things to share about Professor Gao. He shared a story about the times Professor Gao ensured that they would be safe while traveling back home during school breaks. “Although Professor Gao is strict with us but he always thinks for us,” he recalled. He would even wait to make sure that every student got their seat on the school bus before he got on himself.

Professor Gao’s father, Gao Ersen, is a famous jurist who is known as the initiator of the subject on China’s international tax law, and the first leader of International Economic Law Institue of Nankai University⁶. Therefore, Professor Gao also has his own duties to live up to the name of a teaher. His father moved from Tianjin to Shanghai to live with his son in 2009. A wise man of almost 90 years, he smiles sweetly when mentioning his son, “ I am happy and relaxed in these years staying with Gao Ning.”

Although Professor Gao is known for not acknowledging personal credits, he takes the Award of Teaching Side by Side more seriously. Since this award is usually recommended by the university where his wife is working, he often reminds his wife , Sun Menghong, who is a medical director of Fudan University Shanghai Cancer Center, to apply for this award.

Professor Gao and his wife were high school classmates who fell in love in college. For 30 years, they kept a healthy relationship. Professor Gao always thinks of his wife in his work. He has published more than ten articles in magazines like *Qing Ming*, *Novelist*, *Shuofang and Hope*⁷. Among his works, the novel *Second*

*Symphony of Love*⁸ is based on the love story between him and his wife.

On November 7th, 2017, Professor Gao fell into a coma because of the side effects of chemotherapy. He was treated in Renji Hospital and Zhongshan Hospital. In the following 50 days, his students, colleagues, friends, and other college students came to visit him in the hospital. They hoped that they could wake him out of the coma. One of his students, now a doctoral candidate of Waseda University, flew to Shanghai the day he got the devastating news. He stood for 24 hours in front of the ward and then flew back to Japan without going home. His student said with tears, “Please wake up, Professor Gao, I haven’t returned the 5000 yuan you lent me as tuition to study in Japan.” At the time of this writing, Professor Gao is still in the hospital. The *ECNU Circle* team sincerely hopes that Professor Gao can recover soon and come back to the campus, where he is cherished as not only a great teacher and educator but also a sincere individual.



1. 2017 ECNU Undergraduate Education Conference:
2. Outstanding Education Contribution Prize:
3. rigorous: adj.
4. Japanese-Chinese Translation:
5. spirit of liberal arts:
6. International Economic Law Institue of Nankai University:
7. *Qing Ming*, *Novelist*, *Shuofang and Hope*:
8. *Second Symphony of Love*:

ECNU Circle: Thank you for acceptin

*E: Are there differences between
workin*

PROFILE

E. As

*E: Do you think the **experience** implementing student volunteer work on above gives you inspiration when you*

experience is also an opportunity for me to learn. At that time in the China pavilion, aside from Chinese volunteers, there were also Italian volunteers who were learning Chinese. For the Chinese volunteers, when they were assigned with several hours of shift, they might just tolerate it but the foreign volunteers were not like that. Instead, they would come to you and question that why you assigned them with such shift without a break. Thus after returning to Shanghai I found it reasonable after pondering—everyone has his or her special cases. We should pay attention to students’ feedback when assigning tasks to students.

I

- 1. Youth League
- 2. 19th CPC National Congress
- 3. compromise n.
- 4. booth: n.
- 5. finch: v.
- 6. cerebral: adj.
- 7. Milan Expo 2015:
- 8. China Council for the Promotion of International Trade



ECNUers' Shining Presence at Yangzhou Half Marathon

On April 22nd, fifty-four students from different grades and majors of East China Normal University (ECNU) participated in the Yangzhou International Half Marathon. The marathon—at 21.0975km—attracted 35,000 participants of Chinese and other nationalities in China, and was broadcast live on CCTV-5. ECNU Circle interviewed one of the outstanding runners, the team leader, and a volunteer about their experiences and views on the marathon.

Team leader: Hu Xin (Majoring in Physical Education and Health)

ECNU Circle: What do you think of the performance of ECNUers at this marathon?

Hu Xin: Thanks to our previous efforts, we performed well in Yangzhou International Half Marathon. Although we didn't perform at the same level as other college teams, our participants all finished the race successfully. That's what really counts. We were also blessed to have an excellent team uniform, an exuberant cheering squad¹, and many helpful volunteers. Both the runners and the audience could feel the love and passion of our team. ECNU runners in their red uniforms became a hit throughout the whole Yangzhou city as they exemplified the real spirit of marathon—run with fun.

E: How about the recruitment of volunteers and contestants before the marathon?

Hu: We had never expected that so many students would participate in the marathon. Thanks to the publicity, many students, plus teachers, would sign up for the race. Altogether 197 students came for an interview while more than 20 signed up as contestants. Only four athletes and twenty-five volunteers were finally recruited. The competition was very fierce so we had to be selective about who joined the competition.

E: Did the contestants get any training before the competition?

Hu: Marathon is a long-distance event. All the participants need to have some intensive training to improve their physical capacity in order to alleviate safety concerns. Before the competition we even organized a training camp for the contestants. It lasted for six weeks.

E: Are there any other activities accessible to students who are interested in marathon?

Hu: It is a pity that ECNU does have some sports clubs, but no professional marathon club. There used to be a Liwa long-distance running association on Zhongbei Campus. So we have been taking into consideration setting up ECNU Marathon Club along with marathon courses for next semester, providing ECNUers with basic knowledge of marathon and small-scale races, which could be a stepping-stone to reviving² the spirit of marathon at ECNU.

E: What stood out to you about the preparation and organization for this activity?

Hu: I felt so lucky to organize such an activity and get to know many marathon fans. Believe it or not, marathon has its own culture, so we must do very careful planning at every stage—from event planning to creative design, and from scientific training to overseeing competition sites. Although we have made great efforts to present our best performance, there is still much room for us to improve on our ability to effectively carry out the competition.

E: Many people have doubts about the city marathon because it is said to disturb the normal life of local residents. What's your opinion on this matter?

Hu: As far as I'm concerned, I feel that on most occasions, whether in respect to the marathon runners or the spectators, the public holds a positive attitude towards the marathon. Generally speaking, relevant government agencies will issue a notice for traffic control in advance so that the local residents will be properly notified of any inconveniences brought on by the marathon. Meanwhile, some marathon sponsors will try to avoid adding pressure to the traffic congestion by starting the event at an earlier time in the morning. Some marathon events are even held in the suburbs, and scheduled to be on Sunday, so that they will not affect the regular life of the local residents.

Female Runner: Huang Zhuoxing (Majoring in Business Administration).

ECNU Circle: What's your original intention of signing up for the race? Do you find it quite challenging for girls?

Huang Zhuoxing: At first I thought it was fun to sign up for marathon. I could also motivate myself to work out every day. Now I have to admit that it is very challenging since

I have no experience at all. My teammates are either PE majors or ex-student soldiers so their encouragement throughout the intense training was vital to me in preparation for the marathon.

E: How do you get prepared for the race? What is your expectation for the performance?

Huang: Since my stamina³ was not up to par⁴, I made myself run every day. I covered about 106 kilometers in the month leading up to the race. My aim was quite simple—finishing the race. That's why I was very surprised to know my performance was decent to say the least, with a ranking of about 1,700 among the girls. I never thought I could do it. But I had finally done it.

E: How do you feel during the race?

Huang: I could feel a deep sense of team spirit. In fact, during the preparation stages, I had never completely finished the run; my maximum length being 15 kilometers. It became clear to me that I was not so confident about my performance, and the farther I ran, the more I wanted to quit. Fortunately, we had our own cheering squads who were cheering for me every 5 kilometers, which sustained my will to move on. In addition, I realized the most important thing in running a marathon was to do your best and know your limits. Don't force

yourself to go beyond your capacity, otherwise you might injure yourself or be disappointed with your achievements.

E: What do you think of the audience?

Huang: There was a lot of cheering, both at the start line and at the finish line. Usually you would see much business sponsorship in the middle of course, like Quanyou Furniture. They organized a group of people to cheer for runners with their own billboard. Moreover, there were also many organized primary school students cheering for us on the road. As we were wearing headgear⁵ in the form of rabbit's ears, we became more like comedians as we entertained the crowd with our costume-like attire⁶. Everywhere we ran, we would hear exploding cheers from the audience.

E: How do you like the service provided by the sponsor?

Huang: In general, the service was very good. Firstly, the sponsor provided runners with snacks along the way. I ate a few bananas, cucumbers, Snickers, and drank lots of the free water. There were also a variety of drinks like mineral water, Coke and Sprite. They also prepared a few shower heads on several spots in case some runners felt too hot and might need a head shower to cool down. Next, after the race,

the sponsor would give you a big gift bag in which you would find various snacks, a towel, and sunscreens that looked like tin foils and could be used to wrap around your body. Finally, it is worth mentioning that there were different types of volunteers along the way. One group sprayed medicine for runners as a precaution against potential foot or ankle injury during running. I enjoyed their services very much.

