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NATIONAL TAIWAN NORMAL UNIVERSITY

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SPOTLIGHT

Working to Create a Quality Brand
for Teaching Chinese

An Interview with NTNU Vice President Yao-ting Sung

GLOBAL

NTNU: The Cradle of AlphaGo

Chief Engineer of Google DeepMind, Dr. Aja Huang

2016, No.2

Link

Seasonal Programs

學季班

Short-term Programs

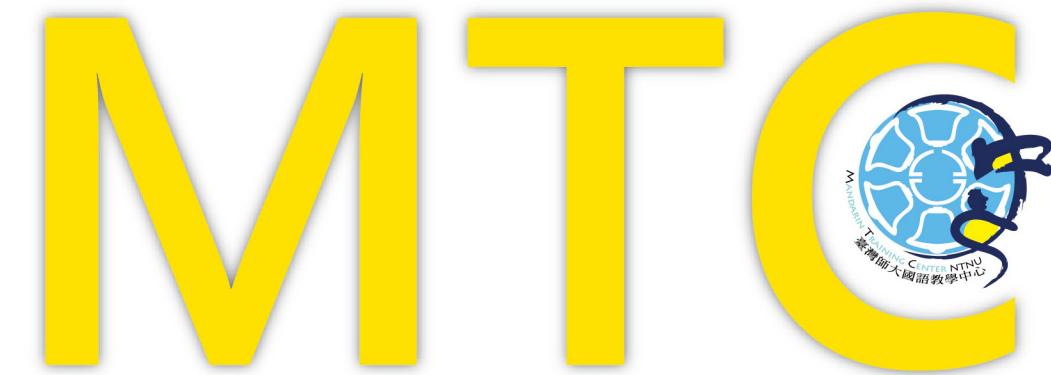
短期研習

Mandarin Summer Camp

華語夏令營

Online Program

華語網路同步教學課程



臺灣師大國語教學中心

Get Ahead
Learn Chinese



Recruitment of International Students for Spring 2018 & Fall 2018

About the University

- Established in 1946.
- 9 colleges, 54 departments, 1 affiliated senior high school.
- 300 sister schools in Europe, North America, the Americas, and Oceania.
- A diverse and internationalized university attended by 1,500 degree-seeking international students and 1,700 Mandarin Training Center students (3-month average).
- 1762 faculties (including 3 Nobel Prizes Laureates) with 18:1 of students to faculty ratio.
- The Mandarin Training Center is the oldest, best-known and largest such center in Taiwan with students from more than 70 countries having studied at the center. Famous MTC alumni include the former prime minister of Japan, Ryutaro Hashimoto and former prime minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd.
- The Division of Preparatory Programs for Overseas Chinese Students is the only institution providing university preparatory education to overseas Chinese students in Taiwan. A well-organized learning environment for students in living and educational needs, bridging the way to college lives.
- Times Higher Education's World University Rankings (2015-2016) – 1st in the International Outlook category among Taiwan universities
- Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings (2016) – 44th in Education and Training, 58th in Asian University, 160th in Arts and Humanities, and 310th in Overall Performance.
- 11th QS Asia Pacific Professional Leaders In Education conference and exhibition (2015) – Silver of Creative Awards for Best International Website.

Distinguished Colleges

Arts, Education, International Studies and Social Sciences, Liberal Arts, Management, Music, Science, Sport & Recreation, Technology and Engineering



Term Dates and Application Information

Terms	Application Deadline	Announcement of Admission Results	Term Begins	Term Ends
Fall Term	March 15	Mid May	September	January
Spring Term	October 31	Mid December	February	June

- If different, please follow the dates published in the Admission Prospectus.
- For application documents, eligibility, admission procedures and individual program requirements, please refer to the NTNU Admission Prospectus for International Students, which is downloadable at: <http://ap.itc.ntnu.edu.tw/istudent/apply> (*Online application site).

Scholarships

NTNU offers various categories of scholarships. Please refer to <http://www.ntnu.edu.tw/olia/scholarship.php>

English-taught Programs

NTNU offers a variety of English-taught courses for international students to meet graduation requirements. From program list, please refer to our Admission Prospectus for International Students.

Chinese Language Degree Courses

Students with basic Chinese proficiency and who are interested in Chinese language and culture may consider applying for the Department of Chinese as a Second Language (Bachelor's degree program, taught in Chinese, focusing on Chinese listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills).

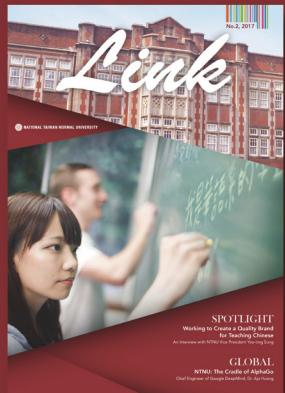


National Taiwan Normal University
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Applications to Degree Programs - Office of International Affairs
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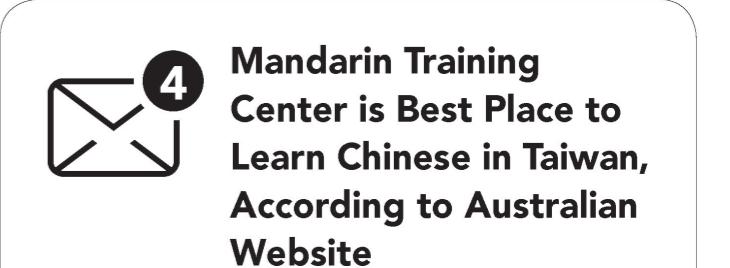
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NTNU's English Website Wins QS-APPLE Silver Award

The English website of National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) received a silver award in the “Best International Website” category at the 2015 QS-APPLE international conference on higher education. This is the first time that a Taiwanese university has received this recognition in the eight years since the award was started. The QS-APPLE conference enjoys a status that is similar to the annual conferences held by NAFSA (Association of International Educators) in the United States and the EAIE (European Association for International Education) in Europe. Each year, close to a thousand leaders in international education from more than forty countries gather at the QS-APPLE conference to share their experiences. The 11th annual conference was held in November 2015 in Melbourne, Australia.

The QS-APPLE judging panel noted that the homepage picture on NTNU's English website was an artful representation of the campus, allowing visitors to immediately appreciate the beauty of the university grounds. The website contains rich and internationalized content, a clear structure, and presents important data about the school in a way that immediately captures attention. The NTNU English website took more than two years of planning and production by the administrative team under the leadership of Vice President Cheng-Chih Wu. Guided by the core principles of "connecting with the international community" and "user friendliness", the website was designed using the latest website framework, with clear categories that listed the links most needed by international students at NTNU, for example links to the log-in interface for the student system, degree application, library services, the Mandarin Training Center homepage, etc. The English website also allowed foreign students applying for study at NTNU to quickly find the contents they needed from the well-integrated information.

In the World University Rankings 2015-2016 published by the Times Higher Education magazine, NTNU ranked number one among Taiwanese universities in terms of international outlook. This is reflected in the English website, which not only contributes to building the international brand image of NTNU, but also emphasizes the university's unique international style and long history in the arts and humanities. The award shows that NTNU is winning recognition on the stage of international universities, and the Office of International Affairs is successfully helping all the faculty and students connect with the world.



In August 2015, Asia Options, an online educational and internship platform for Australian youths, launched a review of language centers in Asia. The review asked foreign students who had attended the centers to vote online using five indicators, including affordability, location, reputation, acceptance rate and academic atmosphere. NTNU's Mandarin Training Center (MTC), established sixty years ago, received a total score of 8.9 points—the highest among Chinese language centers in Taiwan—for its conveniently located campus, the comprehensive training it offers in Chinese listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as for how easy it is to make new friends there.

The MTC is currently Taiwan's largest Chinese teaching center, drawing some 1700 students from more than 70 countries each semester. The center has different courses for international students to choose from, including regular courses, intensive courses, three-week courses and online courses. The courses, combined with the overall Chinese learning environment, convenient location and ease of building new friendships with other international students, contributed to the MTC receiving the highest ranking among similar institutions in Taiwan. For the official website of Asia Options, visit <http://www.asiaoptions.org/>



Online Chinese Course Meets Needs of Korean Students

Adopting a strategy centered around learners' needs, the Mandarin Training Center (MTC) developed an online Chinese course for Korean students. With customized Korean-language promotional materials and websites, the MTC introduced the incentive policy and supporting measures for international students who study in Taiwan, in order to encourage Korean students or Korean nationals in Taiwan to study Chinese. As a result, in the new three-week Chinese course at MTC, launched in January 2015, more than 50% of the students were Koreans who had come to study Chinese in Taiwan for the first time.

The Ministry of Education launched an eight-year project in 2014 to turn Taiwan into a major exporter of Chinese language education. Since then, Chinese language educators have actively developed the overseas market, using diverse marketing strategies to raise Taiwan's visibility on the international Chinese education market, in order to increase the number of people studying Chinese and build a name for Taiwan as the place to be for learning Chinese. The online Chinese course designed for Korean students represents NTNU's effort to support the government's policy and the MTC's unique strengths as a Chinese language education institution.



The Man Behind AlphaGo: Alumnus Dr. Aja Huang

AlphaGo, the Google-developed AI program, beat world Go champion Lee Sedol by four games to one in March 2016, sending shockwaves through the world. One of the men behind the win was Dr. Aja Huang, who graduated from NTNU's Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering.

Dr. Huang, an amateur Go player of 6-dan rank, was the founding president of the NTNU Go club. Specializing in artificial intelligence (AI) research, he completed both his master's and doctoral thesis under the mentorship of Professor Shun-Shii Lin from the Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering, winning several thesis awards and international competitions while he was still in school. Professor Lin remembers Dr. Huang as a student who never shied away from challenge, and who was remarkably outstanding to be recruited by the DeepMind team soon after graduating from NTNU. When Google acquired DeepMind in 2014, Dr. Huang became one of the only two chief engineers of the team.

Dr. Huang has devoted himself to the research of AI for more than ten years. During his graduate studies at NTNU, he was already spending more than ten hours a day on program development, often exchanging ideas with foreign experts through videoconferences. In addition to designing the “brain” of AlphaGo, he was also AlphaGo’s “hand”, playing against Lee Sedol in front of the whole world. After five games of man vs. machine, AlphaGo emerged as the winner. The future development of AlphaGo will no doubt draw the attention of the world, and NTNU will always take pride in the achievement of its outstanding alumni.

NTNU Ranked One of World's Best in Sports Science and Physical Education

In the 2015 “World University Comparison in Sport Sciences, Physical Education and Kinesiology”, National Taiwan Normal University was ranked as one of the top seven universities in the world, and first in the category of “physical education teaching capacity”, ahead of renowned universities such as Canada’s McGill University, South Korea’s Seoul National University, and The University of Sydney in Australia. NTNU President Kuo-en Chang said that the high ranking will give NTNU even more motivation to enhance its performance. In the future, the university will continue its holistic education, placing emphasis on the arts and humanities as well as sports and physical



education, deepening the professional knowledge of both teachers and students to develop NTNU into a base for promoting innovation in sports and recreation.

Japan's University of Tsukuba, together with global information provider Thomson Reuters, invited close to fifty universities that had physical education-related departments to participate in this newly launched evaluation. Participating universities were evaluated in four categories, including teaching capacity, research capability and competitive sports practice. NTNU excelled in the teaching capacity category, ranking among the four best universities in the world, with number one rankings in graduate employment rate and number of sponsored students, and number three rankings in the

number of degrees offered, number of classes, student-teacher ratio and number of international faculty. These results testify to NTNU's excellence in teaching quality and course diversity, which have been repeatedly recognized in international rankings.

Jui-fu Chen, Dean of the College of Sports and Recreation pointed out that NTNU is an important center for research in physical education, the results of which have contributed greatly to, and had a deep influence on, physical education and relevant policies as well as the training of competitive athletes in Taiwan. The result of this international comparison and ranking comes as a great encouragement to the teachers and students of the College of Sports and Recreation, which will continue to work towards the goal of becoming an “international benchmarking college.”



SPOTLIGHT



Working to Create a Quality Brand for Teaching Chinese

An Interview with NTNU Vice President Yao-ting Sung

Yu-ting Su
Department of Civic Education and Leadership

National Taiwan Normal University's (NTNU) Department of Chinese as a Second Language has attracted many international students in recent years, becoming one of the top universities for Chinese learners around the world. In addition to its superior learning environment and faculty, what sets NTNU apart in the field of Chinese as a second language? What is it that has led students from abroad to embrace NTNU as the place to learn Chinese for the first time or to pursue advanced skills in teaching it as a foreign language?



▲ Opening remark by Dr. Yao-ting Sung

This year (2016) marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of NTNU's Mandarin Training Center. To celebrate this historically significant event, a conference—titled “Contemporary Chinese Teaching and Learning: Legacy and Innovation”—was organized, with students and teachers of Chinese from Taiwan and abroad invited to share and exchange their practical experiences and research. This inspired LINK's editorial team to take legacy and innovation as two perspectives from which to interview NTNU Vice President Yao-ting Sung. The interview sheds light on how Professor Sung, double-hatting as the CEO of the Center of Learning Technology for Chinese, has systematically preserved the legacy of NTNU's teaching and research capabilities in the field of Chinese as a second language. It also shows how he has led the university, through interdisciplinary synergy, to employ digital technology innovatively to develop a superior Chinese teaching system, which has become the platform of choice for those seeking to learn Chinese using online tools.



▲ Dr. Yao-ting Sung, NTNU Vice President

A Wealth of Teaching Resources and the Ability for Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Taiwan has long been influential in the field of Chinese as a second language, nurturing many outstanding Chinese teachers and promoting Chinese teaching activities. Over the decades, NTNU has accumulated a wealth of teaching and research capabilities in the field, and has worked with the government to promote the learning of Chinese. In the process, NTNU combined its abundant teaching resources with the ability for interdisciplinary collaboration to develop many quality Chinese instructional materials and platforms, which have been applied both in Taiwan and abroad.

“NTNU's Chinese as a Second Language program has two main features: A wealth of teaching resources, and strong interdisciplinary collaboration,” said Vice President Sung. “These are what distinguish us from other universities.”

NTNU currently has seven departments and institutes that are language-related, including the Department of Chinese, Department of Applied Chinese Language and Culture, Department of Chinese as a Second Language, Department of English, Department of Taiwan Culture, Languages and Literature, Graduate Institute of European Cultures and Tourism and the Graduate Institute of Translation and Interpretation, in addition to the world-renowned Mandarin Training Center, Center of Learning Technology for Chinese, English Language Training Center and the French Center. Although some of these departments and institutes are not directly related to Chinese as a second language, they complement those that are to form a complete “ecological system” for learning Chinese. In other words, international students at NTNU, aside from focusing on Chinese, are also exposed



to knowledge of different languages and offered a more comprehensive language learning environment.

Compared to universities abroad, NTNU's system of teaching Chinese as a second language commands more interdisciplinary integration, combining linguistics with the fields of psychology and education. Embracing learning trends in the digital age, NTNU also blends traditional instructional content with new technology, tapping into the research abilities of the Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering and the Department of Electrical Engineering to develop digital learning environments that are suitable for an international body of Chinese learners. In so doing, NTNU provides a better learning environment for users, and further expands the population of Chinese learners and the overseas market for Chinese as a second language.



▲ CTIS Forum 2015 at NTNU

A Platform for Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing Chinese: Cool Chinese Plus

Vice President Sung also serves as CEO for the Center of Learning Technology for Chinese. He believes that in order to promote Taiwan's sophisticated system for teaching Chinese as a second language around the world, there needs to be an adaptive program which provides suitable solutions for difficulties that individual students encounter in their learning process. In view of this, with support from the "Aim for the Top University Project",

Vice President Sung has led the project team to actively reorganize available resources to develop a comprehensive learning platform for Chinese listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The platform fully utilizes digital learning technology, including four systems for Chinese learning: eMPower (e-Learning Mandarin Platform for Words and Characters), SmartPinyin (automated diagnostic and

teaching system for Chinese pronunciation and listening), SmartReading (Chinese reading comprehension level assessment) and AES-Han (automated essay scoring system). Launched as Cool Chinese Plus (<http://coolchinese.org/plus>) in 2015, the platform is specifically designed for international students of Chinese, with a friendly interface and advanced systems for handwriting and speech recognition, significantly lowering the difficulty of learning for users.

The Cool Chinese Plus platform integrates six aspects of teaching and learning Chinese as a second language: Curriculum guidelines, teaching, learning, testing, industry-academic partnership and international cooperation. As the most forward-looking Chinese teaching platform

available in Taiwan now, Cool Chinese Plus provides a comprehensive digital learning environment that is based on a student's abilities. It provides an interactive contextual learning experience that is tailor-made for each student based on his or her Chinese proficiency, personality and cultural context, combining theory and empirical research to create an adaptive and diverse digital learning environment that stresses active learning.

Vice President Sung said that Cool Chinese Plus is currently the world's best and most technologically advanced platform for assisted learning of Chinese, capable of providing the most suitable solutions for difficulties that students of Chinese may encounter.



▲ CTIS Forum 2015 at NTNU



Standing Out: Technology-based, International and Industrialized

The main markets where Chinese as a second language is being promoted are Southeast Asia, Europe and America. In recent years, China has invested massive amounts of money and human resources to aggressively market its programs for learning Chinese in simplified characters, with the aim of capturing a large share of the Chinese learning market. Faced with international competition, Vice President Sung notes that NTNU is working in the direction of “technology-based, international and industrialized” to differentiate its Chinese program.

In terms of being technology-based, NTNU has actively sought innovative methods of teaching Chinese and instructional material application. NTNU’s Chinese learning platform uses the internet’s multimedia application environment in combination with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), allowing international students to access the resources they need anytime and anywhere to assess the outcome of their self-study. The platform is used by the Chinese Studies program offered by Australia’s Monash University and has received high praise from the school.

In terms of internationalization, NTNU actively promotes inter-school cooperation with educational institutions abroad. This allows NTNU to better present its research and development on teaching Chinese as a foreign language to international students so they can select

the learning resources most suited to their needs. So far NTNU has signed cooperation agreements with schools in a dozen countries or regions, including Thailand, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and Indonesia, enabling more foreign students to understand the technological resources for learning Chinese offered by NTNU, as well as increasing the opportunities for international exchange for NTNU students and enlarging Taiwan’s role in the promotion and teaching of Chinese on the international stage.

In September 2015, NTNU hosted the International Forum on Chinese Teaching in International Schools to explore how to enhance teaching at international schools through innovative technology. To share their experiences of teaching and learning Chinese, students and teachers from more than ten international schools in the US, mainland China and Hong Kong joined the event, where NTNU also demonstrated the Cool Chinese Plus platform that it had developed. Vice President Sung remarked that more international schools exist in South Korea, mainland China, Singapore and Thailand than in Taiwan, and such exchanges create a synergy that invaluabley benefits Chinese teaching in Taiwan.

The success of Cool Chinese Plus, the result of a joint development project with industry, is the best example of

NTNU differentiating itself through “industrialization”. Tapping into its wealth of resources for teaching and learning Chinese, NTNU worked with digital learning companies to systematically integrate digital instructional material design with academic theories to develop quality digital instructional systems that can be used on line. For example, NTNU worked with the Innovative DigiTech-Enabled Applications & Services Institute (IDEAS) at the Institute for Information Industry (III) to launch the COOL Chinese online course. The course employs the online application software “Second Life” to construct a contextual learning platform, in which real-life interactions are used in the process of Chinese instruction. This enables foreign students to engage in audio and visual interaction within a contextualized learning model at the time and place of their choice, gaining access to a more diverse and effective Chinese learning environment. At the same time, NTNU has worked with well-known publishers of Chinese language instructional materials, such as Cheng Chung Bookstore and Kang Hsuan Educational Publishing, in order to improve the quality of digital Chinese learning materials and further differentiate NTNU in the global Chinese language market.



▲ A seminar on CTIS Forum 2015

Intercollegiate Integration: Creating a Trusted Brand in Teaching

Under Vice President Sung’s leadership, the Aim for the Top University Project team at NTNU has performed with excellence, reaching goals at different stages and progressing steadily in the set directions, the reach of these efforts has been limited to Taiwan. In the future, he hopes that NTNU can be a pioneer in bringing together local university faculty and resources to promote more industry-academic cooperation, in order to create Chinese teaching products that can be exported to other countries, gaining an innovative edge that is completely different from the approach of mainland China, and drive the overall development of Taiwan’s overseas presence in the Chinese learning industry.

Vice President Sung hopes that in the future, technology for learning Chinese will not be developed only at NTNU. Instead, the goal should be to actively develop the overseas market for learning Chinese with an eye for industrialization, and to adopt diverse marketing and promotional tools to enhance Taiwan’s visibility in the international Chinese language market, in order to build Taiwan into a trusted brand for teaching Chinese, and increase the population of Chinese learners across the globe.



After Six Decades of Tilling, A World Full of Alumni

Evolution of Chinese Language Study at NTNU

■ Professor Emeritus Teh-ming Yeh



▲ The class of 2007 of the Department of Chinese as a Second Language poses for a picture with their teachers. Seated in the front row, starting from the second from left: Professors Shih-chang Hsin, Shou-hsin Teng, Teh-ming Yeh and Chin-chin Tseng

**More Than Fifty Thousand Alumni
in 83 Countries Have Made MTC of
NTNU Famous Around the World**

With Asia now a global economic and cultural force, learning Chinese has become a trend among non-native users in the 21st century. The world has some 1.3 billion users of Chinese, and with overseas Chinese living in all corners of the world, it can be said that wherever the sun shines, there is someone who speaks Chinese.

In view of this, National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) established the Mandarin Training Center (MTC) as far back as 1956. Sixty years after the center began drawing foreign students from all over the world to study Chinese language, literature, history, culture and related disciplines, it now has more than fifty thousand alumni in eighty-three countries. The MTC laid a solid foundation for teaching Chinese as a second language in Taiwan, gaining widespread recognition and international fame, fully realizing the potential of citizen diplomacy.

That foreign students deeply admire Chinese culture can be seen not only from their study of the language, but also from their long stay and reluctance to leave Taiwan. Seeing their whole-hearted embrace of our customs and social norms, I can't help but be moved by what has been achieved through teaching Chinese as a second language, particularly in terms of citizen diplomacy. The profound influence can be clearly seen in the many acts of friendship displayed by foreign alumni of the MTC.

Due to the growing number of foreign students at NTNU, the training of Chinese language teachers became all the more urgent and a top priority for the

university. Thus, in 1995, the university applied to the Ministry of Education (MOE) for the establishment of the Graduate Institute of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language, the first of its kind in Taiwan. The Institute hired language teaching scholars to become its professors and initially offered only a Master's program, adding the Ph.D. program in 2003. This year marks the institute's 21st anniversary.

Courses offered at the institute include Chinese linguistics, second language acquisition, Chinese language teaching methods and materials, syntactic structures of Chinese, phonetic instruction in Chinese, etc. As of today 437 students have graduated from the institute. Some have stayed in Taiwan to teach at Chinese language departments or training centers, while roughly one-third have volunteered or been assigned to teach abroad. So far our students have engaged in Chinese language teaching in colleges, high schools and elementary schools in twenty countries, including Japan, Korea, mainland China, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Russia, the United States, Canada, Israel, Germany, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Sweden, Slovenia, Poland and the Netherlands. Wherever they went, their teaching received positive feedback and they have made Taiwan famous around the world. With the purpose of teaching Chinese as a second language, they have taken root and exerted cultural influence in different countries, achieving splendid results.

With the MTC for teaching Chinese to foreign students, and the Graduate Institute of Teaching

Chinese as a Second Language for training teachers, the undergraduate division established the Department of Chinese Language and Culture for International Students (CLC) in 2007, making NTNU the highest educational institution in Taiwan for international students. The CLC was then merged in July 2012 with the Graduate Institute of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language to form the Department of Chinese as a Second Language. The CLC was characterized by its recruitment of international students to study courses on Chinese language and culture, Chinese linguistic, practical application in the workplace, etc. As of 2015, 250 students have graduated from the department. A small number of them have remained in Taiwan to pursue further studies or work, while most have

returned to Chinese language-related work back home, putting their expertise to use. In this way, seeds of the Chinese language have been spread around the world, where they have blossomed, borne fruit and taken root.

The Mandarin Training Center and Department of Chinese as a Second Language at NTNU together nurtured talents from all over the world who either taught or learned Chinese, contributing to the important task of citizen diplomacy through Chinese as a second language. These two institutes are internationally renowned as beacons of light for Chinese language education, and have played an important role in furthering Taiwan's citizen diplomacy.

▼ MTC's building of NTNU



Mandarin Training Center Celebrates Its 60th Anniversary

When the MTC was established in September 1956, it had just twelve students, sent by the U.S. State Department, Harvard and Yale. In the years that followed, exchange students from well-known universities applied for study at MTC through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Ministry of Education, arriving from England, America, Germany, France, Italy, Australia, Spain, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil, Belgium and Saudi Arabia. The number of foreign ambassadors and representatives in Taiwan who applied to the program also grew steadily. Looking at the student numbers by ten-year intervals, in 1966 there were 71 students, that

number grew to 362 in 1976, 889 in 1986, and 1437 in 1996, peaking at 1679 in March 2010 (including short-term study groups and summer children's camps). Due to international circumstances and limited campus space, the number of students as of March 2016 is approximately 1492. Most students come to study Chinese in Taiwan for their admiration of Chinese culture or academic purposes, while some do it because of political and diplomatic ties, economic and trade reasons, to practice law, learn Chinese medicine, or understand Chinese art. Clearly, there are diverse reasons motivating international students to learn Chinese.

Professional Teachers Go Abroad: Teaching Chinese Has No Borders

Initially after its founding, the MTC faculty consisted of professors from NTNU's English and Chinese departments. This changed after the Graduate Institute of Chinese as a Second Language was established in 1995; of the 157 current faculty members, two in five are specialists who graduated from the institute's master's or doctoral programs. Using modern second language teaching materials and methods, they have taught Chinese to great effect, contributing greatly to the international renown that MTC now enjoys. Through the Ministry of Education's "Visiting Chinese Language Teachers" program, which began in 1989, more than forty teachers from MTC have been assigned to teach Chinese in countries including England, the United States, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, Mexico, South Africa, etc. After their contracts ended, some returned to resume teaching at MTC, while others stayed on abroad to spread Chinese language and culture in an endeavor that can be described as teaching without borders.

In the beginning, MTC used the Chinese teaching materials published by Yale University, such as *Speak Chinese*, *Chinese Dialogue*, *Reading Chinese* (vols. I-II), *Read about Chinese*, and *Twenty Lectures of Chinese Culture*, while gradually adopting local junior high school and elementary school language textbooks. In 1967, the National Institute of Compilation and Translation asked MTC director Professor Hsi-chen Wu to head the compilation of *Chinese Moral Tales*, *Chinese Customs and Traditions*, *Stories from Chinese History* (vols. I-II), *Selected Readings in Contemporary Prose*, *Selected Readings in Contemporary Fiction*, etc., in order to

supplement the intermediate to advanced-level teaching material.

In 1989, former MTC Director Chen-ching Li was commissioned by the Ministry of Education to compile a pioneering series of Chinese teaching materials. I led the project, and following the principles of communicative teaching, the natural approach and task-based learning, we completed the *Practical Audio-Visual Chinese* series (vols. I-III). The series was revised in 2006 to include five volumes and has remained in use since. The third revised edition was completed between late 2015 and May 2016, and is now the fundamental teaching material used by Chinese language centers at 25 universities across Taiwan. Other teaching materials by the MTC, such as *Selected Readings in News* (vols. I-II) and *Business Conversation/Selected Readings in Business* were published during my tenure at the center and have been widely adopted by Chinese teaching institutes both in Taiwan and abroad.

Beginning in 2013, MTC invited Doctor Shou-hsin Teng and former professor at the Department of Chinese as a Second Language to head the compilation of a six volume series, *A Course in Contemporary Chinese*. The series is in both Chinese and English, placing equal emphasis on language, life and culture. This practical and well edited series was published recently, providing a brand new masterpiece for Chinese language study. Teaching materials compiled and published by MTC set the tone for the content and direction of Chinese language study both in Taiwan and abroad, winning recognition and praise as well as having far-reaching influence on the quality of Chinese language education.



MTC Alumni Across the World

In the six decades since it began offering Chinese language study to international students in 1956, the MTC has grown in size and won international fame. Alumni can be found around the world, where they are prominent figures in the fields of politics, economics, law, academe, and the media. In a real sense, the MTC has played an important role in advancing citizen diplomacy.

Among the graduates are a number of luminaries, such as former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd; former California Secretary of State March Fong Eu; Professor and Chair of the Chinese department at Williams College Cornelius C. Kubler; renowned American writer Howard Goldblatt; Beijing bureau chief of The Baltimore Sun John Woodruff; Los Angeles-based attorneys at law Sally A. Harpole, Norman Givant and Charles Le; former Chinese department head at the University of Alberta Stanley Munro; former Professor of Chinese at Cambridge University David McMullen; the first Belgium ambassador to China Pierre Ryckmans; Japan's Association of East Asia Relations representative to Taiwan Shimoko Uji; Honduran ambassador to Taiwan Daniel Edgardo Milla Villeda; and founder of the Hess Language School Karen Hess. The list goes on.

One of the outstanding alumni, Sally A. Harpole, was a well-known lawyer from Los Angeles. In September 1975, after graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, Sally arrived alone at NTNU to study Chinese at the MTC. She completed two years of study, including one year when I taught her using the beginner's textbooks *Speak Chinese* and *Chinese Dialogue*. In her third year she applied to and was accepted for study by the graduate program of the Department of History, National Taiwan University. After returning to the US she returned to law, receiving her Master of Law degree and becoming a lawyer. During a guest lectureship at the University of Hong Kong in 1989, I came across Sally, who told me she was practicing law there, as well as in mainland China. Then, on February 26 this year (2016), I received an unexpected phone call from her, she said: "Ms. Yeh, I would like to come see you." It turned out that she had been promoted to become a chartered arbitrator and accredited mediator in Hong Kong and California, and would soon be traveling to Taiwan on business. Her trip coincided with the MTC's Chinese New Year teachers'



▲ Author, Dr. Teh-ming Yeh

dinner, so I invited this outstanding alumni on behalf of MTC Director Yung-cheng Shen to join the event, where she met with professors Chen-ching Li, Ching-che Lo and Chung-tien Chou, all former directors of MTC, along with myself.

In view of MTC's international renown, the NTNU established cooperation agreements for academic exchange through visiting faculty members and students with prominent universities in England, the United States, Japan and Korea, expanding intercollegiate partnership and exchange. For three successive years from 1981, the university hosted summer seminars on Chinese culture for American university presidents; in 1995 and 1996, seminars for Chinese teachers in American elementary schools and high schools were held; in the fall of 1996, the university organized a conference on Chinese study around the world by request of the Ministry of Education. These events all helped MTC become a leader in academic inquiry into the discipline of teaching Chinese. Education ministers, experts and academics, university presidents and even U.S. congressmen would visit MTC when they were in Taiwan to see for themselves what was so special about MTC. These exchanges made MTC more than a language training institute, sharing the theories of language education with all scholars of Chinese study.

The Department of Chinese as a Second Language

The Graduate Institute of Chinese as a Second Language (which later became part of the Department of Chinese as a Second Language) celebrated its 20th anniversary just last year. Looking back on its luminous achievements, I can still see everything vividly in my mind.

The institute was established in 1995 as an independent graduate institute under the College of International Studies and Education for Overseas Chinese, admitting its first master's program students that same year and with Doctor Shou-hsin Teng from the University of Massachusetts serving as its first dean. In 1996 the institute began accepting international students; in 1997 the institute began allowing students to conduct their practical training abroad; in 1998 the extension education master's credit program was offered; in 1999 the institute launched Chinese teaching programs with overseas partner schools; in 2001 Professor Shih-chang Hsin became the second dean and the institute started to offer the Chinese Teacher Training Program; in 2003 the Ph.D. program was established and began admitting doctoral students; in 2004 the In-service Program was launched; in 2006 the Department of Chinese Language and Culture for International Students (CLC) was founded, along with the overseas Chinese teaching master's program in Thailand; in 2007 Professor Chin-chin Tseng became the third dean; in 2012 the institute was merged with the CLC and renamed as the Department of Chinese as a Second Language; in 2013 Research Chair Professor Jenn-Yeu Chen was elected as department chair; the following year Professor Chen was promoted to the position of Dean of the College of International Studies and Social Sciences, with Professor Chin-chin Tseng reprising her role as department chair, a position she still holds today.

The faculty includes scholars from relevant fields, both from Taiwan and abroad, who all have a wealth of teaching experience and professional knowledge in their respective areas, such as Chinese linguistics, Chinese syntax, Chinese pedagogy, phonetic instruction in Chinese, contrastive analysis, acoustic phonetics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmatics, semantics, lexicography, Chinese philology, discourse analysis, language and culture, media and Chinese language instruction, Chinese data processing, academic writing, Chinese language teaching practicum, etc. Important achievements over the past two decades include:

1. Signing contracts with dozens of foreign universities on academic cooperation and teaching practicums.
2. International student exchange; the ratio of local students and foreign students is 3 to 2, with international students accounting for one third of the student body.

3. Cooperating with Chinese language centers across Taiwan on teaching demonstrations and practicum.
4. The department provides many opportunities for overseas practicum; after two years of study, graduate students who demonstrate excellence are selected and sent to Chinese teaching institutes around the world to work as Chinese instructors for a period of two months or one to two years.
5. In 1997, the department joined forces with Chinese language departments and institutes as well as mandarin centers around Taiwan to form the Association of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (ATCSL), which holds the International Annual Conference of Teaching Chinese as a Second language and invites speakers from both Taiwan and abroad to give talks at the event.
6. Spearheading the effort of the ATCSL to join the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) as a member country of the Chinese Language Teachers Association. Members attend regular annual meetings in the United States, where they discuss topics with their peers and learn new concepts in modern language pedagogy.

A total of 375 master's and doctoral students have graduated from our department. Among them, one third went on to teaching positions at Chinese language institutes and schools abroad, where they have won praise and recognition. A few pursued doctoral degrees and now teach Chinese or devote themselves to research at universities in the United States and Hong Kong. Our third-year graduate Hao-hsiang Liao has been appointed to a Chinese teaching position at Harvard University, whereas our seventh-year graduate Yin-ting Wang has received a tenured appointment from the Department of Chinese Studies of Leiden University.

I have served at the Mandarin Training Center for thirty-two years (including eight years as Director) as well as taught at the Department of Chinese as a Second Language for twenty years (twelve of those as Professor Emeritus), so I have been there since the beginning and lived through those difficult early years. Along the way, I have witnessed the center and the department achieve great things, nurturing countless talents at home and abroad. Thanks to this, National Taiwan Normal University has become a beacon of light in the world of Chinese language education.



NTNU's Heritage as a Paradigm of Education with Vision for Internationalization and Innovation

Insight by Former Director of the Bureau of International Cultural and Educational Relations, Ministry of Education

■ | Chen-ching Li



▲ The Mandarin Training Center nurtured many outstanding figures in the areas of international politics, diplomacy, academy, trade and economy, and the media, including Honduras ambassador to Taiwan Lina Elena Sunseri (middle). To the left is the author, Chen-ching Li, then Director of the Mandarin Center. To the right is NTNU President at the time, Shang-yong Liang. The picture was taken in 1986 at the NTNU General Building

Over the Past 70 Years, National Taiwan Normal University Has Been Concentrating on Education and the Pursuit of Academic Excellent to Develop Betterness Education and Cultivate Humanity, Put Innovations into Action, and Foster Talent with A Global Vision

The author, Chen-ching Li, graduated from the Department of English, National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) in 1963. He has since taught high-school English, and served as Professor at the Department of English and Director of the Mandarin Training Center at NTNU; Cultural Attaché and Director of the Cultural Division at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Washington, D.C.; Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland; Director General of the Bureau of International Cultural and Educational Relations under the Ministry of Education; Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Shih Hsin University; and International Coordinator of the APEC Education Network. He is currently Professor Emeritus of Shih Hsin University, and concurrently the Coordinator of the Chinese-English Terminology Translation Review Committee Research under the National Academy for Educational Research.

In its seventy-year history, National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) has upheld an academic atmosphere that is down to earth while pursuing excellence. It has implemented its ideals of nurturing talent through a refined education that stresses learning in the humanities, innovation, and an international outlook. Through such efforts, the university strives to uphold its tradition of excellence, achieve sustainable achievements, and continue to thrive in the 21st century.



▲ Author, Dr. Chen-ching Li

In Taiwan's changing society and shifting international trends of thought, NTNU has held fast to its middle way and belief in innovation and internationalization, becoming a pillar with a stabilizing force in the area of higher education and social development in Taiwan. Over the course of seven decades, it has produced outstanding graduates and remained steadfast to the core values of higher education while believing in an innovative international outlook. As such, the university serves as a model to be followed in these times of uncertainty.



Blending the Classical with the Modern

NTNU has maintained a long history and classical splendor, while demonstrating a modern and innovative international outlook. In addition, it continues to fulfill the core function of higher education, which is to offer a solid education for talented students, helping them to cultivate themselves, open their minds, serve society and pursue a happy and meaningful life. This is the kind of higher education that NTNU has striven to provide over the past seventy years, through which it aims to nurture talents with qualities underscored by the university motto: Sincerity, Integrity, Diligence, Simplicity.

The tradition and academic ethos that I witnessed at NTNU express an educational ideal similar to this reminder inscribed on the walls of Harvard University for all students to see: "Enter to grow in wisdom. Depart to serve better thy country and thy kind." In its seventy-year history, maintaining its traditions while exploring new ideas, NTNU has evolved from a model university for nurturing teachers and talents to a well-known international institution for higher education of the 21st

century, winning wide-spread recognition. Countless students from Europe, the U.S. and other Asian countries have come to NTNU for advanced studies for good reason.

The accomplishments and contributions by many of NTNU's English department alumni, both in Taiwan and abroad, testify to the university's success in cultivating talent and internationalizing its education. There are innumerable internationally renowned alumni who testify to the achievements of higher education that Taiwan can be proud of. These include Professor of Linguistics at Harvard University C.-T. James Huang; former head of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Los Angeles and now Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bruce Linghu; Academia Sinica Academician Paul Li; Division Director of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics Samuel Peng; and China Times U.S. correspondent Norman Fu, just to name a few. Needless to say, there are even more outstanding graduates from other departments, who deserve to be written about in a separate article.

An Inspiring Speech that Changed My Life View

Throughout my education in Taiwan and abroad, as well as my service at NTNU, I have benefited from the education I received at my alma mater, which opened my mind and changed my view on life, at the same time leading me to devote myself to education in Taiwan and the international community. In short, my life was transformed in a most positive way thanks to my days at NTNU. The invaluable experiences and memories played an important role during my studies abroad, in my teaching, research and work, as well as in the international interaction and services that I was involved in.

The experience that I remember best from my early days at NTNU took place in the second semester of my freshman year. It was 1960, on the university's 14th anniversary, and I was fortunate enough to be among the audience during Dr. Hu Shih's inspiring speech. In an age when martial law and authoritarian rule loomed large, ideas of freedom and openness were like an incredible wakeup call to a freshman like me.

Hu Shih encouraged students at NTNU to maintain ideals in two respects. The first is character; one must embrace freedom of thought as well as independent and critical thinking, which are more important than life. Intellectuals must obtain a state where they "do not compromise their righteous aspirations and do not humiliate themselves." Only then will they have achieved perfect character. The second is to broaden the scope of one's knowledge, to love and seek truth, even sacrificing

everything or suffering for the truth. College students must learn to love truth more than they love their own lives.

Listening to his electrifying speech, my young mind seemed suddenly enlightened, liberating my thinking and my attitude. At the Department of English, I was further exposed to a mix of tradition, diverse educational methods and modern and avant-garde thought through my many admirable professors.

In my freshman year, I came across the "Address to Freshmen in Harvard College" by Harvard University President James B. Conant (1893-1978). In the address, Conant advised students to cultivate a sense of mission. More importantly, in a changing society dominated by politicians, he advised students to use broad knowledge as a basis to develop the abilities of independent thinking and objective judgment.