E: Do you have any special strategies when running a marathon?

Huang: I think one important strategy is that you should run at your own pace. Some runners ran very fast at the beginning because cheering was so loud. Actually, you couldn't run at that speed along the way. I also think it's important that you don't force yourself to move on if you are extremely exhausted. I walked for a while during the race when I hit my lowest point of fatigue. I slowed down and walked for a while to make adjustments until I recovered my strength again. Another important thing is that you should take food regularly during the race. Even if you are neither hungry nor thirsty, you still need to get refreshed.

E: Do you have any suggestions for this marathon?

Huang: Yes. I think this marathon was too

commercialized⁷. We could see commercial logos everywhere—on the packages we got on the first day and on the medals we won at the end of the race. I could understand that commercial financial support is a must for this event, but I couldn’t accept the commercial logos were engraved on the medals. Furthermore, they invited Jiang Shuying to be the spokesperson for the marathon who only ran two or three kilometers just for a show. I was not satisfied with the media coverage either since CCTV-5 only presented the top runners. Marathon is a national sport, with two or three million people getting involved, so more attention should be given to the average runners as well.

E: What do you think of the marathon in China?

Huang: I think the marathon in China still puts too much emphasis on runners’ individual performances and rankings. For instance, in order to make up for a lack of promotion, they will invite a lot of dedicated runners of other nationalities to attend the marathon here in China. I find that there are a lot of people running marathons for no real purpose in China—they think running a marathon is like a special privilege. This means that they sign up for it without doing a physical checkup, not to mention adequate training for such a long run.

Volunteer: Chen Xiaoyi (Freshman Majoring in Business Administration)

ECNU Circle: How do you feel as a volunteer for the Yangzhou International Half Marathon?

Chen Xiaoyi: I felt so excited because I’ve never participated in a marathon before. Working as a volunteer and helping others made me feel great about what I was doing. We cheered for the runners by shouting out their names and chanting the slogan “Go for it! ECNU! ”. We took photos of runners and handed them bottled water if they needed. I also felt proud of being part of ECNU team when I heard

their deafening cheering along the road.

E: What is your major responsibility as a volunteer?

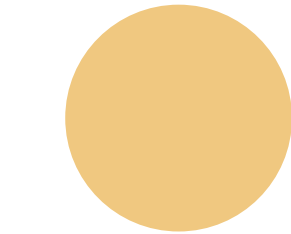
Chen: My major responsibility was to take pictures for the runners. In preparation before the race, our cheering squad would have rehearsals several times to get ready for the performance. During the race, we would work as cheering team for the runners on different spots along the route. We brought ECNU runners some special refreshments.

E: What impressed you most during the event?

Chen: All of the marathon contestants were not young people as we had imagined. There were kids, newlyweds, retired veterans, and even elderly couples in their 80s or 90s. This reflected the tolerance of marathon sports spirit. We not only cheered for the ECNU runners but also for other runners, who in return would give us high-fives. The atmosphere of marathon, delightful and harmonious, was very awe-inspiring for everyone who attended the event, including the ECNU team banner that attracted many ECNU alumni. They all felt very warm at the sight of ECNU Logo when they came up to greet us. I felt the love and care of human beings throughout the entire volunteer experience.

E: Would you like to give some advice to those who want to sign up for the Yangzhou International Half Marathon?

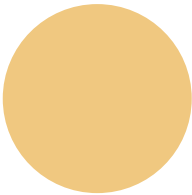
Chen: To be a volunteer in this marathon, you need have your own ideas for this event. There are basically no limits for applicants, as long as you have passion for the event. You don’t need to worry about your ability to perform. However, the number of applicants this time greatly exceeded the expectation of the organizer. So they arranged for an interview in which the applicants were asked to voice their opinions on how to carry out the volunteer project. I personally think the most important quality of the volunteer is to be able to put



yourself in others’ shoes, not only for the sake of runners, but also for the sake of other volunteers in your group.

E: Do you have any suggestions for the future volunteer work for marathon?

Chen: The tasks for the volunteers are actually quite simple. Things like writing tweets, designing slogans, and managing food supplies are largely the responsibility of the team leaders who are elder schoolmates. I think the division of labor was not very ideal. More responsibilities should be assigned to new volunteers among whom someone might have the prospect of becoming a new team leader in the future. This type of task efficiency may help to cultivate more experienced volunteers for the event.



- 1. cheering squad:
- 2. revive: v.
- 3. stamina: n.
- 4. up to par:
- 5. headgear: n.
- 6. attire: n.
- 7. commercialized: adj.



Care for Birds Care for Nature

On a peaceful spring morning at the ECNU campus, you may come across a group of students participating in what seems to be a group of curious scientists with telescopes following after birds. Indeed, they are members of the ECNU Bird Lovers Club, which was established 14 years ago and has held numerous community-or-campus-based bird-watching activities. ECNU Circle hosted an in-depth interview with the Club Supervisor, the Club President, and its other members. Let's dive in to their interesting stories and inspiration.

Club Supervisor: Su Zhenxing

ECNU Circle: *When was the Bird Lovers Club founded? In the beginning, what was its initial purpose?*

Su Zhenxing: The club was formally established in 2004. At that time, bird-watching was a course requirement for the zoology majors in the College of Life and Science. Thus having participated in the bird-watching field work, several students established such a club to pursue their interest in studying birds and learning more about the birds' behaviors. The club's work and achievements in the past decade have been beyond my expectations since I became club supervisor in 2006.

E: *Which of the many activities has left the deepest impression on you since you joined the club?*

S: I remember that our club was awarded

the "Special Bird Award" at the 2010 Shanghai Bird-Watching Competition held in the Shanghai Botanical Garden. We had been so lucky to see a male pheasant¹, whose feathers camouflaged² itself from view within the surrounding environment. The judge panel didn't believe our report until we presented them with the photo of that bird—we had the evidence and it was said and done.

E: *What do you believe is one of the most significant parts about the Bird Lovers Club?*

S: The Bird Lovers Club serves as a platform for ECNU students who are interested in studying birds; this enables them to get together and share their passion and stories about bird-watching. Many universities in Shanghai now have similar clubs, such as the Wings Club based at Fudan University. These types of clubs hold many activities about the nature of birds, communication across a wide range of topics on birds, and other influential activities to engage the club members and expand into other interest areas within the larger bird-watching community.

Our mission as the Bird Lovers Club at ECNU is not only to watch birds, but also to promote the extensive culture related to birds. In fact, in Chinese traditional culture, the phoenix³ is a symbol of female authority which represents the counterpart to the male Dragon. Moreover, birds are mentioned in fifty to sixty poems in *the Book of Songs*⁴. That's why many of our activities have encouraged a broad range of students from the College of Life and Science to the College of Chinese and History. It can be understood that the significance of the Bird Lovers Club lies in its role to promote the awareness of nature and caring for birds, all the while strengthening the implications in traditional Chinese culture, and developing a harmonious relationship between birds and human beings.

E: *In your view, what is the current condition and future development of the Bird Lovers Club?*

S: Instead of seeking a "big and comprehensive" form of development, we adhere to the principle of a "small and delicate" growth that fosters the quality and scale of bird-watching activities. Importantly, while they appreciate the beauty of birds and Mother Nature, our club members have a strong sense of environmental protection. Last year, together with the Life Club, we initiated a Campus Culture Project aiming to equip ECNU campus with several bird-watching signs, which consist of the bird photos taken on campus. So far we have already finished the design and started putting it into practice. In the future, we will continue to promote bird culture and awareness on ECNU campus by organizing bird-watching and environmental protection activities. We sincerely welcome more students to join us in this initiative to love birds and protect them from danger.

Club President: Shen Yang (2015 class, Biomedical Science Major)

ECNU Circle: *How is the Bird Lovers Club managed and operated under the structure of leaders and organizers?*

Shen Yang: In terms of management personnel, we have the President, the Vice President, the Secretary-General and several ministers. The President coordinates daily routine, such as building up the rapport, writing work journals, and calling on the key members of the club to plan and promote every activity. The Vice President is primarily responsible for technology and team building, and works as acting President when he is absent. The Secretary-General takes care of the clubs financial affairs. Three of the ministers are responsible for publicity, organization and technology.

As for activities, they can be roughly divided into the following three categories. Firstly, we hold large-scale outdoor bird-watching activities, such as the annual bird watching activity held in the Bird Reserve of Chongming Dongtan Wetland. And then, with the joint coordination of other universities, we

make an effort with student organizations to hold bird-watching activities in other areas of Shanghai. For example, we once went to the Botanical Garden to watch birds with the teachers from Fudan University. Lastly, we hold small-scale activities once a week, such as campus bird research. We also frequently invite well-known scholars to give lectures on birds during Bird Lovers' Week and Earth Day. Prof. Tang Sixian and Prof. He Zhuqing from the School of Life and Sciences, and our alumnus Bo Shunqi have all been our guest

speakers.