Conant's conviction of the purpose of higher education echoes what Hu Shih expressed in his speech, and both have had a profound influence on how I have approached life and my work in education. The ideas and enlightenment I received at my alma mater fifty-six years ago ultimately enabled me to enter the international academic and cultural stage, forming international ties for Taiwan and spreading Chinese language and culture to different corners of the world. I have the academic atmosphere and tradition at NTNU to thank for all this, along with the "NTNU masters" who were tireless teachers and have had a lasting influence on me.



▲ MTC's building entrance of NTNU

Tireless Teachers: The NTNU Masters

After entering NTNU in 1959, what impressed me most was the number of great scholars gathered at the university and the far-reaching academic connections that they represented, which gave students more exposure to the international academic scene and educational opportunities.

Professor Shih-chiu Liang was the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the time, but was no longer teaching. However, the example he set continued to exert influence and left a deep imprint on all of the students. In 1962, Professor Liang invited Taiwan's former ambassador to the United States, George Kung-chao Yeh, to teach at NTNU, a decision that invigorated the student body.

In my junior year, through the recommendation and encouragement of my teachers, I attended lectures by the internationally renowned linguist Yuen-ren Chao at the College of Liberal Arts, National Taiwan University. In 1971, when I went to the United States for further studies for the first time, I was again fortunate enough to be in the audience during Dr. Y. R. Chao's thought-provoking speech on the evolution of language and phonetic experiments, which he delivered at an international conference hosted by the University of Hawaii. The speech was one that I would remember for life and which inspired a way of thinking that was limitless and expansive. I later formed an academic relationship with Dr. Chao after I wrote to him with some questions. The memory still touches me.

In 1956, Professor Liang founded the Mandarin Training Center, which attracted students from some of the top American universities, including Harvard, Yale, Chicago, Stanford and U.C. Berkeley, etc. This was the beginning of international education exchange for Taiwan, and NTNU was a pioneer of its time. Immersed in this environment of diversity and nurtured by many great teachers, from my freshman year I could appreciate the aspiration to become part of an international community, and came to understand the philosophy that "to go far, one must start from what is near; to ascend a height, one must begin at the bottom."

The undergraduate curriculum at NTNU embodied a typical liberal arts education. In our first year, we were required to earn close to thirty credits. Classes went from Monday mornings to Saturday afternoons. Aside from the core courses of the English department, we also had to take Chinese, Mandarin phonetics, The Analects

of Confucius/Mencius, Introduction to Education, Psychology, Military Training, Physical Education, Audiovisual Education, Contemporary International Politics and Relations, etc. The course load was heavy and required much more work than preparing for the college entrance examination.

Fortunately, we learned from the best. Professor Chih-ping Chen, who taught freshmen Chinese, for example, was a leading and renowned scholar of *Shiji* (The Scribe's Records). In his classes, Professor Chen lectured on everything from the classical to the modern. It was a joy to attend his lectures, which he delivered with humor and zest.

Professor Chi-rui Chang, who taught modern history, never brought a textbook but only two pieces of chalk to class. The entire modern history of China and the world was in his head. This presented a memorable challenge for us students. After a year in his class, we were trained to focus from beginning to end, and to take quick notes while analyzing and integrating the information.

Our psychology professor Chun-yue Lu was a rigorous scholar who always had a thick stack of note cards prepared for each class. Professor Lu's organized and systematic approach to research and scholarship became a model for me during my studies abroad.

To instruct us on The Analects of Confucius/Mencius, we had internationally renowned scholar of Chu Ci (Verses of Chu), Professor Tian-hua Miao. I always sat in the first row, where I listened attentively to his descriptions and analyses of classical literature. The ethics for a modern time, humanistic cultivation and life wisdom that could be gleaned from the works of Confucius, Mencius, Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu left a deep impression on me, and I have used them extensively in discourses on modern education.

In the core curriculum for English majors, the foreign teachers who taught freshmen stressed listening and speaking skills. Often, students from southern Taiwan, such as myself, had trouble understanding what was said in class. Eventually we formed the "English conversation group", which was similar to a study group, and met every night on the lawn in front of the library to practice conversing in English. In the age before the internet and advanced communication media, we relied on the tradition of diligent study at NTNU to gradually reach our educational goals. After all, we can make up for our shortcomings with hard work, and where there is a will,



there is a way. My experience at NTNU more than half a century ago laid a foundation for me, so that for the rest of my life I would strive for success and never shy away from a challenge, whether at home or abroad.

Our teacher for the freshman course “Grammar and Composition” was Professor Chang-lan Liu. In addition to being a tireless teacher, she encouraged us to read extensively and keep an English diary using the content, vocabulary and genre styles that we learned through our reading. This practice opened the door for me to a lifetime of writing and speaking in English, including becoming a teacher myself, guiding students in their English composition, and drafting English documents used in international affairs.

At the urging of my teachers and following their examples, I developed the habit of reading and writing in English in my freshman year. One day during the second semester of my first year at NTNU, I bought a copy of *Up from Slavery*, published in 1901 by Booker T. Washington, from a used books vendor on Guling Street. This was the first English biographical novel that I read at NTNU. Thanks to the patient and solid training provided by my freshman year teachers, I was able to read the book with much interest and enjoyment, learning to apply the elegant words and phrases in my compositions. The thinking contained in this book had a long-lasting influence on me.

The emphasis that NTNU placed on the freshman class and its careful planning for students to receive an education in the humanities were important measures for enlightening new college students. This sort of education planning was rarely seen in Taiwan, but widely implemented in well-known universities in Europe and the United States, especially in Ivy League schools.

In 1993, after I gave an invited talk at Yale University, Richard C. Levin, then the President of the university, told me that in leading the university, one of his major beliefs is in the importance of opening the minds of freshman students and designing their curriculum. The many Nobel prize winners and famed National Academicians at Yale University voluntarily offer cornerstone courses for freshmen, a tradition that has helped Yale to effectively nurture elite talents, which is one of the goals of higher education. Comparing Yale with NTNU now makes me appreciate even more the forward-looking educational philosophy of my alma mater and its expert view on talent cultivation.

From my sophomore to senior year, I gradually improved my English, putting what I learned into practice. Also inspired by the great teachers at NTNU, I gradually laid the foundation for my future endeavors both in Taiwan and abroad, accomplishing tasks in international exchange and relations that I can take comfort in. Among my teachers, Professor C. M. Yang, with his Spartan training of our reading and communication skills, Professor Fang-chieh Chang, who taught integrated research on English composition and reading, and Professor Hsi-chen Wu’s “Selected Readings in Novels” all led me to later advocate reading widely to broaden one’s knowledge and to undertake the task of teaching English writing, speaking and translation.

Professor Pao-chien Yang’s “English Pedagogy and Teaching Practice (Practicum)” course, which taught us how to put what we learned into practice and use innovative teaching methods, laid the foundation for my use of multimedia and internet technology in teaching college classes. As early as in 1963, Professor Yang’s teaching philosophy was already infused with the idea of “flipped learning.” The “audiovisual education” that he insisted on was an early harbinger of the application of multimedia and the internet in classrooms.

Another feature of the Department of English was an unusually close relationship between teachers and students. Universities now require instructors to set aside at least four hours of office hours, in order to counsel students outside of the classroom. In fact, when we were in college, we would often visit professors at their homes to discuss our assignments and all kinds of questions about life. Every Wednesday night I would also go to Tien Educational Center to talk to our American professor Everett J. Mibach. We talked about everything. It helped me greatly to improve my English and develop my own thinking and judgement.

The core concepts of modern education were already in practice at NTNU half a century ago. This clearly demonstrates how the university has been able to successfully nurture talents for Taiwan in the seventy years since its founding. The tireless “NTNU Masters” will always be in the memories and hearts of alumni around the world.





Organizing the First Taiwan-US Higher Education Conference

International academic and educational exchange is an important policy promoted in many countries now to broaden students' international outlook, enhance the quality of academic output and develop talents with an understanding of the larger world. As early as thirty-six years ago, NTNU was already leading the way in doing so.

From April 30th to May 1st, 1980, the first "Taiwan-US International Conference on Higher Education", sponsored by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and organized by NTNU, was held in the General Building of NTNU. Attending the meeting were ten American university presidents, including Alan Guskin from Antioch University, John Young of The State University of New York and Ken Alm from Minnesota State University. The event also saw enthusiastic participation by university presidents from Taiwan. I was fortunate enough to serve as interpreter during the conference, which gave me a deeper understanding of the implications and significance of this international conference.



In light of the success of this first conference and the urgent need for such events for universities in Taiwan, NTNU followed the request of the MOE and other local universities to host the second "Taiwan-US International Conference on Higher Education" on the 17th and 18th of October in the same year (1980). Eight university presidents from the U.S. participated in the conference, including James B. Appleberry from Pittsburg State University, Lloyd Johns from California State University, Sacramento, and John L. Brown from the University of South Florida. James B. Appleberry would later serve as chairman of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU).

Those two conferences hosted by NTNU thirty-six years ago carried great significance, and would profoundly influence the promotion of internationalized education by universities in Taiwan. This again shows that my alma mater was always on the forefront in terms of seeing the need for internationalized education and its promotion. Moreover, it played an active role behind the scenes. And this, in fact, was closely linked to the Mandarin Training Center, founded six decades ago and well known around the world.

► In the 1990s, the number of Mandarin Center alumni abroad had already reached more than thirty thousand. In 1991, during a gathering in San Francisco, the participants proposed that a seminar for alumni be held where everyone would be required to speak Chinese. This novel attempt was well received, and many more such events were held on a larger scale. This picture was taken at the 1995 "Symposium of American Scholars and Professionals Formerly Studying in Taiwan" in Washington, D.C. Pictured, from left to right, are: The author; Cornelius C. Kubler, then Chinese department chair at Williams College; Lyman Van Slyke, Professor of History at Stanford University; Susan Foster, Professor and Head Registrar at Gonzaga University, Spokane; Colorado State University Professor Stuart H. Sargent; Chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature, University of California, Berkeley, Stephen H. West; Allen & Overy New York director Mitchell Silk; Beijing bureau chief of The Baltimore Sun John Woodruff; Attorney-at-Law in Nevada Steven Klearman.

Mandarin Training Center Attains International Fame

The trend for learning Chinese started to spread around the world in the 1980s. During the first Taiwan-US International Conference on Higher Education in 1980, the American university presidents attending the conference noticed that there were many foreign students studying Chinese at NTNU, and they became interested in establishing Chinese language programs of their own. President James Young of The State University of New York (SUNY) at Potsdam, which had just celebrated its 200th anniversary, immediately suggested to NTNU president Wei-fan Kuo to establish a branch for the NTNU Mandarin Center at SUNY.

Later when I served as Director of the Mandarin Training Center, I took the opportunity of attending an academic conference in the United States to visit SUNY Potsdam, where I continued discussions with President Young on establishing a branch of the Mandarin Center and offering Chinese language courses. Although for various reasons the plan never came to fruition, it did result in NTNU sending teachers to SUNY for exchanges and launching a Chinese language curriculum. The founding of the NTNU Mandarin Training Center in 1956 no doubt played an important role in the global Chinese fever we are now witnessing. It can be argued that NTNU was a driving force behind the internationalization of Chinese language education in the 20th century.

In June 1981, Professor Raymond Dawson of Oxford University's Oriental Institute sent eighteen students to the Mandarin Training Center, where they studied Chinese under a system of credit transfer and joint degree courses. Oxford University officially listed the Mandarin Center as an extension institution for its study abroad program, and required all students to complete a semester of study at the Center to qualify for graduation.

In the sixty years since its founding, the Mandarin Center has seen many students who would later go on to important positions in the areas of international politics, diplomatic missions, academe, trade and economy, and the media. Among them are former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd; former El Salvador ambassador to Taiwan

Francisco Ricardo Santana Berrios; Honduras ambassador to Taiwan Lina Elena Sunseri; former California Secretary of State March Fong Eu; Hong Kong American Chamber of Commerce President, and now President of East-West Center in Hawaii Richard Vulysteke; former Dean of Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences William Kirby; Harvard-Yenching Institute Director Elizabeth J. Perry; former Director of the Modern East Asia Research Centre at Leiden University Axel Schneider, who is now Director of the Centre for Modern East Asian Studies at Gottingen University in Germany; former Beijing bureau chief of The Baltimore Sun John Woodruff; former Korean representative to Taiwan Chung Sang-ki; and Murray Davis, Queensland Government Trade & Investment Commissioner to Taiwan.

The students who traveled hundreds or thousands of miles to Taiwan to study Chinese at NTNU shared common characteristics: An understanding of international affairs, a love for Chinese culture, genuine talent, a strong desire to master the Chinese language, a positive attitude, the willingness to embrace the challenges of bilingualism (or multilingualism) and biculturalism, a firm grasp of the logic of language acquisition, and a clear international outlook. More importantly, they were all drawn to Taiwan because of NTNU's well-regarded Mandarin Training Center.

Connecting international ties and helping Taiwan to expand academic diplomacy are NTNU's contributions in addition to its academic work and promotion of international education. Over seven decades, NTNU has fulfilled its academic, educational and cultural functions on a global scale, and served as a platform for international exchange. This valuable heritage, which combines a long history with unique qualities and clear functions, has no peer among other universities in Taiwan. In the 21st century, where "the world is flat and the earth is round", I hope my alma mater will keep up with the times, reaching new heights and continuing to enjoy international fame.

On Teaching Practicums in Germany

Experience Sharing by Associate Professor of Applied Chinese Language and Culture

■ Ying-hua Guan



The First Step is Always Hard

When I first began teaching at the Department of Applied Chinese Language and Culture (ACLC) and was asked by the department to help expand opportunities for students to conduct their teaching practicums in Germany, I felt quite lost and didn't know where to begin as I had no background in teaching Chinese as a second language. I consulted with people, but it was to little avail. I was feeling frustrated and close to giving up when something happened in a class. After learning that there was as yet no channel for them to conduct their practicums in Germany, a student asked me in class: "Ms. Guan, are we unwanted?" This one comment spurred me on, and I decided right then that I would do everything I could to send my students to Germany for practical training, and prove to them that they are not unwanted.

Perhaps the gods were smiling down on the students of ACLC after all. In a letter to Dr. Guder, director of the German Association of Chinese Language Teaching, I introduced the ACLC to him, and said that I hoped to provide students with the opportunity of completing their Chinese teaching practicum in Germany. Dr. Guder did not believe there was much chance of this happening, but he agreed to distribute the information to members of the association.

Suddenly I was hearing from all these schools that said they would welcome ACLC students to carry out their practicums at their schools, and among these schools were quite a few well-known universities. In the end, the first ACLC student to travel to Germany for practical training was the same one who first raised that question in class.

A Practical Experience on Different Levels

Students from ACLC have had practicum opportunities at various levels of schools in Germany since 2011. Currently, institutions that regularly provide teaching practicum opportunities include the Confucius Kindergarten Leipzig, the Friedrich Schiller high school in Marbach, the LSI-Sinicum (Chinese language center) and the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at Ruhr-University Bochum.

The Confucius Kindergarten Leipzig is currently the largest of the few bilingual kindergartens in Germany. It consists of eight classrooms, four for children from one to three, and four for children from three to six. Each practicum student is responsible for Chinese teaching activities in two classrooms. The kindergarten was expanded in February 2016, doubling its number of classrooms and students, thereby promising more teaching practicum opportunities for ACLC. This provides students of ACLC the opportunity to gain experience in teaching Chinese to pre-school children, understanding the difference between teaching young children and adults, and the potential opportunities that can be explored in the area of teaching Chinese to children.



▲ The front entrance of the Confucius Kindergarten Leipzig



The Friedrich Schiller high school, well known as Germany's third largest public high school, is located in the small city of Marbach near Stuttgart. Chinese is an elective second foreign language course there, and can be one of the subjects for the high school exit examination. Four teachers are responsible for the Chinese courses; the practicum student provides in-class assistance to each teacher, for example reciting from the textbook, writing on the blackboard, correcting students' pronunciations, explaining the practice questions, and correcting answers. In higher grade classes, they assist in teaching cultural courses, such as introduction to Taiwan culture and helping students understand relations between Taiwan and mainland China. Occasionally, the teaching practicum student will be asked to design test papers and correct compositions, convert textbook contents into audio files, or provide after-class counseling for students. At Friedrich Schiller, students from ACLC are able to experience how Chinese is taught at different grades in German high schools, and learn the techniques of managing a high school class.

Practicum students teach adults at the LSI-Sinicum (the Chinese language center) and Department of Chinese Language and Literature at Ruhr-University Bochum. Students at the center consist mainly of the general public, who study Chinese for on-the-job training, whereas students at the department are mostly undergraduate and master's students. Established in 1980, the Chinese language center is a well-known institution with a long history. It offers intensive Chinese training classes, which are taught in small classes that go from beginner's to advanced levels, with teaching materials written by the teachers themselves. Students come from varied backgrounds, from members of the general public, corporate employees and teachers to engineers, diplomats and astronauts. Because the intensive classes are taught at a fast pace, practicum students there mainly audit and observe the classes, with the occasional opportunity of participating in some of the teaching activities. As for the Department of Chinese Language and Literature, it signed an agreement with National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) in early 2016 for student exchange, and received its first practicum student from ACLC in April of this year.



▲ The front entrance to LSI-Sinicum (Chinese language center) at Ruhr-University Bochum.

Embracing the Good and the Bad

After gradually establishing the channels for ACLC students to conduct practicums in Germany, I felt that I had proven to NTNU students that they certainly do have the opportunity for exchanges with renowned schools in Germany.

However, the initial joy of having established the practicum channels was soon replaced by the unexpected burden of complicated and myriad practical matters. I managed everything from selecting students to arranging their practicums at the institutions of their choice. I dealt with students and parents, teachers at the practicum institutions and relevant organizations, and the German Federal Labor Agency and German Institute in Taipei, explaining and coordinating, receiving and sending many letters of proof so that students received their visas in time to arrive at their practicum institutes.

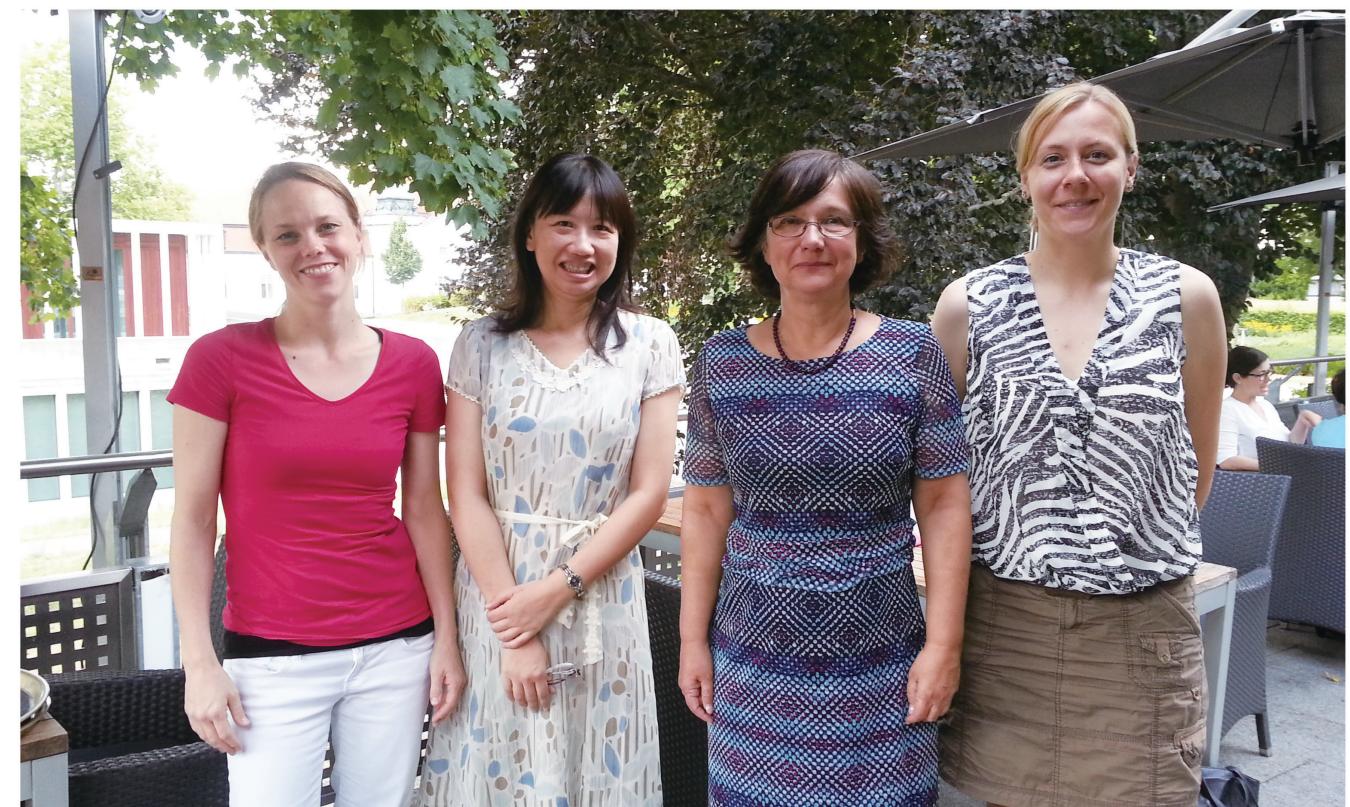
The work was time-consuming, sometimes requiring late-night correspondences with German institutions. Due to difficulties caused by changes in German laws, several times it became almost impossible to keep pursuing the German practicum project. Fortunately, my colleagues at ACLC were very supportive, and they worked to meet the requirement that the teaching practicum be "mandatory" so the practicum institutions could in turn meet the requirements of the German Minimum Wage Act.