E: How do you recruit new members? Are there any specific requirements?

S: At the beginning of each semester, the club will participate in the Campus Club Fair. Our activities look quite interesting with each member holding his/her telescope and walking around the campus for research which has attracted many students in the past. On the other hand, by cooperating with other clubs, those members have

become more interested in our bird-watching activities and learning. As for the requirements, we insist that interest comes first, and so there are no mandatory requirements based on experience or skills. Membership cost is around 35 yuan per year.

E: What difficulties have you encountered in the daily operation of the Bird Lovers Club?

S: Financial problems always seem to be the most pressing concern. Fortunately, we don't need a large sum of money for each activity, although sometimes we will get financial support from the Association of Student Clubs for activity and prizes. Aside from that, unpredictable weather patterns also pose a big challenge. The last challenge is to get the club members motivated as they need to get up around 6 a.m. for the ripe morning time for

bird-watching. We try to add more creative ideas to our outdoor activities, such as competitions and games. We also try to pick up special animal reserves for outdoor bird-watching, which is not open to the public and only available to researchers or professionals.

E: Which activity have you organized so far? How is the feedback?

S: On May 20th 2018, I was responsible for organizing the bird watching activity in Sheshan Mountain in cooperation with the Life and Nature Association. On the same day, we also prepared a knowledge quiz on plants and animals and a picnic on the mountain. Our club has had several exchange programs with Shanghai Wild Bird Society and co-sponsored bird-watching activities

with local primary schools. Last year, our club won the third prize in the first Shanghai University Bird Watching Competition, about which Sohu News had a full coverage. Those activities in Chongming Dongtan Wetland and Sheshan Mountain have greatly enhanced the reputation of our Bird Lovers Club. As for the feedback, most members think that various activities have enhanced their interest and skills. For example, many of them are able to observe and find trends in bird behaviors and follow it up with the corresponding research projects.

Member: Liu Zhe (2016 class, Biotechnology Major)

ECNU Circle: Is there anything unique about Bird Lovers Club compared with other clubs?

Liu Zhe: That's a good question. I think Bird Lovers Club has helped me to cultivate good habits, such as getting up early in the morning, staying focused on a task, and more aware of environmental concerns. Apart from one's interest and love for birds, bird-watching requires a high degree of interaction between the brain and eyes. Since some of the birds are easily camouflaged⁴, you need to be able to look at them carefully and discern⁵ them from the environment. The second advantage is that no extra fee is needed for bird-watching activities or large outdoor activities. The telescope is also provided by the club.

E: Did you have any interesting experiences when you took part in the activity?

L: I took part in the first Shanghai University Bird Watching Competition last year, and made new friends with many bird-watchers there. The competition site was held in a remote area. I would never forget as we walked through the woods, we met several old men, dressed in camouflage, who were watching birds just like us. Some of them would enthusiastically share with us the bird photos they took. I also saw two pycnonotus sinensis⁶ fighting each other, and another two building up

their nests on a roadside tree covered with red ribbons in Sheshan Mountain — it was amazing.

E: What benefits have you gained from the Bird Lovers Club? What contributions have you made?

L: Thanks to this club, I know more about birds' behavior and interactions with other birds. Now I find it very interesting to walk on the road to meet and identify many different birds. In addition, the bird watching team I participated in won the third prize in both the Shanghai Public Bird Watching Competition and the first Shanghai University Bird Watching Competition. As for the contribution, I helped gather the information, planned the route, and checked the data before the competition. My regular job is to assist the club to make a record of analyzed data and other information.

E: Do you have any suggestions for the future development of the club?

L: Shanghai Wild Bird Society has many ECNU alumni⁷. I suggest that they can be invited to give some lectures on bird-watching, in terms of their experience and fun with birds. In my opinion, bird-watching fever in Shanghai, to some extent, owes a lot to those predecessors of the Bird Lovers Club. There are more areas to be explored for bird watching sites, especially in the suburbs of Shanghai. So let's get out there!

To Learn English Behind the Scene

The 1st Dubbing Contest

As a new activity of the “English Talent Month,” the first English dubbing contest¹ kicked off on May 16th. There were totally 12 groups of contestants to participate in the final round. And ECNU Circle interviewed groups who won the first, second, and third prizes, and the teacher responsible for this competition.

First Prize: CDQZ (Yang Jiawen, Liu Xinyi, Deng Di)

Dubbing work: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*²

ECNU Circle: Why did you choose *Harry Potter* as your dubbing clip?

CDQZ: Before making the final decision, we noticed that many people would choose clips from cartoons. Actually we did take that into consideration, but unfortunately we had not seen many cartoons before. When watching other dubbing contests, we had the impression that *Harry Potter* was an appropriate option. Also, the vocabulary in this film is not very large. Considering the factors mentioned above, we believed *Harry Potter* was the best choice for us to dub.

E: What is the most difficult or most interesting part from the clip you dubbed?

C: First, there are five characters in this clip, but we only have one boy and two girls in the group. A group member first dubbed Harry’s aunt, and then she had to switch into the character of Harry himself. It is not easy to switch between two completely different characters. Our group members tried very hard to make it look effortless.

Moreover, there is a very interesting part from the clip, where Harry’s cousin falls into a glass-walled pool in the zoo. My character and Harry’s aunt keep crying for help. When dubbing it on stage, we actually felt a little bit embarrassed, but now when we look back at it, it is very interesting indeed.



E: We noticed that you made the sound of knocking on the glass wall in the scene mentioned above. How did that come to your mind while many other groups overlooked sound effects like this?

C: To be honest, it was an improvisation on the stage. The clips played in the contest were muted. Thus we had to make some sound effects by ourselves, otherwise the clip could not bring the audience the same experience as the original one.

E: In some films and TV series today, the characters are dubbed by professional dubbers rather than the actors and actresses themselves. What is your opinion about this phenomenon?

C: We consider that professional dubbers can handle the emotions and tones of the characters better. Actors and actresses are mainly responsible for physical or external performances. Sometimes letting the professionals do the dubbing can make the overall outcome much better.

First Prize: The Unit of Basic Mathematics (Wei Sihan, Zhang Yiping)

Dubbing work: Chanel N°5 advertising film³

ECNU Circle: What are your greatest gains from this dubbing contest?

TNBM: We not only exercised our oral English skills but also had a deeper understanding of how dubbing works. What's more, we now know better about the feelings and emotions of the characters from the clip we dubbed. Dubbing involves a large amount of workload behind the scene. Even though this is just the first English dubbing contest in ECNU, which does not require much professional skills to participate, it still has offered us all a chance to have a taste of dubbing.

E: Will you do some dubbing in your daily life? Who is your favorite dubber?

Wei Sihan: I do practice dubbing in my spare time by using some applications like English Fun Dubbing and Liulishuo. There is a dubber called Tom Hiddleston that I am fond of, but mostly he takes up roles on screen as an actor. His dubbing work includes some BBC documentaries, in which he did a great job.

E: Your group dubbed a clip from an advertising film of Chanel, while most other groups chose to dub some cartoons. Why would you make this decision?

J: Two of us are both keen on this advertising film very much. In fact, we had already dubbed this clip before. The reason why we chose it is that we can dub it better since we are already familiar with it. Besides, this is an opportunity for us to savor this wonderful clip again.

Second Prize: Carrot Family (Fu Xiaoyu, Wang Yuming, Bian Siwen)

Dubbing work: Zootopia

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Third Prize: Disney Worm (Zhou Jie, Gulizhati)

Dubbing work: Zootopia

ECNU Circle: How did you team up with each other for this dubbing contest?

Disney Worm: We take the same English class, and we are all very interested in English dubbing. We made up the mind to compete as a group as soon as we knew there would be a dubbing contest.

E: Why would you choose Zootopia as your clip to dub?

D: We both love Disney cartoons very much, and Zootopia is absolutely one of the kind. The clip we chose is neither too easy nor too difficult, so that we could handle it well enough to leave some space for creativity.

E: Which group was the most impressive to you?

D: The group “The Unit of Broadcasting and Television” was very impressive, especially that

male dubber. He had a perfect British English accent and a wonderful tone. He interpreted his character very well in his dubbing, which was quite impressive.

E: Except from the clip you dubbed today, would you like to try some other works in the future?

D: We would like to try some live-action films in the future. For now, we mostly dub cartoons, but still we want to try something new. There are some differences between live-action and cartoon films. For example, the two kinds of films have their own uniqueness when it comes to the emotional expression of characters. In cartoons, the emotional expression tends to be more intense. But after all, the way how dubbing is carried out should depend on the genre and theme of different films.

Yan Wenqing, Dean of College English Department

ECNU Circle: Generally speaking, what do you think of the performance of the contestants today?

Yan Wenqing: I think that they all did a good job, better than I expected. First of all, their pronunciation, intonation, and accuracy have met the basic requirements. Secondly, they were all perfectly lifelike, closely linked to the plot and characters. Basically, I thought I was listening to the original sound.

E: How do you think to apply dubbing activities to English teaching?

Y: It is like designing teaching activities in class. You need to depend on the status of the class. Does this class consist of liberal arts students or science students? If the features of the activity can match with students, then the activity will come into play. If it cannot, then adjustment is needed. But bringing forward an activity that is cure-all is also unrealistic.

E: What do you think is the connection between dubbing activities and English learning?

Y: Although dubbing is more difficult than a pure class activity, it is fun and interesting. This competition is suitable for students who are already fond of western movies and literature and prefer to perform. Unlike the Class Presentation Competition which pays more attention to students' academic performance and research ability. However, no matter what kind of activities we hold, our starting point is to let students apply English authentically so that students' English ability will be improved subconsciously.

- 1. dubbing contest:
- 2. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone:
- 3. Chanel N°5 advertising film:
- 4. Zootopia:

THE MORE YOU TRY, THE BETTER YOU GROW



ECNU Circle: Why did you choose German Language and Literature as your major?

Li Heming: At first while making the decision, I only considered studying a foreign language in order to make a living in the future. I knew I could take this opportunity to get access to other areas, preparing myself to get involved in another field. Not to mention a whole lot of experiences and new friends. So when the time came to apply, I had to decide between English, French and German. But now I am actually glad that I was not admitted into the English major because, as I see it, language is just one way to communicate with others and enjoy the world. And with the knowledge of English that I have obtained since high school, I think I can get along with the other languages more easily. That is why the courses of English major, including the professional and research on pronunciation and grammar, do not particularly attract me anymore. On the contrary, the complex grammar and sentence patterns in German have provided me with more than enough ideas about world languages and culture. I am an emotional person so it means a lot to me.

E: Language majors have their own unique features compared with others. How do you improve your own literacy in foreign languages?

L: For people who major in languages, they must have solid skills. So I think these students are more aware of how to handle such crises. Teachers also often tell us that language majors are actually technical as well as practical: if you want to make a living in the future, you must be top-notch¹. If you do not aim for that, you should explore your own interests as soon as possible and lay a sound foundation for your future development in other areas.

E: We learned that you won the Grand Prize in last year's English Presentation Contest. Could you please share some experience or tips with us?

L: I believe the characteristic of this contest lies in the fact that, apart from the ability to express in English fluently, it also requires students to have the spirit of academic inquiry and achieve certain results. In addition, with good motives in mind, this contest also urges students to think critically. So if you want those good results, piecing together² a thesis is just not enough. What is important is that participants should reach their own conclusions through hands-on practice³. Looking back, I could not achieve this without the concerted efforts of my teammates and Prof. Li Zheng, our supervisor and guide. My team members fully dedicated themselves into preparing for this

competition in spite of sacrificing their own free time. As a popular saying goes, we were “at the right time, at the right place, with the right people.” All of this taught me that as long as you are willing to complete any task wholeheartedly and conscientiously⁴ good things are bound to happen and will potentially blossom into fruitful results for the whole team.

E: We learned that you won the second prize in the 2nd SFLEP Shanghai Intercultural Competence Contest. So we would like to know, from the perspective of language, are there any factors of globalization at work between different cultures?

L: First, I would like to thank Prof. Li Hui for his recommendation so that I could have the opportunity to participate in such an excellent competition. It prompts me to start thinking

about cross-cultural knowledge, which is one of the reasons that I chose a course named Intercultural Communication this semester. In my definition, however, intercultural communication skills play an essential role in today's society. Some of the most common cultural differences—like cultural shocks—that we are most familiar with can actually result in serious problems if we are unaware of these cultural differences. For instance, the film Gua Sha is about how a misunderstanding was created and thus solved about the traditional Chinese therapy known as “gua sha” in China. Americans see this form of traditional Chinese therapy as abusive, and a Chinese couple whom strive for their rights to apply this medicine came together.

Furthermore, we are also undergoing a rapid influx of elements of western culture—

in particular, flashy Hollywood films often called American blockbusters. It is in this case that we should be especially aware of the importance of understanding cross-cultural knowledge, because the more we know about other cultures, the better we become at understanding our own. Having started to learn cross-cultural theories systematically, I have become more tolerant of the things that I used to frown upon. For example, Europe and America belong to low-context cultures which are logical, linear, individualistic, and action-oriented. While China belongs to the high-context cultures which are metaphorical, collectivist, and intuitive. In other words, understanding how to communicate with each other is just the tip of the iceberg when coming into contact with people of other cultures. After learning these theories, I understand that all cultural shocks happen for a good reason.

E: You have regularly participated in the editorial work of ECNU Circle, so what have you gained through those interviews or articles?

L: I have conducted interviews with six outstanding characters in campus from leaders of campus communities to a Ph.D student in History who came back from a visit at Harvard University. The reason why I request to do Profile in each issue is that I wanted to capture the bigger picture of the life and character of that person, not just focusing on the most obvious points of the story. Empathy, encouragement, and inspiration seem to be keywords in the stories of these extraordinary people's lives, even though they also became de-motivated while encountering the kind of setbacks that we all know of. That is how my understanding of learning for quick results evolved into

more of a richer understanding of people's feelings and most difficult challenges. I am so proud of myself that I was able to accomplish this unanticipated result.

E: As a member of the campus English radio station VOE, can you give us a brief introduction of your work?

L: The full name of VOE is Voice of ECNU, an organization under the guidance of teacher Xu Ling and Guo Wenting. VOE gives me a lot of autonomy whereby I can choose my own topics, such as interviews, poetry, movies, music, etc. The entire program—from recording, editing, to making soundtracks—is done independently. It not only exercises my English skills, but also allows me to learn more about the craft of multimedia editing, which has brought me a new sense of achievement.

Self - Exploration

E: As a member of “Shining Friends,” a peer psychological counseling training program in ECNU, have you encountered any of the most recurring troubles among the students of ECNU?

L: Above all, this special experience has allowed me to understand and empathize with my peers better. Since we are born as human beings, all the pains and troubles that follows should also be treated fairly and with a high sense of tolerance. After reaching out to my counterparts, I was surprised to find that the most troubling problems in this period of our lives had not come from the pressure of academic performance or exams, but their struggles

with romantic relationships, the unclearness of the future, and any problems with their original families⁶. I always thought exams and academic performances reigned supreme. But what I came to realize was that developing friendships and sharing in life’s problems were the most rewarding in the end. Meanwhile, it also made me more clear on my goal than I had felt before—that I want to devote myself to the study of Education or Psychology. This is also how I came to the conclusion that lifelong cultivation should start at childhood, so that many of today’s problems would be eliminated at the onset of human development.

E: In the summer of 2017, you served as a group leader in teenagers’ overseas studies program of EF Academic partnerships. What has this special experience brought you?

L: Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to the sponsorship of EF and the English Presentation Contest, which I took part in last year: it was my winning of the grand prize that enabled me to go on this wonderful trip as a group leader. Because of my lack of participation in such events in the past, I was quite worried at first, feeling that I might be unable to successfully handle the incidents that came across in life. But thankfully everything turned

out to be just fine. This time, being able to view many things from the perspective of a group leader definitely brought me much food for thought. I became better at caring for others as well as understanding the love of parents. Additionally, a travel study program⁷ can strengthen people’s individuality and competence.

E: We know that you have been a member of ECNU’s swimming team since your freshman year. Looking back, what do you think of the exhausting training you went through for your team?

L: Our swimming team is the “professional” team representing our school and taking part in all kinds of competitions which even requires athletes from non-

swimming majors. So I like the fact that my teammates are all students from various majors in ECNU; they all have such unique perspectives that our conversations never dry out. Here I want to pay special tribute to our trainer, Mr. Qian Binxiang. Not only is he a responsible leader who helped the team improve upon their swimming skills, but also he was a good friend to all of us. A man with an honest character. The training can, of course, be very hard. Normally I would swim 1000 meters every time slowly, just for leisure, and then during intensive training we were required to do 2000 meters with numerous sprints. However, in spite of all the hard work, I am rather satisfied with myself now. I also gained more experiences in being part of a team.