Sending the students off to Germany was only part of the work. Although the students received information from the practicum institutions and knew what was expected from them, most of them lacked social experience and problem solving skills, resulting in poor adjustment to the new environment. They either wrote to me with complaints, asking me to help them resolve their problems, or vented their personal feelings on Facebook, causing other students to have concerns, even developing preconceptions about the practicum institutions.

On the other hand, sometimes the teachers at the practicum institutions would complain to me about individual incidents. I would then have to try to appease both parties, asking the practicum institution to be more accommodating to the failings of youth, on the other hand trying to make students understand the German culture and way of doing things, social realities and workplace ethics. Some students became very ill when they were in Germany, and I had to contact the parents as well as keep

writing to the practicum institution to find out how the students were doing. Then there were students whose life and practicum in Germany went smoothly, but completely ignored inquiries about their status, as though they had vanished from the world. Even after completing their practicum and returning to Taiwan, they failed to notify the university.

Dealing with such complaints and incidents often left me feeling drained. But then I thought of how many students who completed their practicum in Germany have broadened their international outlook, become more confident, mature and grown-up, taking the initiative to think about their future, even deciding to pursue advanced studies in Germany after graduation. Perhaps at the time of their practicums they were still immature, but the experience helped them grow, and that to me is worth it all. And I have been moved by letters from students after they complete their practicum or graduate, thanking me and sharing with me what a good memory it is.



▲ The author (second from left) with the Chinese teachers at Friedrich Schiller high school.

Before Going Abroad for Practical Training

An overseas practicum is an important experience and training for students who wish to build a career in teaching Chinese. In a practical sense, it gives students the opportunity to learn how to apply what they learn in the classroom in actual teaching situations, and how to turn theories into effective teaching strategies. It also helps students grow emotionally. They learn how to live independently in a foreign country, how to solve problems, and how to get along with superiors, peers and students at their practicum institutions. However, they must have the right mindset and the mental preparedness before they can benefit from the experience.

First of all, the main purpose of practical training is to accumulate actual workplace experience, not to make money, so students shouldn't be preoccupied with the wages that a practicum institution pays. In fact, many practicum institutions are unable to pay wages, or pay very little, which is one reason why they are willing to provide the practicum opportunities. If students feel that they have had an unpleasant practicum experience due to low wages, then they would be missing the point and ruining the rare opportunity.

What students should focus on is what they can contribute and learn through this opportunity. They should care about their students and demonstrate professionalism in their teaching, observing students' reactions so they know how they can improve their teaching. If the practicum institution provides the opportunity for in-classroom observation, students should take this chance to carefully record the teaching methods of local teachers and how they interact with students, then use this to reflect on their own teaching methods and how they might be improved. If there are no such opportunities or the local teachers do not provide guidelines for teaching, then students must see this as an opportunity for them to try independent teaching, instead of immediately deciding that this is a bad practicum opportunity or environment and criticizing the host institution.

In fact, if a practicum institution does not have a cooperation agreement with NTNU, it is under no

obligation to provide practicum opportunities or teaching instructions. Students should think positively. If a certain institution provides practicum opportunities but no teacher to provide guidance, this means it lacks the professional talent needed to do so, which is why it needs practicum students with the expertise to help. At times like this, practicum students should be grateful for the trust of the practicum institution, and understand the important responsibility that has been entrusted to them, taking this chance to put their skills to full use.

In addition, practicum students should be equipped with the ability to live and solve problems independently. Each practicum institution is different in nature and location. When the institution provides less assistance in terms of accommodation and living needs, students can only rely on themselves, from buying everyday goods, learning travel routes to going to the doctor, sometimes even going to the foreign affairs bureau to extend a visa or making a trip to the bank to open or close an account. If you are traveling and have something stolen from you, you must know how to report it to the police, how to apply for new papers, how to report credit card loss to the bank, etc. All these test the practicum students' language skills and ability to respond to change and adapt. If the students are incapable of handling such situations, they can seek help from the practicum institution, local colleagues, Chinese language churches, Taiwan students associations and the local Taiwan representative office. In short, when you are abroad, you have only yourself to rely on. You cannot expect the practicum institution or local teachers to provide you with all the services and help you may need. Finally, practicum students should understand the local language and culture in order to blend into local life, and be courteous and honest when communicating with the supervisors of the practicum institutions or mentoring teachers. If you run into something unpleasant, learn forbearance. After all, what is most important in a foreign country is to learn to protect yourself.



Reimbursement Regulations Prevent Students from Receiving Financial Assistance

The Ministry of Education's Overseas Internship Program and the internship financial aid provided by NTNU's Office of Careers Service are important resources for students conducting their practicums abroad. After all, most foreign practicum institutions are unable to provide wages, and the costs can run high for students spending an entire semester abroad for their practicums. Unfortunately, the financial aid provided by the Ministry of Education is decreasing, while qualifications remain strict, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to successfully apply for financial support.

The NTNU's Office of Careers Service, which provides government-funded stipends, also has to meet strict government regulations. Students must leave and return to Taiwan in the same year, preferably all before the end of October, in order to meet the accounting and reimbursement deadlines. This stipulation prevents practicum students whose internship straddles two years from qualifying for the stipend, and shows how the rigid accounting process of public organizations defeats the original purpose of a budget set aside to provide financial assistance to students. We have to ask, why must the Ministry of Education have such a rigid accounting and reimbursement schedule for money set aside to help students? Can the accounting process be more important than the actual purpose of the funds? Perhaps it is time to relax the accounting schedule so more students can actually benefit from the program, which is what it was always meant to do.

▲ A practicum student from NTNU's Department of Applied Chinese Language and Culture conducts a culture class at Friedrich Schiller high school

◀ A practicum student from NTNU's Department of Applied Chinese Language and Culture conducts class at the LSI-Sinicum

A Few Questions about Teaching Chinese as a Second Language

To Fellow Colleagues Embarking on a Chinese Teaching Journey Overseas



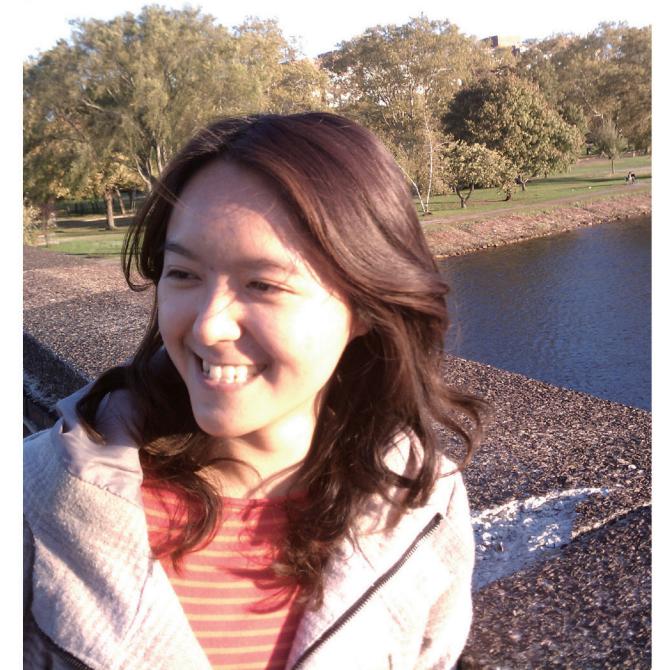
■ | **Xin-yi Zhang**
Preceptor of Harvard University
Alumnus of Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations

When many places were starting to welcome the vigorous spring season in early April this year, another snow arrived at Boston. This has been my 7th year into teaching Chinese at the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University, and yet from time to time, I still think of my student days at the Graduate Institute of Teaching Chinese as a Second Language (TCSL, now renamed Department of Chinese as a Second Language) at NTNU. I got the offer to teach at Harvard during the second year of my master's program at TCSL, and I have been on the Harvard campus for 7 years, like time passing by in the blink of an eye.

A major reason many people long to become teachers of Chinese as a second language is the prospect of living abroad and exposure to different cultures. Indeed, while being in such a career may not lead you to wealth, you can always expect a constant flow of cross-cultural sparks and interaction with people, which would undoubtedly broaden your horizon and enrich your spiritual life. There seems to be something mysterious and refreshing about venturing into the unknown in an exotic land, and perhaps that is the very drive that inspires people to explore further.

However, as we cannot anticipate what the exotic land will have in store for us, or what will happen next, we may have different levels of doubts. While sky is the limit in the pursuit of our dreams, we also need to keep our feet on the ground about teaching Chinese as a second language, and gear ourselves up with the necessary tools.

During these few years of my teaching career overseas, I was often asked several questions. Does being able to speak Chinese mean you can teach it? What does it take to teach Chinese? How do you find a teaching job overseas? What are the challenges in teaching Chinese in the US?



▲ Author, Xin-yi Zhang

How should a teacher of Chinese as a second language equip oneself?

As a matter of fact, teaching Chinese as a second language involves a wide range of aspects. The situation differs from country to country. Curriculums for school kids and for adults also require totally different designs. As such, there are no one-size-fits-all answers to the aforementioned questions. Therefore I think a good starting point would be sharing my experience and understanding about teaching Chinese at Harvard in the past few years, as well as my personal thoughts.



I Speak Chinese; Therefore I can Teach It?

Do you need special skills to teach Chinese? Whoever speaks Chinese can teach Chinese. Is that the case? I tend to look at these questions from two perspectives.

If you are just learning the language for fun, or as a way to make friends, the interaction is just for pleasure. In such circumstances, language teaching is more casual and anyone who speaks Chinese may well be able to teach it. The purpose of learning and teaching would be just to communicate. All it takes is for the two parties to get the message across. There is no need to be too demanding about pronunciation and grammar as this is a more relaxing way to pick up the language without too much pressure involved in the learning process. Nonetheless, as this is also a less structured way of learning, whether the knowledge will become long-term memory, whether the learner's pronunciation and diction are appropriate, etc. may all become potential issues later on.

Now let's approach the questions from the perspective of a more holistic, structured language curriculum that is more demanding for both teachers and students. In a classroom teaching environment, all the curriculum designs and teaching methodologies used in class are pre-thought out and planned, and the content is tailored to students' proficiency levels, age, mother tongue backgrounds and learning objectives. Teachers must pick the best suited combination of teaching materials, curriculum design and teaching methodologies so that students can get the most out of it.

Some schools managed to develop their own ways of teaching based on the school culture and student characteristics. Take Harvard for example, the overall curriculum design of Chinese classes on a term basis comprises group classes for grammar instruction and small classes for speaking exercise. By doing so, a repeated grammar-centric oral exercise methodology via Q&A has come into being, and a teacher without prior training would inevitably run into problems while conducting such classes.

Additionally, in Chinese classes, it is often necessary to distinguish between words or phrases with similar meanings. For instance, what is the difference between “gān gà” (awkward), and “nán kān” (embarrassed)? How should “tiān rǎng zhī bié (as different as heaven and earth)” and “nán yuán bēi zhé (poles apart)” be used? Are they used in different contexts? These are questions that students may ask. If a teacher only speaks Chinese, but did not train for teaching, will he/she be able to do a good job?



▲ Join the activities at Harvard



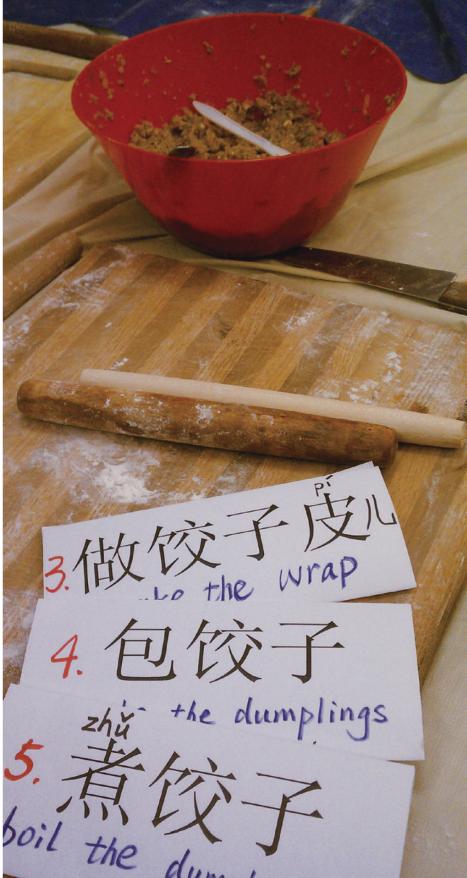
▲ Language lab at Harvard. Technology-assisted teaching is sometimes required in teaching Chinese as a second language



▲ Snow scene at Harvard. Teaching overseas also requires adapting to a totally different climate from home



▲ A performance hall at Harvard where author was invited to attend a performance by a student musical club for a glimpse of college students' leisure life in America.



3. 做饺子皮儿
"to the wrap"
4. 包饺子
"zhā - the dumplings"
5. 煮饺子
"boil the dumplings"

▲ One of the most popular Chinese culture event—"make the dumplings."



▲ Enjoy watching basketball games as local entertainment



▲ It is always to read voluminously and to travel far and wide. Making good use of your vacation by travelling will allow you to explore more of the culture and open your eyes.



▲ A chapel on campus. Getting a closer look of western religious philosophy is also a special point during the course of teaching overseas.

Never Stop Improving Yourself, Building Your Teaching Expertise

The core objective of teaching Chinese as a second language is to enable students to "speak" Chinese. Although we may have a broad spectrum of ideas and all sorts of creativity while brainstorming about curriculum designs, or incorporate new technologies to facilitate teaching, we must not ignore the 3 most basic elements of a language—phonetics, vocabulary and grammar. Getting familiarized with the three elements' meanings and the corresponding teaching methodologies is the first step of Chinese teaching. If you are new to this field, and are confused about what to learn, what trainings to take, my advice is to focus more on-developing ways to get students to pronounce correctly, to memorize vocabulary efficiently, and to speak in grammatically correct sentences.

The first thing about teaching pronunciation is the ability to demonstrate correct phonetics; secondly the ability to detect problems in students' pronunciation; and thirdly the ability to correct students' pronunciation.

Regarding grammar lessons, grammatical rules introduced in class should go beyond the theory. More

emphasis should be placed on the application. That is to say, teachers should be constantly thinking about how to clearly explain about the grammatical structure, collocation, function, and the conversational situations where the grammatical rule can be employed.

When we become aware of the problems that may come up during the course of teaching, we should seek to acquire relevant knowledge in the targeted areas, improve ourselves, and further sharpen our teaching expertise.

There are multiple dimensions to teaching Chinese as a second language. Aside from equipping oneself with professional capabilities to cope with classroom challenges, cultivating an open-minded spirit of acceptance, and nurturing resilience to overcome frustration are equally important. Since we will be meeting students from different cultures, or work in countries other than our own, we are also faced with a variety of challenges in life, such as adapting to a different environment, culture shock, work visa, the option of short-term stay or long-term residency, etc.

Think Ahead, Move Prudently on Overseas Teaching

Generally speaking, overseas opportunities for new entrants to the career of teaching of Chinese as a second language are mostly short-term positions. Given the relatively high turnover of Chinese teachers working overseas, such positions are somewhat attached with greater uncertainty. This will prompt Chinese teachers overseas to expand their life experience, to build their professional capabilities, and interpersonal abilities, as well as to think about their move more proactively. Nevertheless, such uncertainty sometimes clouds the minds of young teachers of Chinese as a second language who are at the crossroad of life.

Therefore, when you are finally given the opportunity to teach overseas after beating strong competitors and passing through all the roadblocks, apart from enjoying life in a foreign country, and broadening your vision and knowledge via immersion in diversified cultures, you might want to figure out as early as possible what you really want. Do you like to compete for a college position against teachers of Chinese as a second language worldwide, or to teach students younger in age? Do you prefer an urban

life or a country life? Different types of job openings require different ways of preparation. For some positions, you must obtain professional certificates to prove your qualification; for some, you must be able to demonstrate teaching methodologies specified by the school; and still some schools ask for other skill sets such as educational technology, event planning, etc. These are all things a teacher of Chinese as a second language need to be thinking about while pursuing self development.

At this time where internationalization and cross-cultural exchange are greatly stressed, teaching Chinese as a second language offers us a key to the world. However, whether we are drafting a global blueprint for Chinese teaching, or just pursuing a budding dream of teaching overseas, we shall all try to put things into perspectives and hold your feet on the ground so you may detect potential issues as they come along. Be brave and yet prudent when chasing your dream so that this overseas teaching journey can be a long and fulfilling one.



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NTNU Who's Who Outstanding Research Award from MOST



Professor Chi-cheng Chang

Outstanding Service to the Academic Community

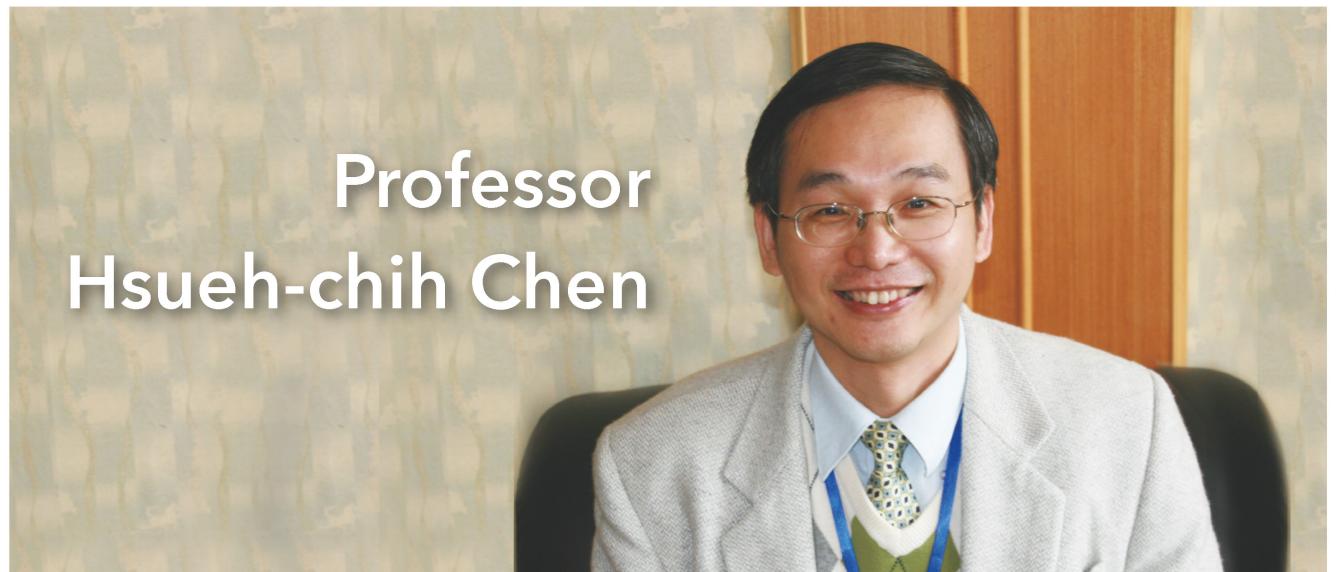
Research Chair Professor Chi-cheng Chang received the Outstanding Research Award from the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) in 2014. He has served as Chairman for the Department of Technology Application and Human Resource Development at NTNU and discipline coordinator for applied science education under MOST. Professor Chang is currently President of the Association of Taiwan Engineering Education and Management, Taiwan's representative at the International Federation of Engineering Education Societies (IFEES), Associate editor of the International Journal of Technology and Engineering Education, and serves on the editorial board of various academic journals in Taiwan and abroad. A two-time recipient of the Wooden Bell Award from the Alliance of Academic Societies in Education, and recipient of the Outstanding Contribution Award from the Global Chinese Society for Computers in Education, Professor Chang has been widely recognized for his services and contributions to the academic community. Several years ago, Taiwan's application to become a member of the IFEES was met with objection from mainland China. It was thanks to Professor Chang's negotiations and efforts that Taiwan was finally admitted to the organization, contributing to Taiwan's improved status in international academic circles.

Pioneering Research Leads the Way

Professor Chang's research is focused on the empirical research on e-portfolios. His work on e-portfolio taxonomy, reliability and validity of e-portfolio assessment, e-portfolio assessment rubrics and e-portfolio knowledge management effectiveness is a world first. The e-portfolio knowledge management scale has been included in the American Psychological Association's PsycTESTS database. With his series of empirical research on e-portfolios, which has established the theoretical framework and empirical methodology for the subject, Professor Chang has gained international fame in the area. His work has also launched research and development of e-portfolios in Taiwan, where he is a leader in the field.

Research Brings Social Impact

Professor Chang has advised dozens of institutions and universities on introducing and developing e-portfolios, including the Ministry of Education (MOE) - in order to improve the general education curriculum, the National Youth Commission, the Institute for Information Industry, the Central Taiwan Teaching/Learning Resource Center, the Southern Taiwan Teaching/Learning Resource Center and more than twenty universities, reaching a total of more than 300,000 people. His research work has been pivotal in the practical implementation of e-portfolios in Taiwan, which is now a required item in the MOE's Teaching Excellence Project.



Professor Hsueh-chih Chen

Unveiling the Mystery of Two Positive Qualities: Creativity and Humor

Humor and creativity are two of the most important and mysterious positive qualities a person can have, as well as two of the key abilities that modern students should be equipped with. A recipient of the 2014 Outstanding Research Award from the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) and Chair of the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling at NTNU, Professor Hsueh-chih Chen has worked with his team in recent years to systematically analyze these two qualities. His basic theoretical research on humor led to the three-phase theory of cognitive humor processing: incongruity-resolution-elaboration. Using tools of cognitive neuroscience including fMRI and ERP, Professor Chen further located the precise site in the brain corresponding to each phase and the brainwave types, making his theory of humor one that is more complete as well as supported by neurological evidence.

Humor Theory for Autistic Individuals

Professor Chen also developed a program for enhancing one's sense of humor by integrating cognition, emotion, motivation and behavior, and found that the program helped improve the sense of humor in both students and teachers. Furthermore, he applied his humor theory to those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), using rigorous experiments to overturn, for the first time, the bias that autistic individuals are incapable of understanding and expressing any type of humor. What he found was that autistic individuals merely lack the ability to understand and employ two types of humor: incongruity-resolution humor and affiliative humor. This discovery not only helped scholars better understand the causes of ASD, but also pointed out the right direction for helping students with ASD develop a sense of humor and social skills.

Enhancing Creativity and Benefiting Disadvantaged Groups

Using state-of-the-art eye tracker technology in his experiments, Professor Chen established the dual-process model for creative problem-solving called "fixedness averting—representation change", in addition to developing a series of test tools for students in Taiwan that are reliable and valid for measuring divergent thinking, insight thinking and remote association. Professor Chen was also the first to discover through careful research that

new immigrant students, despite being disadvantaged in terms of their socio-economic position, life adjustment and academic performance, are consistently superior in terms of creative expression. He further proved that this resulted from the Medici Effect, where diversity and multiculturalism contribute to enhanced creativity. His work contributes to understanding the nature of creativity and how to help students become more creative.

Three phases of Humor Process

Humor Process	Brain Region	EEG
Incongruity	MTG, MFG IFG, SFG, IPL	N400 (right central)
Resolution	vmPFC, Amg, PHG	P600 (left frontal)
Elaboration		LPP (left frontal)



▲ Creativity test in the Lab



▲ Author, Dr. Aja Huang with his wife, Erica

NTNU: The Cradle of AlphaGo

■ | Aja Huang
Chief Engineer of Google DeepMind
Alumnus of Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering



In March 2016, the computer Go program AlphaGo developed by the Google DeepMind team beat Lee Sedol—a 9 dan professional in Go and the world's number one Go player of the past decade—by four games to one in Seoul, South Korea. The research paper on AlphaGo, of which I was one of the two lead authors, was published in the top science journal *Nature*. Behind the success of AlphaGo is a team that includes experts on three main technologies: deep learning, reinforcement learning, and tree search. I feel deeply honored to be a member of this team, and to have participated in an important step forward for artificial intelligence (AI).

This match means more than a computer outsmarting a human brain. Rather, it represents a group of outstanding and hardworking scientists and engineers coming together to defeat the world Go champion. The implications of this win are even more profound than Deep Blue's victory over world chess champion Garry Kasparov in 1997. This is not only because Go is much more difficult than chess, but also because Deep Blue gained most of its strength from specialized, supercomputer-level hardware, whereas AlphaGo is a self-learning AI program whose core techniques can be applied to other fields such as medicine and business. This is why AlphaGo continues to make waves around the world, raising interest in AI and Go.



▲ The cradle of Dr. Aja Huang, Department of CSIB of NTNU

Laying a Solid Foundation at NTNU

I graduated from the inaugural class of the Graduate Institute of Computer Science and Information Engineering at NTNU, and remain deeply grateful for the nurturing that I received from my alma mater during my master's and doctoral studies. In addition to the solid foundational training I acquired through the many classes offered by the department, I was also positively influenced in my academic research by many professors who were both mentors and friends, especially professors Shun-shii Lin, Berlin Chen, and Gwan-hwan Hwang.

I remember that when I was a Ph.D. student at NTNU, my status on MSN Messenger was “roaming freely in the garden of research, soaring high in the sanctuary of scholarship.” With funding from National Science Council projects and Professor Lin's guidance and support, I had many opportunities to participate in the Computer Olympiad as well as academic conferences abroad,

where I had many occasions to meet and exchange ideas with foreign researchers. At a contest in Italy in 2007, I made the acquaintance of Professor Rémi Coulom, who would later become my joint advisor. Rémi was at that time widely recognized as the leading scholar in the field of computer Go. Under his patient guidance, we together developed the Go program Erica, which won the gold medal for the 19 x 19 Go tournament in the 2010 Computer Olympiad. Developing Erica was an invaluable experience, and it laid the groundwork that would prove crucial in the development of AlphaGo.

After graduating from the doctoral program at NTNU, I went to Canada for a year of post-doctoral research, then entered the British company DeepMind to work as a researcher. These experiences dramatically broadened my knowledge and horizon, and I would like to share some thoughts and insights I gained through this process.



▲ Author Dr. Aja Huang with his mentoring teacher Mr. Remi attend to the USE Cup



▲ Team of DeepMind Alpha Go



With Teamwork, Dare to Pursue a Dream

Learning English is crucial. When I first began working abroad, I was hard hit by the feeling that throughout my education, I had received little training in listening to and speaking English. The most important form of interpersonal communication is speech; children learn to speak before they learn to write. Growing up, I always did well on English reading and writing tests, but did poorly on listening and speaking, and this became a problem in my work. Because of this, I was determined to work hard on my English. I watched English news, especially CNN Student News, and watched movies in English

without Chinese captions, I read the Bible in English, filled with admiration for its lyrical style. I even collected books on English listening comprehension. By taking advantage of every opportunity I could find to speak English, I gradually lost my fear of making mistakes. In sum, the secret to learning English is practice, practice, and practice.

Reading widely never hurts either. I had a colleague from Australia who was not only well read on academic papers, but had also read many professional books, and was a very strong researcher. Once, when I asked him a question about machine learning, he immediately pointed

me to a certain chapter in a certain book. The breadth of his knowledge deeply impressed me. Under his influence, I have read a number of books in specialized fields since then, especially in mathematics. Math is not called "the Queen of science" for nothing. It has helped me strengthen my professional capabilities, as well as contributed greatly to the development of AlphaGo and my ability to cooperate effectively with team members. Reading widely now will help prevent any regret you may have in the future of having read too little, too late.

Work-life balance matters. Working abroad these past few years,

I have found that my colleagues generally value family life, vacation time, and personal space. Often a colleague will want to go bathe under the sun on a beach, without a laptop and with no way for anyone to reach them. When they come back from vacation, they work very efficiently, making the best case for "resting in order to go further." Work hard when it is time to work, and relax when it is time to rest; this contributes to a well-balanced body and mind.

Teamwork is powerful. The success of AlphaGo can to a large extent be attributed to extremely efficient teamwork. In the AlphaGo team, we have smooth

communication and sophisticated division of responsibility. During meetings, no one is afraid of raising questions or expressing their opinions, which often sparks wonderfully creative and surprising ideas.

Pursue your dream if you have the opportunity. Dreams are what make us great. If you have the chance to delve deeply into the field that interests you, go all in. I have been interested in Go since a young age. When I learned of computer Go in graduate school, I dreamed of one day creating a super-powerful Go program. I never imagined that this dream would be realized more than

ten years later at Google DeepMind. You create your own road by walking it, step by step. There is a Taiwanese saying that goes: "Success is 30% destiny and 70% hard work. There is no victory without hard work." How true.

It is my sincere hope that AlphaGo's success, and the story I have shared here of the personal journey that led to my role in creating it, will help inspire the students at NTNU and elsewhere who truly dare to dream.

Ten Years in the Making: NTNU Nurtures the Man Behind AlphaGo and Its Win Against the Champion of Go

■ | Shun-Shii Lin
Professor of Computer Science and Information Engineering



The moment that AlphaGo beat world Go champion Lee Sedol was not only amazing; it also represented a historic achievement for artificial intelligence. From the research into Go's ko fights, winning the gold medal in the Computer Olympiad, to AlphaGo beating the world Go champion, this is a journey with some important milestones that are worth recounting here.

“Ko” occupies an important place in Go, yet early computer Go programs mostly lacked the ability to handle “Ko Fights”. While studying for his master’s degree at NTNU’s Graduate Institute of Computer Science and Information Engineering, Aja Huang asked me to become his advisor, after which we began research on the difficult topic of Ko. Using game theory, we were able to find the best Ko fight strategy in the situation of “Real Ko”, which allows the computer Go program to calculate the move with the maximum benefit or least damage when handling a real Ko. This finding was recognized in 2003 by the Institute of Information & Computing Machinery’s Best Master’s Thesis Award. Of all the master’s students that I have advised at NTNU, ten have received awards for their theses, and many have reached outstanding achievements. I am pleased to say that Aja is one of them.

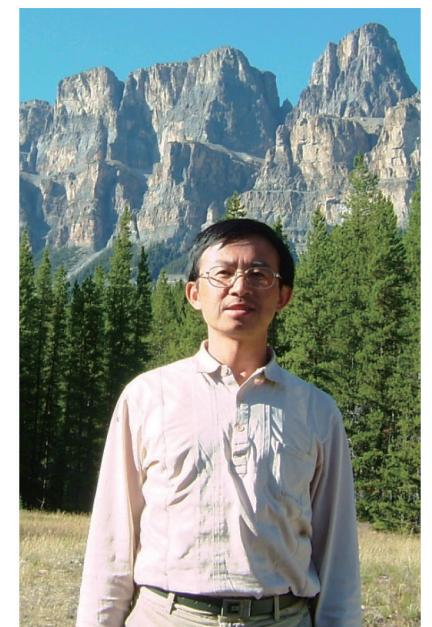
After receiving his master’s degree, Aja stayed on in my lab for a year as a research assistant for a National Science Council (now the Ministry of Science and Technology)

project. In 2004 he was accepted to the doctoral program of our Institute, and I again had the pleasure of advising him. By my invitation, in 2009 Professor Rémi Coulom from France’s Lille 3 University graciously agreed to become a joint advisor for Aja’s research. Together, we spared no effort in helping him develop his computer Go program.

In 2011, Aja, Professor Coulom and I put forth new heuristic algorithms for the Monte Carlo Tree Search, successfully applying simulation balancing technology to the realm of computer Go, in addition to proposing various methods for time control. All of the experiments were carried out in “Erica”, the Go program developed by Aja. And it was thanks to these heuristic algorithms and experiment results that Erica was able to beat the famed Japanese Go program “Zen”, which had dominated the field for years, winning the gold medal for the 19×19 Go tournament in the 2010 Computer Olympiad in Japan. As of the end of 2015, I have mentored NTNU students to win a total of 17 gold medals in computer game tournaments in Taiwan and abroad. Aja was one of them, and for this achievement he received the Doctoral Dissertation Award from the Taiwan Computer Game Association in 2012. Of the five doctoral students that I have advised at NTNU, he is one of three that have been recognized for their Ph.D. dissertations.

In the time that I have known him, Aja has proven himself to be a devoted student, willing to

learn the various software and hardware technologies taught by his professors, and not one to shy away from a challenge. His outstanding research work during his ten years at NTNU led him to be recruited by the DeepMind team in 2012. Technologies such as the Monte Carlo Tree Search and “Pattern Weights Training”, which he developed at NTNU, are still used in AlphaGo, for which he continues to serve as chief program designer. I am pleased that in this ten-year journey, NTNU created, quite serendipitously, a road that led to the birth of AlphaGo and ultimately its win over world Go champion Lee Sedol. I give my heartfelt thanks to all the professors who have advised Aja along the way. It is through their selfless devotion of time and effort that we have reached this milestone.



▲ The author at the Canadian Rocky Mountains

Responsibility for Educational Excellence: Students



Why did the University of British Columbia Implement the Academic Leadership Development Program?

■ | **Anna M. Kindler**
Visiting Chair Professor from University of British Columbia

National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) and the University of British Columbia (UBC) recently signed the UBC-NTNU International Cooperation Agreement, with the aim of jointly planning and holding a series of activities under the Academic Leadership Development Program (ALDP) for academic and administrative leaders at the

university. The first project will be carried out through the consensus-building camp for newly appointed department and graduate school heads, with the hope of promoting this mode of cooperation to other local universities and those in other Asian countries.

Visiting Chair Professor Anna Kindler formerly served as Vice Provost Academic and

Senior Advisor to the Provost at UBC, and has rich experience in developing and supporting academic leadership. Professor Kindler has given many engaging talks to share her experience at the “University’s Leadership Experience Forum.” Subsequently, she has shared with us the following article describing UBC’s experience with the development and implementation of its ALDP.

Turning Crisis into Chance: Identify the Problem

How do academics become academic leaders? Most academic leaders in universities around the world are drawn from the community of scholars: they are experienced, respected researchers and teachers who have displayed interest or have been persuaded to take on formal management and administrative responsibilities within the academia. With very few exceptions, academic leaders take on their new jobs with no educational background or any training in leadership and it usually does not take long for them to realize that the knowledge, experience and skill sets that they have acquired over the course of their academic lives come short of what is required to effectively lead and manage an academic unit. In the professorial roles, academics do not need to be routinely concerned with the financial health of their departments or faculties; they do not need to know all the university policies that bear

on the functioning of their units; they are free to express at meetings their opinions and views without the need to seek a productive consensus; they can focus on building their own careers and scholarly reputations without concerning themselves about professional lives of others; they have the luxury to focus on the courses which they directly teach without the need to understand how these courses and programs interact within the broader landscape of the educational offerings of the department, faculty or university.

This reality dramatically changes with the assumption of leadership responsibilities – not only because of the new duties but also because of the individual’s changed positioning within the peer group. I have long referred to this phenomenon as becoming “them” as opposed to being “us” – a changed perception of the relational dynamics shared by the new leader’s

colleagues that comes with the power (assumed or real) embedded in the leadership role. Having experienced this transformation in my own professional life and having witnessed it in the lives of colleagues who have also embarked on the leadership journey, I can confidently assert that this transition is challenging at best and profoundly frustrating at worst. Learning from mistakes can be an effective strategy, but in the context of mistakes committed by academic leaders it can come at a significant cost to the individual, his or her peers and the institution as a whole. Leaders who are unprepared for and feel lost in their roles risk not only underperforming relative to their ability to lead but can also make decisions, create conflicts and damage university reputation not because of malevolence or negligence but out of ignorance that cannot be compensated for by charisma and excellence in scholarship.

Development of Academic Leadership: A UBC Experience

When I joined the Provost Office at UBC in 2004, having previously served as a Dean overseas, I continued to be challenged by the circumstances and demands of my new position, with little help available to allow me to meaningfully fill the gaps in my leadership knowledge and skills. I was not alone in this struggle. Whenever I met a new Department Head or a new Dean, they all shared with me the sense of inadequacy and frustration that came from the lack of preparation and clear understanding of new responsibilities. We all knew we could do better, but we did not know how to reach this potential. Two years later, in collaboration with

the Associate Vice President Human Resources team we embarked on the project of founding an in-house program that would provide the much needed support for UBC academic leaders. In consultation with the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (later transformed into CTLT – Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology), we identified external consultants: Leading by Design group, to help us develop a program unique to our needs. We decided to focus the program on the needs of Department Heads, given their critical, on-the-ground leadership roles. Over the years, informed by the feedback

provided by the program participants, in partnership with the UBC Faculty Relations and with support of a broad-based Advisory Committee, we have worked to refine the program to arrive at a model that continues to evolve to optimize the value of the program to our academic leaders. The Academic Leadership Development Program (ALDP) has now been serving our leadership development needs for almost a decade and has been increasingly praised – by the participants, as well as by external reviewers – for making important, tangible contributions to the university and to the success and satisfaction of academic leaders.

Implementing the Academic Leadership Development Program

The program is focused on accomplishing the following four broad goals: clarifying the roles and responsibilities of Department Heads; enhancing their capacity to lead by developing relevant knowledge, skills, and leadership strategies and identifying sources of meaningful support; enhancing job satisfaction of academic leaders; and building a supportive community of practice. The program structure and components have significantly evolved over time to include, in the current program iteration, a “boot camp” at the beginning of the academic year, followed by theme-based workshops, studio sessions,

and the provision of on-line learning modules, spread over the period of eight months. The participants are welcome to attend all of the program events, but, in practice, Heads tend to select from the repertoire of offering those that they find most relevant to their contexts and specific needs. This is especially true for the studio sessions, designed around themes suggested each year by the Heads, which create opportunities for them to bring their individual issues or challenges that they grapple with to the sessions and have an opportunity to consider practical solutions with support of other Heads and the studio facilitators. Peer mentoring, coaching and appreciative inquiry constitute important aspects of the program and have become increasingly explored and valued by the Heads. In particular, coaching which was optional and initially offered to just a small fraction of the program participants is now available to all Heads enrolled in ALDP.