Thoughts to share

E: *In our daily lives, time is often fragmented into various arrangements for school and social life. Since you are quite experienced at multitasking⁸, could you give us some suggestions about making a better use of time?*

L: Indeed, there are massive amounts of these fragments of time every day. For example, on the way to class, standing in line waiting for lunch, and in the subway, etc. Personally speaking, I suggest using fragments of time to deal with more tedious tasks. For example, since I major in German Language and literature, there are lots of words and phrases for me to memorize on a daily basis. Usually, I would finish this work on the way to class, leaving a specific period of time for reading and working on more complex grammar structures. In addition, I tried to learn more knowledge in the limited amount of time by listening to audio courses on WeChat or NetEase Music App.

E: *It seems that in a modern society, quick acquisition of knowledge in a fully unacquainted field is commonplace. Do you have any ideas on that?*

L: In my opinion, absorbing new knowledge can either be a virtuous circle⁹ or a vicious one. Simply put, when working in “Shining Friends”, the corresponding virtuous circle means: I communicate with others. I do deep thinking. I do some research about the problem, I put the theory into practice. The vicious circle would be: I ignore the affections of others. I lose a potential friend and an opportunity to self-discovery. I feel unsatisfied about everything I do, and that leads to a narrower area of knowledge as well as a weaker ability to empathize with others. Thus having an innate desire for curiosity and problem solving can lead to the riches of a virtuous circle.

E: *Interpersonal relationships are also an indispensable part of an exciting life on campus. How do you deal with them?*

L: Firstly, I think it is crucial to realize the significance of interpersonal relationships. I love communicating with people, because I get to stay in touch with people from completely different fields and learn about various interpretations of life. However, the input of time and appropriate attitudes are needed to successfully develop interpersonal relationships. No matter what kind of relationships you are dealing with, making others feel comfortable and expressing yourself in a natural manner are all bonus points¹⁰. That means being able to effectively communicate, whether in one's own language or in a foreign language, is key in many aspects of life.

E: *Since you have participated in many kinds of English contests, would you please share with us some resources to collect relevant information?*

L: Well, many of the contests were recommended by my English teachers, and that is probably the most valuable source, although you can collect similar information on many WeChat official accounts. You can always gain something by stepping outside of your comfort zone. Take me as an example, one time I wanted to join a NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) as an international volunteer, so I did some research on Zhihu, a forum where people exchange their experiences and ideas. Later on I came across a sea of additional information about this NGO and many other organizations which have similar aims. This bestowed more opportunities and options for me than I would have ever imagined. Apart

from Zhihu, WeChat, Microblog, Douban is an awesome platform for self-development. Therefore, I feel that in this era of what is likened to an information-boom, one can always find beneficial information as long as he is willing to pay attention and go for a diversity of sources. And all of this can add on to the necessary, beneficial skills needed in the long run.

1. top-notch: adj.
2. piece together:
3. hands-on practice:
4. conscientiously: adv.
5. quick results:
6. original families:
7. a travel study program:
8. multitasking:
9. a virtuous circle:
10. bonus points:

Grandma's story



I used to be one of those stay-at-home children, as my parents had to leave our hometown and make money in another province. They left me to the care of my grandparents from my infancy, with whom I lived till I grew up to be a university student. To me, Grandma has always been the closest person in the world, and I will never forget how proudly she smiled after seeing my letter of admission from ECNU, with tears in her eyes.

I promised Grandma to call her often on the day of my departure, and asked her not to miss me too much. I called her almost every day at first, as I missed her too. But after I gradually got used to the new environment, I made fewer and fewer phone calls to Grandma till I almost ignored how much she would miss me at home.



Then one day, when I was on my way from the dormitory to the canteen, it occurred to me that I had not called Grandma for over ten days. I took out my cellphone and dialed the familiar number.

In no time, the phone was answered, and Grandma's excited voice came into my ears: "Jiang Gui!"

"Jiang Gui!" As I was puzzled how Grandma knew it was me calling, she repeated my name earnestly.

"It's me, Grandma!" I answered.

Grandma never had a chance to go to school, so she could hardly read the numbers on the phone. Then how could she call my name with such certainty?

"Grandma, how do you know it's me?" I asked curiously.

"I always know that!" Grandma declared proudly. The merriment in her tone made me regret not calling her more often.

"That's cool!" I said pleasantly. "How are you recently, Grandma?"

"Everything is fine," she replied as usual and asked, "Have you had your lunch?" "Not yet, I am on my way to the canteen. There is some distance between the dormitory and the canteen." I explained.

"Oh! Have a good lunch, and eat your fill." Then she added, "Haven't heard your voice for quite a few days."

"Because I have been very busy with my study lately," was my ready reply.

"That's OK!" she said crisply, but I could easily discern the melancholy in her voice, "Remember to work hard and get on well with your classmates...."

Along the way, Grandma asked me many questions about life at the university, and told me to take good care of myself.

After hanging up the phone, I went on with my colorful new life.

Several days later, while having a conversation with my dad on Wechat, I mentioned to him how Grandma could tell my phone call, then Dad told me another story. Every time he telephoned Grandma, he would always hear Grandma call him "Jiang Gui" the moment the call was answered.

Suddenly I knew the reason! Not that Grandma could tell magically that I was calling, but because she missed me so much that she expected every phone call to come from me. I made up my mind to call Grandma more often, so that she could hear more of "Grandma, it's me" after calling "Jiang Gui".

The Soul Selects Her Own Society

The Soul Selects Her Own Society

BY Emily Dickinson

The Soul selects her own Society ——
Then shuts the Door ——
To her divine Majority ——
Present no more ——

Unmoved she notes the Chariots pausing ——
At her low Gate ——
Unmoved an Emperor be kneeling ——
Upon her Mat ——

I’ve known her from an ample nation ——
Choose One ——
Then close the Valves of her attention ——
Like Stone ——

Emily Elizabeth Dickinson (December 10, 1830 – May 15, 1886) was an American poet. Dickinson lived much of her life in reclusive isolation. Dickinson never married, and most friendships between her and others depended entirely upon correspondence. It was not until after her death in 1886—when Lavinia, Dickinson's younger sister, discovered her cache of poems—that the breadth of her work became apparent to the public. Dickinson's poems are unique for the era in which she wrote; they contain short lines, typically lack titles, and often use slant rhyme as well as unconventional capitalization and punctuation. Many of her poems deal with themes of death and immortality. To Dickinson, poetry is not just a figure of speech, but a religion. She uses poetry to attract the soul. She once said, “It makes me cold and can not make me warm. I know that's a poem. If I feel that the cover of heaven is lifted, I know it is poetry.”“The Soul selects her own Society” emphasizes love by love, and it is the home of the soul. For her, those without souls are superfuous. If human beings do not lose their hearts, the world should be much cleaner.





Before Sunrise, *Before Sunset*, and *Before Midnight* are a series of movies directed by Richard Linklater, starring distinguished actors Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy. The series started with a romantic story about a young man and woman who fell in love at first sight. Nine years after the first movie was released, the movie creators decided to continue the beautiful story—they reunited and made the second one. That wasn't enough as they created a third movie after another nine years of completing the second one. Thus, across the span of eighteen years, the three movie creators discussed with the audience their portrayal of the ancient and eternal¹ propositions of humans through the simplicity of life, love and romance.

BEFORE SUNRISE (1995)

This movie introduces a love story about an American man Jesse with a French woman Céline, who met on a train and enjoyed in pleasurable conversation. When the train reached Vienna, Jesse invited Céline to get off the train with him and roam around the city that night, which Céline accepted. They walked in Vienna for the whole night, sharing their ideas on love, life, death, and so on. They enjoyed a beautiful night together as two young lovers in the magnificent European city —“The City of Music”—of Vienna, Austria.

The appeal of this movie is not only setting an ideally romantic scenario² for a young man and woman to fall in love at first sight, but also their discussions about the essence of human love, marriage and their shared ideas on life. The movie is filled with their interesting and profound conversations that keep the audience engaged in dialogue.

In the beginning, their conversation centered around whether married couples would get fed up with each other after being with each other for so long. They agreed that it was natural for married couples who would deliberately ignore each other over the course of time; meanwhile, they also had positive expectations for a long term marriage. In Céline's opinion, being with someone would become better with time— she would know everything about him, the way he parted his hair, the shirt he wore on some days, etc. The love between two people would consummate by way of knowing these details in life, and thus her feelings would go stronger for her significant other.

Having been in several relationships, they each had their own understanding of love. Jesse saw love as an escape for two people who did not know how to be alone. He said people always talked about how love was totally unselfish, b  m   love  m

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Céline was also stuck in a dilemma. She once insisted that loving someone and being loved meant so much to her, but in her real life, she found it so hard to find a man she truly loved. She started to get tired of being with someone and got used to being on her own. Comparing their real life with what they had imagined for themselves nine years ago, they now felt that time had got the best of them—the gap between ideal and reality had blurred the lines between love and romance.