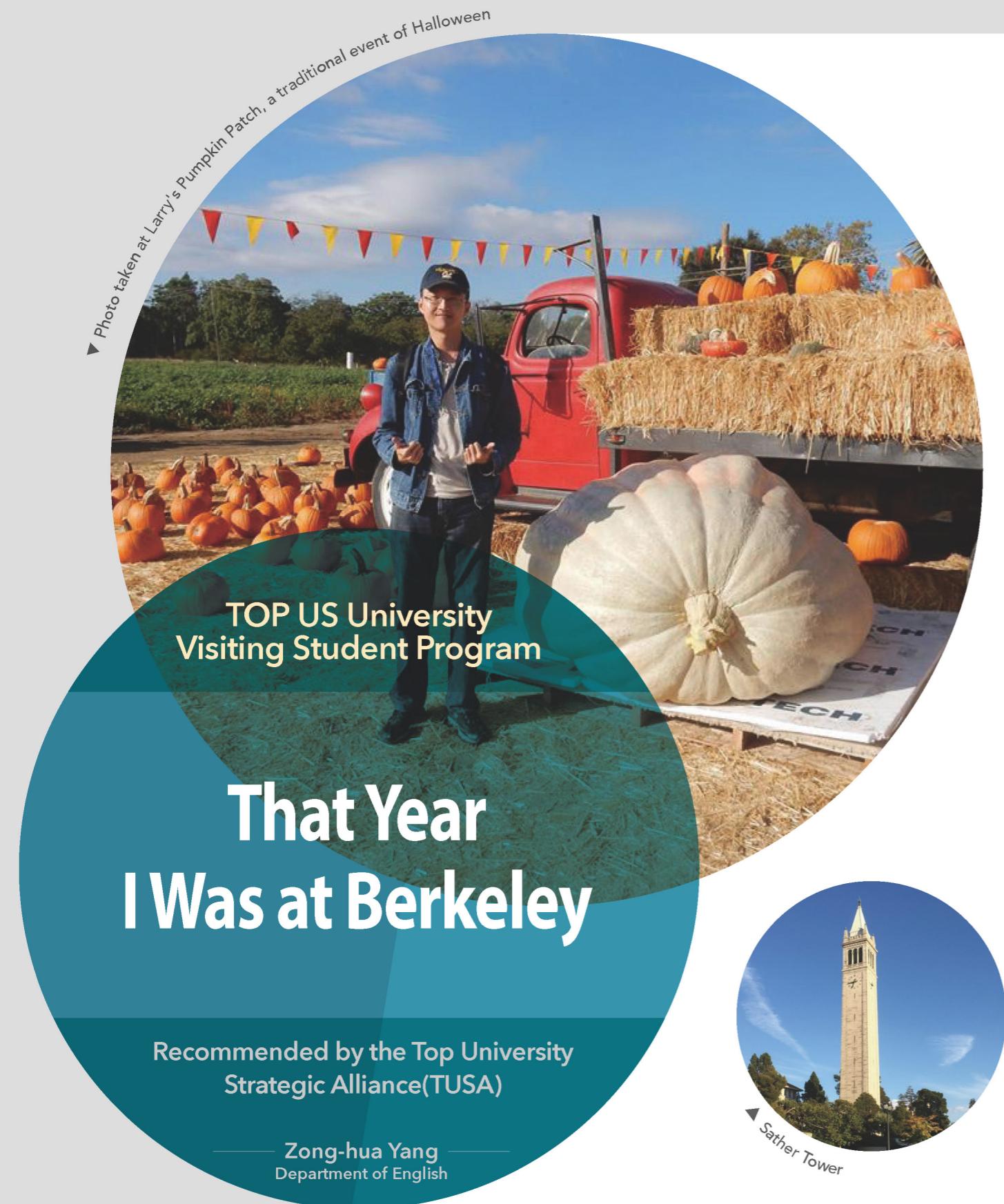
Although the “boot camp’s” general focus has remained fairly stable over the years, its format and specific activities as well as topics for the workshops and studios has been in flux. This organic, changing nature of the program has been facilitated by the changes in the management structure of the ALDP which now includes, in addition to the Program Director, an Academic Director: a past program participant and experienced, highly successful former

Department Head. Together they engage with the program planning and implementation team; closely monitor all program components as they are being delivered; remain in communication with the program participants and introduce the needed changes while the program is still in progress, to ensure that it serves participants as well as it can.

One of the most valuable outcomes of the program is the leadership community that it has generated. In the past, Department Heads rarely interacted – and those from different Faculties often did not even know each other. The ALDP has provided a catalyst for them to become engaged, supportive peers; to expand the cohort of knowledgeable colleagues to whom Heads can turn for advice even well after the program has ended. Many Heads who participated in the program in the past also make themselves now available to contribute to the ALDP as presenters, studio facilitators or mentors. This further reinforces the notion that over the past decade we have moved from a void in leadership support to a growing culture where academic leadership is no longer seen just as a task that someone has to fulfill within the institution – but rather as a responsibility that is valued by the university community and a role that can be a source of profound satisfaction and meaningful achievement.



◀ Group photo after the University of British Columbia and National Taiwan Normal University cooperation agreement signing ceremony



TOP US University Visiting Student Program

That Year I Was at Berkeley

Recommended by the Top University Strategic Alliance(TUSA)

Zong-hua Yang
Department of English



▼ Sather Tower

It all began three years ago.

I have been studying English since college and all the way up to PhD program, but I never had the chance to study at an English speaking country. Every time I heard teachers or classmates talking about their fruitful and surprise-packed study abroad experience, it further fueled my aspiration and curiosity about living overseas. As such, I began paying attention to all sorts of information about short-term study abroad programs, and was blessed with the opportunity to study at San Francisco State University (SFSU) as

an exchange student nominated by NTNU for the fall semester 2014.

In early December 2014 while I was still in San Francisco, I received a forwarded email from our department TA at NTNU regarding a one-year study abroad program at UC Berkeley for PhD students from TUSA. Without any hesitation, I immediately decided to apply for the program. Having visited the UC Berkeley library during my stay at San Francisco, I knew it was a top ranked library in the US. However, without a Berkeley issued student ID, I was unable to access its major

Persistence Rewarded with a Dream Come True

It was quite a rush for me to get all the documents prepared for the application. I didn't learn about this program until early December and paper copies of all the application materials had to be submitted by the end of December. As I was still in San Francisco at the time, I had to get the application package ready a few days before the deadline closed and asked my friend in Taiwan to print and send in the application for me. Fortunately, I already had some readily available documents from my previous application for the SFSU-NTNU exchange program, such as my NTNU transcript, TOEFL score report, autobiography, etc. Nevertheless, I still had to prepare

for many other documents, of which the 10-page research proposal was the most time-consuming. While drafting my research proposal, I rethought about the direction of my PhD thesis. In the meantime, I also checked out academic programs, faculty background and publications at Berkeley that were related to my studies.

Because I enrolled in 4 courses totaling 12 credits (pursuant to the terms of the student exchange agreement) at SFSU, I was preoccupied with finals and reports since early December, and did not have time to write my proposal until mid-December. Knowing that I was going to apply to study at

collection and electronic database during my visit. By participating in the Berkeley-TUSA program, I knew I would be able to tap the academic resources of Berkeley, and gain an in-depth understanding about how the university built its prestigious reputation as a premier US university through its academic system. Additionally, albeit less importantly, my fond memories of San Francisco, including the weather, the friends I've met, and the rather handsome scholarship the program offers also played a part in my decision to apply.

Berkeley through the program, my housemates (4 were SFSU students) all cheered for me, hoping that my application would be successful so that I could reunite with them in California. Such international friendship further strengthened my drive to apply for the program. Therefore, as American students were getting ready for the winter break with Christmas celebration, I stayed home and made an all-out effort in writing the proposal. To be honest, I wasn't very confident about my application. As I did not have much time to prepare, I didn't have the opportunity to have my teachers or peers preview my proposal and provide feedbacks. Nor was I able to

get a professor recommendation from Berkeley (though it was not a required document). Perhaps because of my strong resolution and persistence, I received good news from NTNU, notifying me I had been admitted to the program. As such, blessed with the opportunity to return to the Bay Area, I embarked on a one-year visiting student program at Berkeley in the summer of 2015.

It All Began at the Institute of East Asian Studies

The point of contact and host of all visiting students and scholars from Taiwan at UC Berkeley, the Institute of East Asian Studies is an excellent environment for studying where all visiting scholars and students are provided with desks and chairs for their own use, as well as access to kitchen facility and photocopiers. Everyone with a sensor card can access the facilities 24-7

UC Berkeley has an impressive book collection and electronic data. Each department/graduate institute will assign a dedicated librarian to provide advisory services to users in search of research materials. Interlibrary loan service is also available free of charge. You can check out books from other universities online, and collect them at Berkeley's main library. The interlibrary service scope covers nearly the entire country. Sometimes you can even check out extinct books for free through the system.



▲ Doe Memorial Library

▼ Author at the Larry's Pumpkin Patch



A Multicultural and Liberal Education Environment

Teachers at UC Berkeley attach great emphasis to student participation in class. Due to the large number of students from around the world and from different ethnic-cultural backgrounds, disagreements often arise during the course of classroom discussions, especially when immigration and ethnic issues are involved. It is also commonplace for students to ask questions or challenge professors. The class schedule was rather intense. Excluding the one-week study breaks both before the midterms and the finals, there are only 13 weeks in a semester. The weekly reading load is therefore pretty heavy.

For the fall semester 2015, I audited two classes—Rhetorical Theory - Biopolitics Reconsidered,

and Gender and Animal Studies in American Culture. Although the former is a Masters-level class, and I was just sitting in on the class, I was required to make presentations, participate in the classroom discussions or ask questions, just like everyone else. Because I had to read through the course materials before every class, I learned and benefited a lot from the course.

The latter was an undergraduate-level lecture class. Although there were about 70 students in the class, the professor adopted a student-centered approach. As a result, there were many Q&A sessions between the professor and students, and panel discussions. Students were also required to post their comments about the reading materials on their

blogs and share them with the class for feedbacks and discussions.

Instructors pay a lot of attention to how the students are doing in class, and how they think of the class. Student-teacher interaction and communication are also important aspects of the learning/teaching process. Most professors would make an effort to remember names of all the students in their class. In addition to classroom instruction, every professor would have office hours where they would be available to answer either class content-related or essay-related questions. Some professors even require students to use the office hours to discuss mid-term or final essays or reports.

Customized Curriculum Designs Based on Individual Differences

Berkeley's curriculum design shows that the university cares about individual differences among its students. In addition to customized curriculums tailored to students' interests and needs, one-on-one instruction is also available.

For undergraduate programs, almost every department offers honors courses as electives for students aspired to engage in academic research. Students taking such classes are required to decide on a research topic under the guidance of an advisor, and write a 40- to 50-page thesis on the topic. They are also required to meet with the advisor

on a weekly basis to discuss the content of the thesis so as to develop solid research methodologies.

The university also offers scholarships for undergraduate students. A college student double majoring in English and History told me she could use a US\$5000 research scholarship the university offers to visit museums or buy books for her history studies. All she had to do in return is to submit a research thesis of 50 pages or more at the end of her research.

At the graduate-school level, one-on-one instruction is emphasized to a greater degree. For example, PhD

students in the Rhetoric Department and Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures have to pass their qualifications exams based on three reading lists. Each list has to be discussed with and supervised by a professor. With the professor's consent, the student can request for an independent study course to be offered for one-on-one instruction. The reading lists and materials to be covered in the class would be customized based on the student's research interest, content of the qualification exam, or the direction of his/her PhD thesis.

At Berkeley, the atmosphere of academic freedom can be observed through students' right to education. For instance, students have significant autonomy over their learning. Rules regarding majors and minors are also very flexible. Students can choose or change their majors/minors in the freshman year depending on their interests as they explore their academic aptitude in the first year, and they do not have to confirm their decision until their sophomore year.

Undergraduates at Berkeley can also create and run their own courses, known as Democratic Education at Cal (DeCal) and earn 1-3 credits toward graduation. Although mostly at the fundamental level, the DeCal course offerings encompass a wide variety of subjects,

such as magic classes, ecofeminism classes, and classes that teach you how to speak Taiwanese or play bridge, etc. Anyone who is able and willing to offer a class can apply to the curriculum committee (comprised of students) to open a class while professors only an advisory role. The intention of the long-established system was to create an environment where students can engage in intensive reading and discussions without having to worry about grade competition. To that end, DeCal courses are offered on a pass/no pass basis.

In addition, many interdisciplinary programs are also available at UC Berkeley. Such programs are jointly offered by professors from different departments (e.g. The Designated

Emphasis (DE) in Critical Theory), which shows a high-level of across-the-board of cooperation and coordination between different departments. Students are encouraged to take classes in subject areas outside of their majors. With contribution of students from various departments, classroom discussions can often spark different voices and fresh perspectives.

Naked events are commonplace in many well-known US universities, and Berkeley is no exception. The UC Berkeley naked run is held on a selected day during the week leading up to final exams where students would run naked through the main library.



▲ Sather Gate at UC Berkeley

Interactive Learning Through Tutor/Exchange Partner System

UC Berkeley places a great emphasis on students' writing ability, so that it has set up a dedicated writing center to offer talks or workshops on thesis writing, and on-one-one writing tutor service. Writing tutors are mostly American students in their senior years with whom you can book an appointment to discuss your final essays. During my spare time, I attended writing-related talks, and use the writing tutor service from which I improved my logics in writing and also learned some ways and techniques about coaching writing. Apart from writing, tutor service is

also available for some of the more difficult sources where seniors or graduate students would discuss with the tutees about the difficulties they face in learning or assignment contents.

The university also has language exchange programs in place, both in a group setting and via an exchange partner. Besides English, French and other languages are also available. The English class I attended was offered on two schedules, participated primarily by non-native English speakers. The class was hosted by an American student. We met for

an hour every week to discuss on a specific topic in English or undertake role-playing scenarios.

I also signed up for the language exchange partner program. My American language exchange partner and I would meet for an hour and a half every week to practice Chinese and English. Through these activities, I was able to gain more opportunities to practice English conversations, as well as engage in language and cultural exchange with American or other international students.

Striving for Excellence via Investing in Students

In my view, some of the reasons that make UC Berkeley a top university are its willingness to invest directly in students, and a helpful faculty that would spend time on students and offer one-on-one independent research classes. For writing or some of the more challenging courses, the university also takes the initiative to arrange free tutor services. What I saw there is a comprehensive system complete with the upstream, mid-stream and downstream academic training.

Part-time jobs on campus are often relevant to students' area of studies, such as students working as tutors as I have mentioned before. Also, the majority of PhD students

receive full or half scholarships/assistantship from the university on the condition they teach classes (mostly undergraduate courses related to their own areas of studies) in exchange of tuition waivers. That means PhD students would be able to accumulate some teaching experience relevant to their studies prior to graduation and the scholarship/assistantship they receive would allow them to focus on their research without having to find part-time jobs elsewhere to cover their expenses.

Furthermore, the university career center is very helpful in providing PhD students with academic market information and services, such as offering resume

editing/polishing services and inviting successful professionals with PhD degrees to share their career experiences.

During my sojourn at the San Francisco Bay Area, I enjoyed conversing with people. Most of the people I met were immigrants (to different degrees) with countless family stories to tell. Just like the protagonists in diaspora novels I read before, they all had their own ideas about America in terms of American dreams, self-identification, and cultural adaptation, etc. From these dialogues, I was always able to gain different cultural experiences and learn things I have never before learned in the books.

Life at UC Berkeley



In terms of campus climate, it is relatively dry and rather comfortable. Although without significant change in temperature throughout the year, daytime and night-time temperatures can differ greatly, like going through four seasons in a single day. The winter sun was especially warm, so much so you would forget winter even exists. However, the temperature would drop sharply after the sun sets, and a light jacket would be needed on a summer evening.

Multiculturalism is also reflected in the foods sold in the university neighborhood. As there is a big population of Asian students, Asian foods are pretty common. For example, Taiwanese-style bento boxes and breads are both available. Generally speaking, eating out would on average cost about US\$7-10 per meal, 2.5-3 times that in Taiwan. Dining in a restaurant would require an additional 15-20% tip. To save on daily expenses, I cook 3 meals a day most of the time. In my leisure time, I would also try out new recipes. Before I knew, cooking had become one of my interests.

In America, the so-called

“potluck” is a gathering activity to which everyone would bring along a dish to share with others. If you can bring your own dish, particularly your hometown specialty, it would be a good topic to add to your conversation.

Restaurants and accommodations north of the campus tend to be more expensive, while those on the south side are comparatively cheaper. Many students hence chose to live on the south side, myself included. My accommodation is about a 20-minute walk from the campus. There are more homeless people hanging out in the south side. On my way to school, I would pass by the People's Park, which is said to be the site of radical political activism in the 1960s. Now a sanctuary for the homeless, the park is often seen with tents and piles of things, but painted slogans on the toilet wall still bears traces of political movement in the past. Walking by the park one day, I saw a slogan sign under the street light saying “we just love living on the street.”

The Berkeley neighborhood is pretty safe overall, but you could run into weird people occasionally. One day I was walking home at

around midnight as usual, a car stopped beside me. One of the two young men in the car rolled down the window and said “excuse me!” I thought he was going to ask for directions, but the guy sitting closer to me shouted “Star Wars!” at me, immediately sprayed white powders at me, and then drove away. I was left alone on the side of the street with my face all covered with the white powder, and a spotty black backpack as if it had been bleached, under a street light blocked by a tree.

UC Berkeley is conveniently served by bus and subway transportation. A single bus ride, regardless of how far you travel, would cost a flat US\$2.1 on regional buses and US\$2.25 on San Francisco buses. UC Berkeley students can ride for free. Visiting scholars can buy a US\$34 monthly bus pass. As for subway, fares are charged by distance. A single trip from UC Berkeley to San Francisco would cost nearly US\$4.

Apart from formal academic conferences, there were all sorts of non-formal meetings and gatherings held on campus. Some were semi-academic, and some were purely

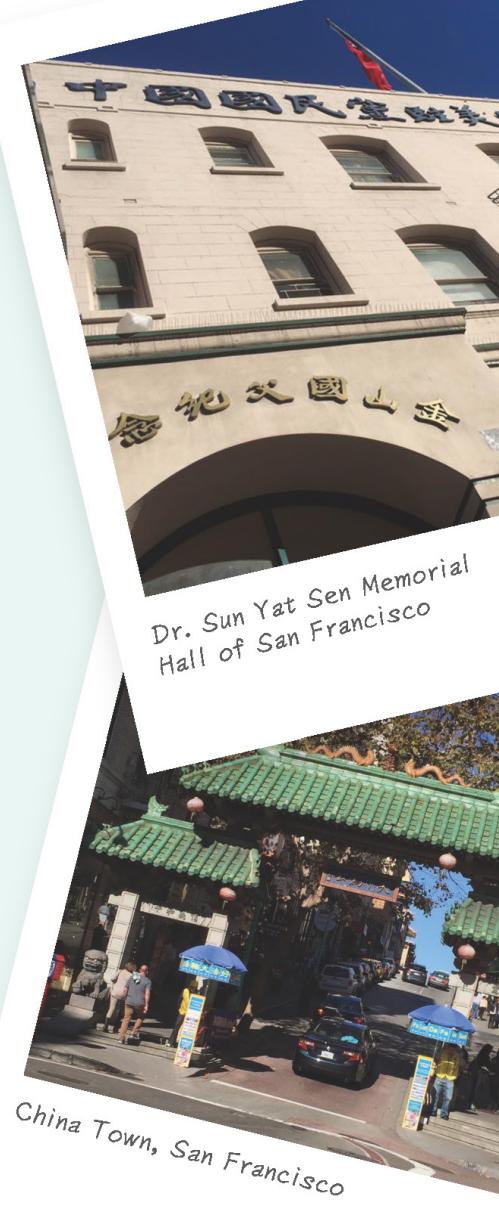


casual gatherings. These occasions have allowed scholars of different backgrounds to come together to meet each other for academic social networking. Take the Institute of East Asian Studies for example, besides organizing its own meal gatherings and visiting trips, the Institute also co-organizes events with the Center for Chinese Studies and Center for Japanese Studies.

Through such gatherings, there are many opportunities to come across visiting students or scholars from countries other than your own, and people would exchange thoughts about their life in America, academic experiences, as well as the pros and cons about the academic mechanism in their own countries.

From time to time, the university would also organize joint gatherings, such as for visiting scholars and students, or for visiting and exchange students, including pub night, mountain climbing, etc. During my stay in the US, I also participated in the bible study for international Christian students every Friday evening.

UC Berkeley is located in a quite small town ideal for academic



Student Exchange Program

THE
Germany Time

To Heidelberg Germany

Jung Lin
Department of English

▼ The author (middle) with the exchange student counselors, Kristina Koturic (left) and Dietlind Wünsche (right)

Front entry of the Department of English

The Gap in Time—Physically and Psychologically

In September 2015, I went to the University of Heidelberg on a student exchange program. There is a seven-hour time difference between Taiwan and Germany, with Taiwan being ahead of Germany. This means when my mother called me from Taiwan at 7am her time, it would be the time to say “good night” to me as it would be 12am midnight in Germany. This was my first taste of the time difference after I had just arrived in Germany, but the impact I felt from the time difference later extended beyond my initial understanding. I came to realize that the gap in time doesn't just lie in the physical time zones. A gap also seems to exist in the perception of time between Taiwanese and German cultures, and this realization really broadened my thinking.

Strangely and coincidentally enough, after observing how Germans think and behave, it seems to me Taiwanese people are rushing

through life in comparison, perhaps at a rate seven times faster. In Taiwan, we are always racing against time. We believe the faster we complete our undergraduate program, the better. And then the best scenario in life would be to get a graduate school admission offer immediately after four years of college, land a dream job before 25, and get married before 30. During the course of studies, we tend to expect ourselves to master a subject within the shortest time possible. Take language learning for example, we always strive to learn at a faster rate than others. Books with titles such as “Getting a TOEIC Gold Certificate in 10 days!”, “Learn Japanese in a Month,” etc. are commonly seen, and are sending the message that overnight success is not a myth here. Instead, it is something everyone “should” pursue. However, my experience in Germany told me otherwise.

When the winter semester was about to end in January 2016, I told my exchange counselor in Germany that I wanted to enroll in a one-month intensive German language program in March, and then take 20 hours of German per week in the following semester, which would mean having German classes from 8 am to 12 am every day from Monday to Friday. Puzzled by my plan, the counselor asked me, “how are you going to cope with your core modules?” I told her it wasn't a problem as I would keep all the core modules to the afternoon. But was my plan really going to be okay?

The reason I wanted such intensive training in German was because I was still much of a rookie in the language with an A2 proficiency level (about the equivalent of GEPT's elementary level). Mastering German was one of my goals for studying in Germany, which I defined as achieving the C1 level in the German proficiency test (roughly corresponds to the advanced level in GEPT). During my time in Germany, I always felt I wasn't picking up the language fast enough. Although I improved from the elementary to the intermediate level within half a year, I still had to take the second half of the intermediate German course scheduled for the semester that followed. That means it would take me a whole year to go from elementary to intermediate. If I had been learning German in Taiwan, the slow progress would have



▲ The red and white building at front was once a student prison, but now it turns into a museum

been somewhat excusable, but since I was studying in a German-speaking environment, people back home would surely laugh at me if I failed to do better than the intermediate level.

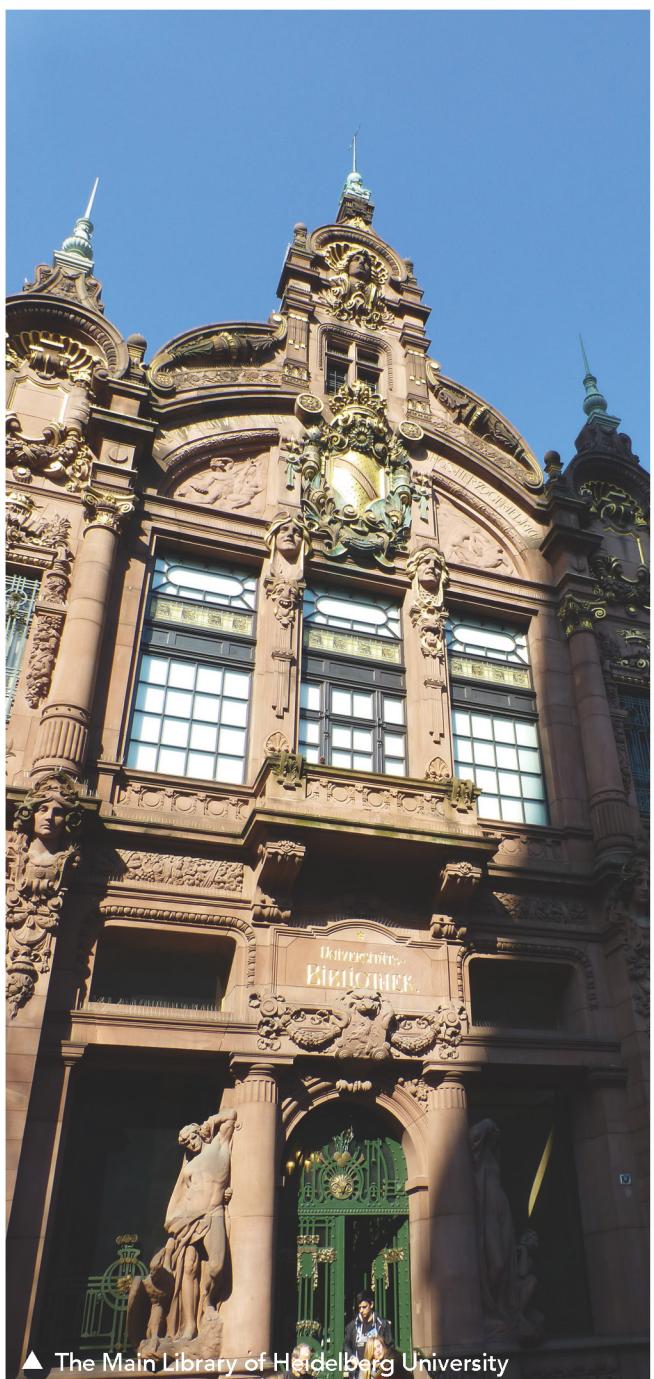
So I went to my counselor in the hope that she would let me enroll in the intensive program after hearing what I had to say so that I can boost my German proficiency to the highest level possible.

My communication efforts were to no avail. My counselor wasn't convinced by my plan. She said she could see my determination, but was doubtful such a plan would lead to solid learning. She asked me, "if you devote so much of your time to German classes every day, how will you have the time to review or preview the materials from other courses? Assignments and conversation exercises also take time." She recommended that I make a bigger effort to explore other classes the University of Heidelberg offered during my stay in Germany, rather than limiting myself to the language center classrooms.

The counselor's suggestions shed a light on me. While literature, writing and movie courses were all available to me at the Department of German, I was obsessing over my German proficiency level and turned a blind eye to such options. What I had been pursuing was

the language skill, rather than the deeper knowledge and cultural understanding of the German-speaking world. All I cared about was to attain my goal in the shortest possible time, instead of building a solid foundation for my German. How could this be right?

On a second thought, it just didn't seem right. It dawned on me that the whole idea about pursuing immediate success was actually a reflection of vanity. All my attention was focused on getting the piece of paper noting I had achieved the advanced level, and not on truly mastering the language. Was this really what I had envisioned for myself? The counselor told me I still had plenty of time to think it over before the new semester starts in mid-April. Nonetheless, I already had a clear answer in my mind. At the end, I took the counselor's advice and decided to finish off what I came here to do. I selected the research seminar courses I had always wanted to take. As for my German, building a solid foundation became the objective of my day-to-day training and speedy progress was no longer a priority. I figured it is worth taking the time to build a profound base, and hopefully German can be deeply embossed in my brain.



Different Perceptions of Time; Solid Foundation

According to my observation during my studies in Germany, solid training has been a consistent objective throughout the curriculum design in Germany. Unlike in Taiwan, the amount of time required to learn a subject is not a major concern for German students. Many of the seminar courses I took at the Department of English there did not have finals. I recall my semantics professor apologizing to us in a class for not being able to give us a final as promised because his supervisor insisted on having of hand in an essay. I wasn't exactly thrilled by the news. As a matter of fact, it made me all the more worried. Composing an essay was far more difficult than taking an exam. Not only do you have to digest what have been taught in the class, you also have to demonstrate the additional knowledge you have acquired yourself, and of course this would take more time to prepare.

Although college students in Germany seem to have a lot of vacation time, their leisure time is actually quite limited. Most students will use their vacation time to compose their final essays. For that reason, you would see many hardworking students battling with all sorts of literatures, books and texts in the library during the winter break. This explains why the library remains open almost 24 hours a day in March (winter vacation time). Imagine how many students would practically live in the library at this time.

In order to get the proper education and training, Germans are often willing to invest the time it requires. A German friend I met at the University of Heidelberg once

came to me for gift ideas as her roommate was about to go home to reapply for a different school. The news was very much to my surprise. In my mind, the University of Heidelberg was already among the best of the best with people fighting to get in. Why would someone who already got in choose to quit?

The story behind her decision was even more surprising. Seeing the objectives of the training the University was offering were different from what she was looking for as an aspired special education teacher, she decided to apply for vocational schools where she believes more internship opportunities will be available to better prepare her for the job.

After my initial shock subsided, the sincere and genuine reason she had put me to shame. I was surprised that she chose a vocational school over a university. Frankly speaking,

if a student in Taiwan was to make such a decision, it would require a tremendous amount of courage. In a culture dictated by credentialism, we are often too obsessed with scores. We choose which university to attend based on the score requirement for admission and give little thought about whether the program is a good fit for us, or how it can help us in the future. Sometimes even after we have found out the program we are enrolled in is really not working for us, we still choose to complete the program because we don't want to waste extra time in school. If we still fail to find minors, programs or clubs that we are interested in, we might feel lost. This is because we tend to think we can't afford to lose, and we

My Time in Germany vs. Return to Taiwan

Personally, I still think time is an important factor while pursuing solid training. During the half year I was on exchange in the University of Heidelberg, I discovered that doing things right and doing them well in the limited time is more of my style. Although the ideal would require more time, it will allow me to stay true to myself. After returning to Taiwan, I am physically on Taiwan time, but perhaps I will keep my psychological clock on Germany time.



▼ Author (first right) and his Indonesian friends in front of Candi Prambanan

**Government
Sponsorship for Excellent
Student to Study Abroad Program**

A Sojourn of Fantasy at Universitas Indonesia

Donny Lin
Department of East Asian Studies

▼ Mosque in Indonesia

Up until now, my mind is still somewhat preoccupied with everything that had happened in Indonesia.

I embarked on a study trip to Indonesia, intending to collect literature for my masters dissertation, but ended up falling in love with the country. I found surprises and pleasures in the little things in the local daily life from the five-time-a-day Azan (call to prayer) broadcasted from mosques, the ubiquitous lesehans (traditional places to eat) where you can hang out with friends till late night, the various modes of public transportation that takes time to figure out, and the wide variety of hijabs women wear on their heads. These ordinary things in the eyes of the locals were all elements that spiced up my everyday life in Indonesia.

Although it was a hasty decision, I was glad I was able to study at Universitas Indonesia as a visiting student on the Excellent Student to Study Abroad Program- sponsored by the Ministry of Education and through the help of the Office of International Affairs, NTNU, and to collect local literature for my dissertation at the same time.

Upon learning the news that I was going to Indonesia, my friends and family were rather confused about my decision, due largely to the stereotypical impression they had received from media coverage.

As the research literature I needed could only be obtained locally, I departed for Universitas Indonesia before its international office confirmed relevant arrangements to avoid missing the commencement of a new semester.

Taking a taxi from the airport, I traveled through the Indonesian capital of Jakarta to the university's Kota Depok campus while the scenery gradually shifted from skyscrapers-crowded cityscape alongside wide roads to bungalows dotted country roads. Such geographical shift already left a surprising impact on me, and yet there was more to come. I had to say I really picked the "perfect" timing. I arrived at the campus thinking my accommodation would be ready, but only to find out the university had

not arranged a room for me, and the dormitory superintendent was already off the duty for the day. At that moment, a prospect dawned on me—I may not have a place to sleep for the night.

Even more despairingly, I found out that hotels nearby were all booked up because the university graduation ceremony was to be held the next day. Fortunately, a hotel staff member was kind enough to allow me access to the hotel WiFi so I could search for vacant rooms in Jakarta city. Meanwhile, I received an email from my study partner which the university had previously arranged with contact information so I was able to enquire about accommodation information by phone. With the study partner's assistance, I eventually checked into a hotel at midnight.



▲ Street view at Indonesia's Kota Depok

Unexpected, Amazingly Beautiful Scenery on Campus

Since I arrived two weeks later than other international students, I missed the international student registration day. Luckily, with the help of my study partner, I was able to expedite the processes of campus-level registration. Yes, you read me right! Aside from registering with the university, I also had to complete the college- and department-level registration procedures respectively. However, since the graduation ceremony and the Friday prayer congregation (Salat Jumat) concurred on this day, the administration team only worked half-day. That means I had to complete the remainder of the registration process in the following week after school started, on top of attending classes and selecting courses.

I felt like a country bumpkin the first time I stepped into the Universitas Indonesia. The university sits atop an expansive land plot of which three fourths are forests with eight lakes scattered on campus. The most classic scene on campus is the modern library building looking across a lake to the traditional-styled administration building in distance. Founded in 1851, Universitas

Indonesia enjoys the longest history and prestigious reputation among higher education institutions in the country. In addition to the main campus in Kota Depok, the university also has a campus located in downtown Jakarta, and one in Salemba that is the home to the university's medical school. Being able to study in such a comfortable campus environment was really beyond my expectation.

First week into the new semester, as per the recommendation of the secretary of the college and a professor in the department, I decided to take two courses in the international undergraduate program at the Department of Communication—Introduction to Politics and Introduction to Sociology. Although my classmates were all freshman in college (Mahasiswa Baru, MABA), their English ability generally surpassed that of Taiwanese students of the same age. Despite my lack of understanding of some terms commonly used in the local culture, I was able to communicate in English with my teachers and classmates in class.



▲ View of the administration building from the library at Universitas Indonesia

Vibrant Campus Community Shaped by Well-rounded Students

The Introduction to Politics course was taught by the Dean of Academic Affairs of the college. Aside from lectures about the basic theory and concepts of politics, the instructor also engaged students with discussions, using examples from the Indonesian politics to accelerate students' understanding and application of the theory. Prior to the week before the finals, the instructor specifically asked me to present on Taiwan's political system and diplomatic relationship in order to give my fellow classmates an overview of Taiwan in the contexts of historical development, political status quo, relationship with China, and future outlook.

Compared to politics, sociology was a relatively new subject for me, but offered quite a few important perspectives to the research of my dissertation. In class, the instructor guided students to discuss about local issues, and combined relevant theories into the discussions. For example, when introducing the topic

of "Mass Hysteria", the instructor quoted the example of Indonesian ballad singer Iwan Fals causing turmoil during his concert at the Universitas Indonesia. Even so, the bombardments of weekly quizzes comprising blank filling questions still made the course impossible to like.

As admission to the Universitas Indonesia is highly selective, those who managed to land an offer from the university are cream of the crop from around the country. Being a well-rounded player is a necessary admission criterion. Therefore, apart from devoting time to studying, Universitas Indonesia students are also enthusiastic about extracurricular activities. The university offers an extensive array of activities on a weekly basis, both sports-oriented and non-sports-oriented, such as music concerts, IT invention exhibition, career fair, just to name a few. Among such events, some are organized by the university or colleges, and some by students.

As part of its efforts to facilitate

the interaction between international and local students, the university has set up the study partner system. In addition, it also organizes field trips, community services and cooking events for international students.

Because I arrived in Indonesia later than other international students, and there was only one international student from France in the two classes I took, I didn't hang out with international students in groups like others did. Instead, I had more interaction with local Indonesian students. I also enjoyed wandering around by myself. I made day trips to explore various destinations in the greater Jakarta (Jabodetabek) region every one or two days by public transportation as much as possible, often visiting places off the beaten path in a hope to get a glimpse of the local life. My habit of wandering around probably started to develop when a friend invited me to Jakarta just 3 days after my arrival at Indonesia, and was enhanced by my sufficient leisure time.

Life Experience Mixed with Peculiar, Frustrating, Dangerous Moments

There were many benefits to wandering around by myself. My time was flexible and I could explore the city freely, but I did run into quite a few episodes of peculiar, frustrating or dangerous incidents. Being approached by passersby was the most common; some were asking for directions, some were touting their products, some just wanted someone to talk to, and some were offering "special" services.

My frustration mostly stemmed from transportation experiences. I've been in situations where a van (angkot) broke down and I had to transfer to another vehicle. I've seen a driver and a passenger in a heated argument. I was once driven off the train due to disrupted service for the entire line. The most unbelievable experience was that I was overcharged by the same taxi driver three times, and had to ask a

friend to report the driver to the taxi company to settle the dispute.

As for the dangerous experiences, once I almost fell off a van as I was jumping off the vehicle before it came to a full stop, and I saw a few middle-aged and elder ladies snickering at me. There were several times I was walking alone on streets with no other pedestrians but only motorcyclists. I often got lost, and I have also been robbed of my backpack.

Despite several dangerous incidents, exploring by myself still brought me much good. For instance, when I got lost, I had to ask for directions in Indonesian. Apart from practicing my speaking, I may perhaps meet a new local friend. When walking from the city center to the suburbs, I observed the disparity between the rich and the poor, and felt the hospitality of the locals.

Traveling on various means of public transportation, I lived the life of the locals.

All these adventures turned me away from the stereotype I first arrived Indonesia with, and I accepted the country as it is. The more I explore, the more I am in love with the country. I even regretted that I didn't opt for a one-year study.

Still, travelling within the greater Jakarta area couldn't paint a full picture of Indonesia. In view of this, I decided to make good use of my time after school ended in Indonesia before I returned to Taiwan. A friend studying at Universitas Gadjah Mada invited me to visit Yogyakarta, so I did. I also made a special trip to Padang, Sumatra and to Balikpapan, Kalimantan, in a hope to see urban development in other Indonesian cities and experience difference local cultures.



Getting to Know Islamic Culture; Befriending Muslims

As expected, a new look of Padang took shape after the local government and residents worked hard to rebuild their earthquake-stricken homeland. No high-rises in sight, but the city was revamped to an increasingly orderly look, and equipped with a tsunami alert system and contingency mechanism for emergency evacuation. It was comforting to see that the city had come a long way since the catastrophic tsunami battered the city.

A visit to Balikpapan convinced me its reputation as Indonesia's most livable city was well deserved as it had set a good example of achieving a balance between economic development and the ecological environment. With its close proximity to the sea, easy access to the inland rainforest and well thought-out urban planning, it is indeed a city that would make you want to settle down!

Besides gaining a more in-depth look at the Indonesian culture and

life, the most significant influence the study trip had on me was a deeper understanding of the Muslim culture, which I was only able to get a glimpse of from books or news media before. Now that I've got to know my Muslim friends and spent time with them, I developed a better acceptance and higher respect for their religious doctrines and beliefs. I also met friends from Azerbaijan and Tunisia who shared their views about the conflicts between their religious teachings and the modern day values. I even fell in love with Islamic arts and "accidentally" bought a few Qurans, hanging decorations, tapestries and calligraphy paintings.

Compared to the US, Europe, Japan, Korea, etc., Indonesia is a less popular study abroad destination, but I was happy to have the opportunity to get to know the country, which I see as my starting point to a greater global vision. Some international friends once told me they had mixed

feelings about the "lack of orders" in Indonesia. I believe this is something inevitable for every developing country, and this is exactly what I love about Indonesia. The study trip not only bolstered the research foundation of my dissertation, but also deepened my understanding of Indonesia. Because of the bonds I built with the locals, I will continue to follow news and information about Indonesia in the future.

When considering further study or job prospect, Indonesia will remain my top pick, but if I could to go to developing countries in other Southeast Asian countries, South Asia, or Africa, that could also be the start of a new journey leading to a more diversified global perspective. I look forward to seeing more people embark on an adventurous life by studying or working in Indonesia, and enjoy the rich cultural and life experience it has to offer!