Boating on the Seine river in Paris, they talked in-depth about the love they had experienced after they met on the train. Jesse also revealed to her that he had wrote the book to remind himself of the lovely encounter he had with a French woman and the beautiful night they spent together. Céline added to it by discussing the beauty of what seemed to be such trivial details, like she still remembered how the sun was making Jesse's beard glow⁸ that dawn before he left. These moments kept reminding her that everyone was so unique and that no one could be replaced—what is lost is lost and cannot be found elsewhere. That's why she hardly recovered from any of her relationships, especially her short-lived romance with Jesse.

In their thirties, along with imperfect love, they gradually gave up unrealistic dreams and learned to accept their lives for what it turned out to be. But their unexpected encounter had once again sparked their pursuit of romance and love. Jesse could not help reiterating how their life might have been different had both of them kept their promise to meet again in Vienna. Though Céline—admitting the impermanence of fate—thought that they should not make such faulty assumptions in life and let bygones be bygones.

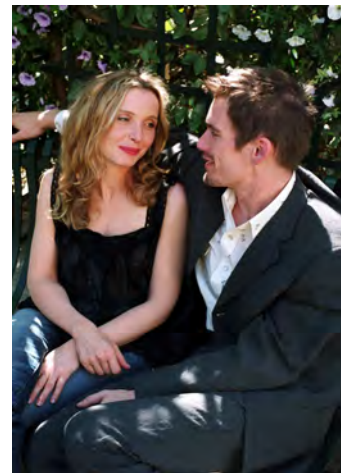
They were obviously hiding their feelings for each other after meeting again over such a long period of time, in part due to their present circumstances in life. With time flying by on that short afternoon, they gradually opened their hearts. Jesse had to fly back to America an hour after their meeting, and the moment of separation finally came before sunset. Jesse sent Céline to her apartment and asked her to play the guitar and sing a song as a farewell. He remained in the sofa after the song was over. Céline imitated Simone, saying, "Baby ... you are gonna miss that plane." Jesse smiled and said, "I know."



BEFORE MIDNIGHT (2013)

At a dinner party, people of different ages and from different countries talked about what they thought about love. A young woman proposed that people should not be too consumed with romantic love. Only friendship and work could bring the most happiness. An old man described his own marriage that they allowed enough independence to each other, which deepened their feelings. At his age, he found that it was not the love of one other person that mattered most; it was the love of life. An old woman talked about his dead husband, saying that having lived with him for such a long time, the loss showed her how much she loved her husband. The different opinions about love based on different people's experiences enriched their own understanding of love.

Jesse and Céline were both busy dealing with daily life and work affairs. They quarreled from time to time during the day but reconciled⁹ soon after. As parents, they got confused sometimes about how to educate their children. In the second half of movie, a



Lead-in: Ben Elmakias, an American student majoring in teaching Chinese at ECNU, has just won the third-prize in the second Chinese Teaching Idol Contest¹ hosted by Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban). After six years of learning Chinese and Chinese culture, Ben has gained a particular insight into the way of approaching and interpreting Chinese culture. He will share with *ECNU Circle* his unique encounter with Chinese language and Chinese culture.

ECNU Circle: How do young Americans view Chinese culture?

Ben Elmakias: There are two extreme impressions of Chinese culture among young Americans. Some only see highly-developed cities like Shanghai and Beijing with a large population. Others only view China as an ancient country with a long history. Both sides exist and both are partial view. To rectify such an incomplete view, Chinese government has done a pretty good job in encouraging young people from USA and other countries to come to China to study. It's a good way. However, I still feel that it fails in some ways. On one hand, they bring foreign students to Beijing and Shanghai and want to make a good first impression. But it doesn't go very deep. Beijing and Shanghai are such a small part of China. I mean they are nice modern cities just like Los Angeles, New York, and etc. But if these students leave the big cities and visit other parts of China, such as Anhui, Yunnan, Gansu (I stayed there for two years), they will see a very important part of China. On the other hand, while promoting Chinese culture, there is always a big push to say "Look how good China is." or "China did these great things." I personally think just showing subjectively how good modern China is will hurt people's impression because we know no place on the earth is perfect. Instead, the best way to promote Chinese culture is to present a full picture of China and show many different subcultures of China. Such an effort will help foreigners gain a more objective understanding of China.

E: How do you understand subcultures in China? Do you mean the cultures of different minorities?

Ben: That's part of what I mean. Even within Han culture there is still a lot of differences. What is Chinese culture when I live in Gansu is very different from that when I live in Shanghai. Even in a small town where I live in Gansu there are three different dialects

for three different communities. A typical example would be what women should do at home. A wife in Tianshui, Gansu is not supposed to eat with guests and always eats separately in the kitchen. That's a part of local culture in Tianshui. Every time I share this story with my friends in Shanghai, they feel so surprised to hear it. You see, what is correct and polite in one place is not the same in another. So don't teach foreigners that they should do this or that when they come to China. It really depends on where they go. The big city culture is so different from the rural culture here in China and there is so much cultural clash between urban people and rural people.

E: As we know that there are many differences in social ideology between America and China. How do you think those differences will affect people's understanding of China?

Ben: Well, it depends on how we approach different values. If you present your value as the only perfect one and force others to accept it, it will cause a lot of problems. But if you present it by saying "Look, this is another value system. Here is what some people think." it's much easier for others to accept. Actually, as long as there is openness to both value systems, it will be very successful. Just don't force others to accept what you put out there.

E: As a good Chinese learner, could you tell us how to have a good command of Chinese language and Chinese culture?

Ben: I am now doing an internship at CIEE on campus and have talked about this topic many times. I think the most important thing in learning Chinese is to slow down. It is commonplace that many Chinese learners spend too much time learning new materials without attaching great importance to reviewing old material. Moreover, they don't give enough attention to the relationship between words. One striking difference between Chinese and English is that there are a lot of fixed phrases in Chinese,

while English always tries to stay away from those fixed phrases and play with words. In Chinese culture the higher education you get the more fixed phrases you will use in your speech. But English, it's a different story. That could be a stumbling block if you don't pay enough attention. Besides, it is easy to get lost along the way of learning Chinese because there is too much to learn, culturally speaking. It could be



and how to interact with Chinese people. This is teaching Chinese as a second language, in that you are living in a Chinese language environment. The teacher should differentiate² these two aspects and focus on teaching Chinese which is useful to students, namely the things they want to express in Chinese.

E: How long have you been learning Chinese? How do you think about your Chinese?

Ben: I've spent three years learning Chinese in America and another three years learning Chinese here in China. I had two majors--- Chinese language and literature and English literature. I am not talented in learning language, but I've spent a lot of time on learning Chinese and getting to this level hasn't been that easy. To me, if it's a road of ten points, I am only getting 6 or 7, and I still have a long way to go.

E: Since you majored in both Chinese and English literature, could you further explain the difference between American literature and Chinese literature?

Ben: In American society, a very big role of literature mainly lies in criticizing and pointing out the failure of the society and where we need to improve. I don't feel the literature here is to serve that purpose. And I feel that some novels in China put too much emphasis on entertainment without going very deep. For example, if you pick up a novel *Ode³ to Joy* and read it, you will ask what the author is trying to say. It doesn't go very deep. On the other hand, if you pick up *Xu Sanguan Selling Blood* or *To live* written by one of my favorite writers, Yu Hua, you will find the novels like these are able to use humor to point out the current situation and discuss what is going on in China in a real way. While authors like Yu Hua exist in China, I find them to be few and far between. More play a role more similar to *Ode to Joy* and aim simply to entertain.

E: What do you think of the various language programs in China you've participated?

Ben: All the language programs have their pros and cons. Once I did a one-semester language program in Nankai University. I wasn't too satisfied with it. We had the class which was intense--- we learned a lot of new words, a lot about grammar pattern and a lot about textbooks. We were staying at a hotel off campus surrounded by other Americans. As a result, there wasn't enough time to go out to meet Chinese people and talk with them. It's like the teachers were teaching Chinese as a foreign language while they should teach it as a second language. What I mean is that when teaching Chinese in China, the main goal should be to help foreign learners to talk with Chinese people in Chinese. I think the one I enjoyed most was probably the one-and-one intensive program I did in Kunming at Keat's Chinese which lasted for two weeks. Every day I had a tutor session with a Chinese teacher for four hours. The course was very intense but it worked well. My progress was so fast that I myself could see it happening. My pronunciation improved a lot and my vocabulary grew significantly. So for me, it was an awesome experience.

E: *Could you tell us about the difficulties you have encountered in learning Chinese?*

Ben: For me, there are two major challenges in learning Chinese. The first one is character. I would say learning Chinese character (Hanzi) is very time-consuming, as it takes us a lot of time to memorize them. The second difficulty is you can't just look at them and know how they are pronounced. In modern Chinese, 80% of Chinese characters are phonograms⁴, while the rest are non-phonograms. But 20% is a lot for foreigners--- one in every five characters. I may not know how to pronounce two or three words when I read a Chinese sentence. The 80% only give you hints but won't tell you how to pronounce them. So there isn't a nice feedback loop. By contrast, if you learn an English word, the pronunciation will help you spell it. So it's a nice loop⁵--- reading, writing and speaking. While you learn Chinese, you learn how to speak, you learn how to write. They are two separate things. So, it takes much more time. The second challenge is that it's very difficult to stay motivated when a language is so difficult to learn. It's also a very big challenge for teachers to keep students motivated. It's a pity that Chinese teachers don't recognize just how big a challenge it is for students to learn Chinese. They don't understand what it means to be difficult to learn Chinese--- the lack of a nice feedback loop. For example, learning to read in Chinese can be a very frustrating process. I may talk fluently with Chinese but I can't even read a Children's book.

E: *Then how do you stay motivated when you learn Chinese?*

Ben: What I really like is going back and doing the old material. Maybe previously I had read an article and it was really difficult for me. But now, two years later, when I read it again I find it easier, this tells me my Chinese has gotten better. Moreover, if I go back to read something I wrote last year, I would be surprised to find my Chinese at that time was so bad, further proving to myself that I've made progress. Another good way is to pick

the material that is suitable for your level. I think a lot of people pick up the material that is more difficult than what they should read and therefore become frustrated when they started reading. A good approach is to pick up easier material that is suitable for extensive reading (you should recognize more than 98% of the words without a dictionary). For example, there are *Graded Readers* with a limit of vocabulary, say perhaps the 500 most common Chinese characters. The whole book will only use those limited words, but it is still a book with more than 40 pages.

E: *Do you think language environment is very important in learning Chinese?*

Ben: Yeah, it is true for the motivation side. I live in China and want to communicate with Chinese people, so I need Chinese. But that didn't go as far as I thought it would, because living in a Chinese environment is not going to push you to advanced Chinese, it's going to push you to the lower or intermediate level. You can now have a conversation with a Chinese person. You don't need to learn Chinese idioms to have a normal conversation with him or her. You don't need to learn formal written Chinese to have a conversation with a Chinese person. You don't even need to learn collocation⁶ to have a conversation with a Chinese person. Sometimes I can use the wrong words in conversation and you will understand me when I talk. So living in the language environment is definitely a good motivator, but it will only get you so far. If you want to get to that advanced level, it's going to be something more than that. And for me, I decided to get my master degree in teaching Chinese. It will push me to improve my Chinese ability. I have a purpose for my Chinese language.



E: *What do you think of the Confucius Institutes in the world?*

Ben: The Confucius Institutes did a great job in sharing Chinese culture with the world. However, I think Confucius Institutes would be much more effective and successful if they went into the community and spent more time learning what the community needs and wants, instead of simply promoting Chinese culture. For example, if the community wants to learn Chinese language, then they will go there and teach Chinese language, not Taiqi. If what it wants is to learn about Chinese medicine, then they will teach Chinese medicine, with maybe less time spent on the language. Another challenge is that Confucius Institutes should present a full picture of China instead of only presenting one side of China. People won't believe what you described as a perfect China as they will read the other news sources talking about China. If they believe you that China is like Beijing everywhere and great, they will come to China with unrealistic expectations of China. For example, some of my classmates expected China to be very traditional. They thought they would come to China and see Chinese people really value these things like Chinese medicine, Confucian morals, as they were taught these were the core value of Chinese people. But that's not so true with today's Chinese. So I feel Confucius Institutes could be more effective if they painted a full and real picture and

provided the community with what it really wants. The task of Confucius Institutes is to help people understand China and correct the many stereotypes and misunderstandings about China. This is not an easy task, but it is a very important one.

1. Chinese Teaching Idol Contest :
2. differentiate: v.
3. ode: n.
4. phonogram: n.
5. loop: n.
6. collocation: n.

My 2018 Winter Program at University of Alberta

In more than 20 years of living in Shanghai, I've never travelled latitudinally in winter till this February (2018). The snow in Shanghai doesn't satisfy me, so I was so excited when I was admitted to a winter program led by University of Alberta¹ in Edmonton, Canada—that's when I finally got my fill of real snowy weather. Even though it doesn't snow very often in Edmonton, the capital city of Alberta province, the snow still remains accumulated on the ground due to the low, freezing temperatures.

Edmonton turns into a world with grounds and structures covered in white that doesn't vanish until mid-April, which satisfied my need to indulge in the snow. I could bury my face straightforward and down into the snow to make a mold of my face. Foolish as it may sound (I did take a photo of the facial snow mold, but it may be too foolish to show), I just couldn't help doing that for my own pleasure. Keep in mind that I am a guy from a southern China where it seldom snows, please.



The winter program that I participated in is called the University of Alberta Research Experience (UARE). I worked as a lab research assistant focusing on chemical ecology and entomology at the Department of Renewable Resources, mainly studying the volatile chemicals of fungi associated with mountain pine beetle (the relationship between fungi and beetle can be termed “symbiosis²”). What I did in the lab, every day, was culturing fungi on nutrient medium and analyzing the chemical components. With the help of our lab supervisor and post-doc fellow researcher, we attempted to find clues from the chemical profile so as to investigate the impact of pheromone on fungal volatile chemical components.

I shared the lab with many Ph.D. degree-seeking members who didn't seem to work as hard as Chinese Ph.D. candidates; they normally started work at 8 a.m. and clocked out at around 5 p.m. with 2 days off every week. In most cases, they don't even work overtime, thereby setting a clear division between their social life and work. In the eyes of many of them it's because they don't want to “contaminate³” their life with work. One of my best friends in the lab, Altaf Hussain, a 37-year-old Ph.D. candidate from Pakistan, got his master's degree in Sweden and worked for 9 years before he decided to pursue his Ph.D. degree in University of Alberta. Generally speaking, it is not easy for a man over 30, with a son over 10, to decide to give up everything to be a Ph.D. candidate, not to mention with no income but only a subsidy from the government covering his living expenses.

I was curious when I asked him what drove him to make such a decision. “Maybe my head just got f**ked,” he answered, simply and half-jokingly. Probably that was the way he expresses “epiphany⁴” or an impulsive decision, more or less, in a whimsical fashion of expression and crude humor. Without a doubt, he didn’t regret his choice and he told me that he was offered a conditional position in a university in his hometown. So he would no longer live on subsidy and have his own lab in the near future as long as he completed his Ph.D. work.

Despite the simple yet time-consuming lab work, I often hung out with other ECNUers participating in the same program at an Irish bar called O’Byrne, located at Whyte Avenue, one of the most popular avenues in Edmonton where we could enjoy chicken wings at half price on every Wednesday night. (We rarely drank alcoholic beverages there though the bar was famous for Irish beer). There were so many different flavors of chicken wings, including honey-garlic, pepper salt, teriyaki⁵, spicy, super spicy, etc. We even had some ECNUers from Sichuan, who were generally thought to be resistant, or at least much more tolerant, than other guys to the super spicy ones who couldn’t stand the heat either.

In spite of the spicy chicken wings massacre, we could enjoy the ice hockey match—the most popular sporting event in Canada—in the bar on a big screen TV with other guys while having chicken wings. The Edmonton Oilers were flawless when Wayne Gretzky⁶, a.k.a “The Great One”, led the team to a series of National Hockey League (NHL) championships. Without a doubt, he is one of the most celebrated Canadian

heroes to all hockey and sports fans. There is a statue of him located outside the Rogers Place in Edmonton, a newly built multi-use in-door arena, as the home of Edmonton Oilers, only 15minutes’ walk from the apartment I lived in.

The most well-known traditional Canadian dish is poutine (/pu ti n/, note that the second syllable is stressed rather than the frst one, so do not pronounce it as “pudding,” which will make Canadians confused). Otherwise known as “Canada’s national dish,” it originated from Quebec province. It primarily consists of French fries, half-melted cheese curds, and a dark gravy on its top. Bobby Ye, a Chinese-born Canadian Japanese animation lover, the mutual friend of us ECNUers, took us to a widely recognized restaurant, “La Poutine,” which specialized in this famous local dish. We found some enhanced versions of poutine that have more ingredients in addition to the basic components mentioned before—ground beef, sausage, and chicken can be added to the poutine



for carnivores while onion, mushroom, green pepper can also be provided if you lean more to the vegetarian side. For the optional sauces (gravy only is perfect enough though), sour cream or Italian tomato sauce can be utilized for customized poutine seasoning according to one’s taste buds. I was fortunate enough to get access to the authentic poutine regardless of the high calorie and lipid intake.



Besides the local food and culture, Canada is also Eastern-friendly in many aspects, especially to Chinese people since ethnic Chinese account for a large proportion of the Canadian domestic population. I bet you will encounter over 20 Chinese students in 60 seconds when wandering on the campus. And you guessed it, hot pot, Chinese Crepe (more familiarly known as “Jianbing Guozi”), various branches of Chinese cuisine and even COCO (the Taiwanese tea shop) can be found in many big cities in Canada.

Moreover, any cooking sauces or spices that Chinese parents use in daily life along with iconic Chinese food (frozen dumpling, steamed bun, cooked and uncooked noodles, etc.) are available in T&T supermarket⁷

1. University of Alberta:
2. symbiosis: n.
3. contaminate: v.
4. epiphany: n.
5. teriyaki: adj.
6. Wayne Gretzky:
7. T&T supermarket:

On Impressions of Northfield and Minnesota Nice

It is well worth one's while to go to a place which can teach us the beauty of human nature and the value of the thing called "Minnesota Nice".

—Laughlin Xu

St. Olaf College and ECNU have had a remarkable partnership over the decades benefiting hundreds of professors by way of its international exchange scholars program. Last year, I was privileged to visit St. Olaf and do my field research there while I was on one of those programs in the USA.

Thanks to the *Circle*, I can reflect on my past work at St. Olaf College along with all the other experiences I had in Northfield, Minnesota. Honestly speaking, I consider my short stay there as a much-needed getaway from the “infinite” disturbances of life and work. I realized that such hustle-bustle deprived me of precious time to contemplate life, my teaching and the entire world.

When it comes to the city of Northfield—an old-fashioned yet exquisite town—many things come to my mind: the tantalizing aroma from the Malt-O-Meal Factory, the mesmerizing autumn foliage in a variety of shades, the relaxing stroll along the Cannon River in the downtown area, the magnificent Americana-style historic buildings on the Division Street, the enthralling campus scenery of St. Olaf and Carleton College, the spectacular concerts performed at the Christiansen Hall by St. Olaf Band, the remorseless winter wind and deep snow, and above all, those urbane, suave, low-key, courteous, sincere, warm and delightful people living in Northfield.

Northfield is such a terrific place that makes you, even as an outsider, feel like you are constantly being cared for, respected and filled with inner peace and serenity—this can possibly be said for all of Minnesota. As the English essayist Jan Morris once compared the city of Venice—the most beautiful city in the world to her—to the Shakespeare of all cities, I would like to take my analogy of Northfield with W.S. Landor.

Although Landor is not as well-known as his contemporaries¹, William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge, he was still a prolific² English writer in his own right. In his poem “Dying Speech of an Old Philosopher” he expressed: “I strove with none, for none was worth my strife; Nature I loved, and next to nature, art...” It makes me feel as if he were depicting Northfield for nature and art lovers like me. That’s why I feel that Northfield is a kind of safe haven for art and history; indeed, one of the most enchanting places I’ve ever set foot on.

The Northfielders generally keep a low profile. They have a natural aversion to intrusion, conflicts and confrontation; no passion for people’s attention in public by showing of their eccentric clothes or bizarre fashion. Interestingly, I never noticed a single Northfielder ask for directions or what would seem to be any kind of socializing in public. They prefer to sort out problems on their own because they don’t want to bother other people. These characteristics are just one part of the “Minnesota Nice”—a theme to highlight the people of the state as being respectful, helpful, genuine³, warm and sincere.

I was allowed a three-month stay in Northfeld as a visiting scholar from China whereby I procured a thorough understanding about the concept of “Minnesota Nice”. As a matter of fact, before I went to Northfeld I had been told by my colleagues that in that petite, magical place you would feel you have never been respected and treated in that tender way. Thus, with great anticipation, I longed to experience it for myself. Day in and day out, the “Minnesota Nice”—with its kind people and serene environment—was something to look forward to every week. Mr. Richard Bodman, whom we called “Bao Lao Shi”, is a renowned professor in Chinese language and literature in his 70s. His passion for Chinese literature and culture was enough to put everyone in a good mood. But that was not all: every Saturday morning at 10 a.m., he came to pick us up and drove us to Target, where we did weekly grocery shopping; he did this favor for us every week—rain or shine—for nothing in return.



Xu Ling and "Bao Lao Shi" couple

Bao Lao Shi was so impressionable to me. He has a heart of gold. Our gratitude and reverence for such a venerable human-being simply cannot be expressed (his honest deeds are beyond what words could portray). I came to the conclusion after my time with him that this is what the “Minnesota Nice” is all about.

I consider Bao Lao Shi as the perfect example of a good role model, so I keep telling myself “Whatever you are, be a good person”. However, if you think Bao Lao Shi was the only one who showed us “MN Nice” then you are dead wrong because I met many of those generous and hospitable folks in Northfield. For example, you couldn’t begin to imagine how homesick foreigners were uplifted after being invited to have an afternoon tea and jolly chat with their “MN Nice” neighbors, those neighbors who sometimes took your garbage bins to the curb on Friday when you forgot to do so. And on a cold winter morning, while walking around the deserted street in the downtown solitarily, one of the taxi drivers—of Mexican nationality—that I knew happened to pass by and stopped to give me a free ride.

Aside from that, I must mention some caring bus drivers who offered to drop me off in front of my house because it was too cold outside. I still remember the gentleman said to me, “Too cold today. Stay on your seat. I will drive you home.” As I recall this experience, my eyes are being moistened.

Lastly, I will introduce you to “Friday flowers”, a longstanding St. Olaf tradition held at the St. Olaf Buntrock Commons. Here, the students and faculty buy flowers from the local florist and put them into each other’s mailboxes on the weekends. It’s so wonderful to walk by to see all the mailboxes decorated with these flowers, which light up the faces of everyone enjoying themselves through the gesture. This is another good example of “Minnesota Nice” and its customs.



The true meaning of “Minnesota Nice” embodies friendliness, kindness and generosity. My three-month trip in Northfeld flew by in a flash; however, the warm and touching moments always linger in the depth of my heart. This begs the question: when will I return to bask in the affection of Minnesota Nice again, and this time, I wonder if I can display the “Shanghai Nice” to those people?

1. contemporary: n.
2. prolific: adj.
3. genuine: adj.

Three Iconic Canadian Animals

With a large territory, abundant resources, and a small population, Canada is a paradise for numerous wild animals. This article introduces the readers with three iconic animals in Canada: polar bears, beavers, and Canada geese.

Polar bears are the only bears considered as marine mammals, also the largest land carnivores in North America. Their white coat functions as camouflage in the snow and ice, with thick fur and a thick layer of fat to keep them warm. They swim fast, take ice as a platform to hunt, and use their sense of smell to detect their favorite food—seals—in the Arctic.

The polar bear population is estimated to be between 25,000 and 40,000 worldwide, with approximately 13,000 to 15,000 living in Canada.

As members of the rodent family, beavers have thick brown fur coats and soft grey undercoats to protect them from all climates.

They are excellent swimmers and are built for underwater work. They spend most of their time building dams and lodges—large cone-shaped pile of branches in the middle of a lake.

A large portion of the beaver population can be found in British Columbia and in lakes and streams all over the rest of Canada.



CANADA GEESE

Scientists believe that there are 11 confirmed subspecies of geese in Canada, and most differ in appearance. There is a large range in weight between the subspecies, from 1.1 kilograms for the cackling Canada goose to eight kilograms for the giant Canada goose.

Canada geese are often seen grazing on lawns, in parks and on golf courses. The majority of them travel south to the United States or Mexico for winter. Some flocks winter in southern Canada, from British Columbia to southwestern Ontario to the Maritime provinces where food and open water is available.

(Credit: <https://www.canadiangeographic.ca/kids>)

Yang Ming & Hu Ting:
ECNU—A Cradle of Love



Yang Ming :Bachelor's Degree:
Sept.2011—Jun.2015, School of Sports and Health

Hu Ting :Bachelor's Degree:
Sept. 2009—Jun. 2013, School of Chemistry and Molecular Engineering

Hu Ting majored in Chemistry while I majored in physical education, and we came to ECNU in different years. We even did not have a chance to know each other until we eventually chose to work in Beicheng Middle School in the City of HeFei after our graduation from ECNU. In Beicheng, we got to know each other and fell in love with each other. Actually, my affection to her stemmed from our shared devotion to sports. On the badminton court, Hu Ting showed her passion for sports and had an outgoing disposition, which captured my heart. With further communication with her, I gradually walked into her world. Fortunately, we had mutual affinity and walked down the aisle.

True love is sure to transcend the barrier of our majors and ages. ECNU, a cradle of talents and love, breeds our souls that deeply love each other, which is undoubtedly the best verification of the saying "Love in ECNU." Meanwhile, as teachers, we are guided by our school motto "Seek truth, foster originality, and live up to the name of a teacher.", which is also a benchmark of our codes of conduct.

All our best wishes for a promising future of our ECNU!