▲ Taman Sari



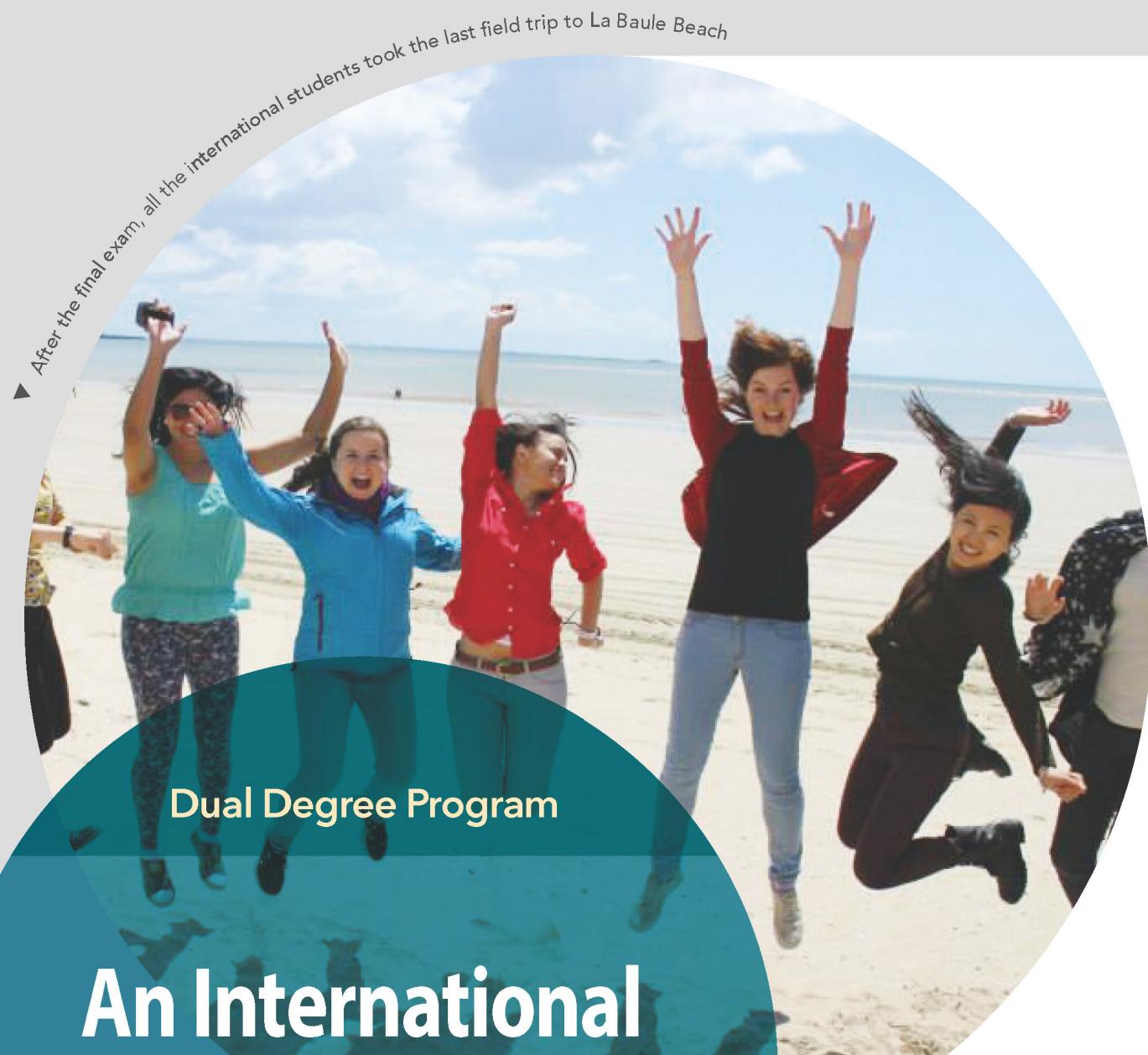
▲ Jembatan Siti Nurbaya



▲ View of the library from the administration building at Universitas Indonesia



▲ The small island across from Pantai Air Manis



An International Springboard

GIECT of NTNU & UFR ITBS of
Université D'Angers

Article by Peng-yu He
Graduate Institute of European
Cultures and Tourism

The Master's Dual Degree Program between Graduate Institute of European Cultures, and Tourism (GIECT), NTNU and UFR ITBS, Université d'Angers provides students with the opportunity to pursue a dual master's degree and internship in France, which attracts many applications from GIECT students every year.

Thanks to the dual degree program, Pin-yuan Chen and Yun-ko Shen, two ladies with distinct personalities both fulfilled their dreams of studying in France after being awarded the opportunity. In addition to the required courses for the dual degree program, Université d'Angers offers a free French-language training program for NTNU students to enhance their language proficiency. Upon completion of the 5-month program, students can then look for internships in France based on their fields of interests.



▲ Eiffel Tower in Paris

Understanding of Cultural Differences Breeds Empathy

In France, you have classmates from many different parts of the world, so each person has to learn to deal with the cultural and value differences. "Students usually get along very well in get-togethers, but it will be a different story when it comes to preparing for group reports. This is when you will begin to experience a series of culture shocks," said Yun-ko. For instance, the attitude to time may differ between different cultures. Students from some countries may think being a few minutes late is no big deal. However, students who observe the time will feel impatient or frustrated, thus creating an unpleasant atmosphere among the members of the team even before group discussion begins. As this time, the ability of the group convenor to defuse tension becomes important. She said, "Although I feel frustrated by some of the culture shocks when they occur, I learned that you have to put yourself in other people's shoes when you work with people from different cultures. You have to try to understand the cultural background of other people with empathy."

Because of the love of French wine, Yun-ko took a wine course as an elective, and has since then embarked on a journey of wine exploration. Her passion for wine also earned her an internship position at a Cognac giant after she obtained her dual degree and a long-term France visa.



▲ "In France, employers care more about how you deliver their products to customers, but not how fast you wrap up a sale," Yun-ko said



Knocking on the Door with Guts and Expertise

With the help of Director Yi-de Liu at GIECT, Yun-ko wrote a report on the wine market in Taiwan, analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of wine produced in the Loire Valley in Taiwan's consumer market and explaining why red wine is more popular with Asian people than white wine. Wowed by the contents of the report, the winery owner was pleased to offer her an internship position.

Language barrier was the greatest challenge during the internship. Although Yun-ko already spoke basic French, it was still challenging for her to use French to deal with complicated administrative procedures and business communication. And sometimes when answering phone calls from customers, she had to ask them to say it again, or even repeat the second time. The many properties of wines and jargons involved also didn't make things any easier. Yun-ko said with a smile, "Sometimes I don't even know what those words mean after I have translated them into Chinese."

"All I knew about brandy before was that it is a spirit. After coming to France, I learned that some brandies are distilled from grapes and then aged in a barrel, and thus carry a touch of oak barrels and a fruity hint. This has totally overturned her previous impression about the wine tasting culture. "Brandy, when enjoyed with a chocolate-flavored macaron will bring out a subtle hint of creme brulee," Yun-ko said with excitement.



▲ Yun-ko with her colleagues at the winery

I landed a new job in the second largest Cognac producer in the world, through the job search site in France. She gratefully said: "If not for the dual degree program at GIECT, maybe I wouldn't have come to France to study and discovered my passion about wine. Nor would I be pursuing further studies in France while working my favorite job. I am very grateful for the opportunity and assistance GIECT had provided to make all this possible.

After completing her internship at Domaine de Bablut, Yun-ko

Problem Solving Ability Developed in a Foreign Land

While studying in France, Pin-yuan Chen encountered situations she had never imagined before because of cultural differences. She noticed that Asians tend to be more group-oriented while Westerners are more inclined to individualistic thinking. For example, if a meeting is scheduled for the weekend for homework discussion, the French students often won't even show up. They would only appear during

normal school hours. Faced with this situation, there was just nothing could be done. "Maybe the French believe that weekends should be a personal leisure time, and not for meetings," she said. Compared to Asians who prefer planning ahead, Westerners prefer living at the moment. "Although different values could cause misunderstandings sometimes, more often than not, we learn to appreciate the diversity of customs

and cultures of other countries," said Pin-yuan.

Under the regulations of GIECT's dual degree program, in addition to completing the semester reports required by NTNU, and passing the required exams, students will also have to either submit a short thesis written in English, or complete an internship in France. Like Yun-ko, Pin-yuan also opted for the latter. Luckily enough, she

found a job she was very interested in at the Fragonard Perfume Museum established in 1962.

Though interning with Fragonard allowed her to immerse in the world of fragrance, the internship did not go as smoothly as expected. There were many things she had to handle on her own. "In Taiwan, it was very easy to ask people for advice, or to consult your parents for a decision, but in France you don't have that. You often have to make your own judgment and think clearly before you act. You also need to fight for your own rights. Being in such an environment, I quickly learned to think independently," she said.

A few days after the internship program had begun, Pin-yuan found out it was more like a training program for a new full-time employee. The department she was interning with did not see her as an intern, but was only paying her the salary of an intern. In the Asian mentality, this should still be an excellent internship opportunity, regardlessly. However, from the Westerners' point of view, there are big differences in the rights and obligations between interns and

A group of ten young women are posing together at a dinner table. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The table is filled with various dishes, including bowls of food and glasses of juice. The women are dressed in casual attire, and the setting appears to be a home. The background shows a wall with several framed pictures and a potted plant.

▲ Pin-yuan (first right) at a pot luck party with other international students

trainees. As such, Pin-yuan decided to fight for her rights. She plucked up her courage and approached her supervisor at Fragonard to negotiate for a short-term full-time position.

After multiple interviews, her supervisor finally agreed to transfer her to a full-time position, and asked an assistant to handle the transfer. During the course of interaction with the assistant, a misunderstanding arose due to the language barrier which led the assistant to believe Pin-yuan wanted to give up on the transfer, and therefore wouldn't process her transfer application. When Pin-yuan cried to her fellow

Eventually, Pin-yuan still managed to get the short-term



- ▲ The internship experience at Fragonard Perfum Museum is the best part of Pin-yuan's memory of France

position with full-time salary. She believes that the process of fighting for her own rights has taught her how to negotiate with the supervisor and to develop the problem solving ability. "I think such ability can only be stimulated when you are in a foreign environment. It was an unforgettable learning experience, one that would not have been possible without GIECT's dual degree program," Pin-yuan concluded.

Having completed the dual degree and internship program in Taiwan and France, Pin-yuan and Yun-ko are very thankful to the Office of International Affairs and GIECT for the scholarship and assistance they offered. They also very much appreciate GIECT Director, Prof. Yide Liu's encouragement and support. He paid special attention to the life of dual degree students in France, and never hesitated to offer his advice when the students faced difficulties, much like a loving father and brother. With his mental support being the biggest source of reassurance, the students are convinced NTNU is their most powerful backing.



CAMPUS

Hometown Dishes

■ Enkhbayar Tumurbaatar
Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development

I am Enkhbayar from Mongolia and I am now a graduate student at the International Human Resource Development Program at NTNU. I love watching movies, traveling and cooking. But I do not cook here in Taiwan because I live in the dormitory which does not have a real kitchen but just a simple one with only one small cooking heater.

My father is a really good cook. I like to cook with him because I don't like to do the prep work but he likes it.

Today I am going to teach you three Mongolian dishes which are really famous and delicious. They are Tsuivan, Huushuur and Niisel salad.



Tsuivan is a very famous dish in Mongolia. Everyone, including many visitors, enjoys Tsuivan in my country. Making Tsuivan is not easy to people who are making it for the first time.



Tsuivan

INGREDIENTS

1. All-purpose flour
2. Beef or mutton (pork and chicken is also ok)
3. Onion
4. Potato
5. Carrot
6. Bell pepper (red, green and yellow for more colorful dish)
7. Cucumber
8. Garlic
9. Salt
10. Water
11. You can add your favorite flavoring such as black pepper, soy sauce, etc. (amount of ingredients are based on serving sizes)



DIRECTIONS

First of all, we have to prepare dough. Tsuivan's dough looks like noodle, but actually it is not noodle. Let's call it "noodle" just for now. We hand-made this "noodle" one by one. Maybe it is difficult to people who cook Tsuivan first time.

1. Hand-made noodle

Make a dough as you normally do. Mix flour and warm water to create a pliable dough. Rest it for 10-15 minutes. You will get soft texture. Keep in mind that Tsuivan dough shouldn't be too hard. If so, it will be difficult to roll it into a sheet.

- Cut your dough into pieces and roll it into round and thin sheets
- Pour some vegetable oil in the center of sheet, spread oil all over the sheets
- Roll up the sheets, and prepare some boiled water to steam those dough rolls.
- Steam it for 15-20 minutes
- Cut the rolled sheets into small pieces like noodles (about 0.4 cm wide each).
- Now your Tsuivan noodle is ready.
- Congratulations, you have made Tsuivan noodle!

2. Prepare other ingredients

- Cut beef to small pieces
- Cut the vegetables into thin stripes

3. Time to cook

- Use big frying pan with lid
- Put some oil into the pan
- Stir fry onion, carrots, potato, and pepper together
- Put in salt and other seasonings
- Add in meat
- Stir fry with low heat for 5 minutes
- Add only small amount of water. Otherwise potato will be mashed.
- Cover it and cook for 5 minutes with medium heat.
- Add noodle on the top of the mixture, and cover it. (Attention: Do not take the lid off until it is done.)
- Cook it until being dry.
- Use fork and spatula to mix all the ingredients
- Decorate with cucumber slices and it's ready to serve!

"I spent 5 months in Mongolia with the Peace Corps and had Tsuivan as often as possible...I'm making it tonight for dinner! I love it so much!"

(Jillian)
"Tsuivan is like food from heaven. It's so great to know that there's other people who love it much as I do!"

(Jessica Brooks)

Huushuur

INGREDIENTS

For dough

- 1. All-purpose flour
- 2. A little bit of salt
- 3. Warm water

For filling and frying

- 1. 2 garlic cloves
- 2. 1 pound ground fatty mutton (you can use beef, chicken or pork)
- 3. 1 cup minced onion
- 4. 2 scallions, minced
- 5. 1/4 cup water
- 6. 6 to 8 cups vegetable oil



Huushuur is a fried meat pie which is very popular and delicious. Mongolians believe if we eat hot Huushuur during the spring time, it is very helpful to our health. It is a kind of traditional medical treatment of Mongolian.

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare

Mix flour and salt, then stir in warm water until the dough forms. Transfer to a floured platform and knead briefly. Dispense into 1 1/2-inch balls. Cover with an inverted large bowl at room temperature, let stand for 1 to 2 hours.

2. Prepare filling

Mince and mash garlic to a paste with 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, then vigorously stir together with mutton, onion, scallions, and water in a bowl.



3. Form and fry pies

- Preheat oven to 250°F.
- Roll out ball of dough into a 3- to 4-inch round sheet on a floured platform with a floured rolling pin. Put about 2 tablespoons of filling to one side on the round sheet, flattening filling slightly, and fold other half over it to form a half-moon. Press edges together to seal, forcing out air. Start at one end of curve, fold edge over in triangles (each fold should overlap previous one), pressing as you go and press last fold under (this will help to seal). Repeat with the remaining dough and filling.
- Meanwhile, heat 1 1/2 to 2 inches oil to 350°F in a deep 4- to 5-quart heavy pot.
- Fry pies, 4 at a time, until golden and filling been cooked through, about 6 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Reheat oil to 350°F and skim off any blackened bits between batches.
- Huushuur is ready to serve!



Niislet salad is potato salad from Russia. But we make this salad by our own style.
Ingredients: (for 4 people)

Niislet salad

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 3-4 middle sized potatoes | 7. 50g canned peas |
| 2. 200g ham | 8. 300g Mayonnaise |
| 3. 200g Cucumber | 9. Diced onion |
| 4. 3 Hard-boiled Eggs | 10. Salt |
| 5. 2 big carrots | 11. Black pepper |
| 6. 50g canned corn | 12. Dried dill weeds |

DIRECTIONS

- Peel off and wash potatoes and carrots
- Cut potatoes and carrots into small cubes
- Cook potatoes and carrots with boiling water for 10-15 minutes
- Drain and dry potatoes and carrots
- Cut ham, cucumber and egg into small cubes
- Mix all the ingredients together and add in corn, peas and diced onion
- Add salt, pepper and dried dill weeds
- Stir with mayonnaise
- Keep in refrigerator for a while
- Ready to serve!



So, Why Exactly Do I Read Chinese Short Stories?

■ | Luke Deming

Graduate Institute of Translation and Interpretation



I'm on the MRT every day, so I've spent countless hours either waiting for the next train to arrive or taking a train to another section of Taipei. I've always felt that aimlessly looking at a phone doesn't give one's brain the "mental nutrition" it needs. That's why as soon as I get to the railway platform I immediately pull out a Taiwanese literature book—this way I can improve my Chinese and learn about Taiwanese/Chinese culture at the same time. I hate wasting time waiting for something, and as a result I'm able to read about four books a year during the time I'm on the MRT. Now you may call me old-fashioned, but I still think there's something special about reading paper books during the Digital Era. Honestly, I also just don't see how using your phone to pass the time can make you feel like you've achieved something, but, to me, finishing one book, or even one short story, gives me a great sense of accomplishment. So, if you're on the MRT and you see some white guy reading Shorts, A Bimonthly (which is a fantastic bimonthly literary magazine full of great Chinese short stories), then you've found me.

"You can read Chinese?"—a couple times a year I get asked this question by Taiwanese people who just can't believe what they're seeing...a white person reading Chinese (as for the curious looks I get from people that don't end up talking to me—I probably experience that over 100 times a year). After all these years, I still don't understand this question, because when it comes down to it, it's just not a very good question.

So, why isn't it a good question? Well, first, how can someone be entertained for so long by words they can't even read? Second, there are more interesting questions they can ask me. Like, "What do you think of Taiwanese literature?" or "Who's your favorite Taiwanese writer?"; I can give you countless answers to questions like these, as Taiwanese literature has a long history and an incredible variety to boot. But, when I get asked "Can you read Chinese?", I only have a one-word answer to give. Here I am, still waiting for that day when someone asks me what I think about what I'm reading, because I have so much I'd like to share.

The Benefits of Reading Chinese Literature for Foreigners

I strive to completely understand how Taiwanese people think, and so every day I make sure to hear their voices and read the words they write.

If you want to understand a language and its culture, I believe that reading that language's literature is the fastest and most effective way. In addition, I think that short stories are quite possibly the best type of literature for foreign readers; short stories rarely exceed 10,000 words, and by reading a variety of short story writers you end up absorbing different words, phrases, writing styles, opinions and beliefs, cultural aspects, and historical tidbits.

I started reading Shorts, A Bimonthly three-something years ago. Back then, I'd only studied Chinese for about three years, so my Chinese wasn't good enough to always understand the stories that I was reading. But, I still believed, despite the difficulty involved, that through reading literature I could become more and more knowledgeable about Taiwan's culture and history. So, even if I didn't really understand the story, at least I'd learn some new words or be more familiar with certain aspects of Taiwanese/Chinese culture. Another advantage of short stories is that when you come across a story you don't understand, you can choose to either give up and move on to the next piece or, despite all odds, find a way to keep reading until you reach the end. It doesn't matter if you understand the story or not, because you're bound to learn at least something while you make your way through the tale.

Shorts, A Bimonthly offers the following three benefits for foreign readers. 1) Learning about culture: in addition to Taiwanese authors, this literary magazine has writers from many different countries, including mainland China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Canada. Furthermore, the writers span from young to old. 2) Learning about the incredible diversity of Taiwanese literature: Shorts, A Bimonthly averages about 12 stories per issue and the following genres are featured: nativist (a local form that focuses on Taiwanese with family that lived on this island before WWII), military dependents' villages (people from families who moved to Taiwan after the Chinese Civil War), realism, surrealism, fantasy, ghost stories, and Chinese martial arts chivalry. 3) Language learning: Readers can pick up spoken words, written words, Chinese idioms, swear words, and much, much more.

My Favorite Taiwanese Writers

I enjoy reading different genres of literature, which makes sense because I like learning something new every day. And, this is why I've never read the same author over and over again. Lots of people read all the works of a single writer, but the main problem with this is that many authors continue to publish works that aren't all that different from one another. You could say that the plots of their numerous books are all about the same. For example, Giddens Ko is a talented writer but his books are very similar; they're pretty much either romantic love stories or center on a perverse theme. This is understandable, because if an author wants to publish a lot of books he needs to create a couple standard plots where characters and details change from book to book, but in the end everything will be about the same. That being said, Taiwan's literature community has many writers that are willing to try new things, craft different stories, and create original characters, and for this reason I admire Chen Xue and Luo Yi-jun.

Whenever I'm reading a story in Shorts, A Bimonthly, I typically don't look to see who the writer is. But, I can usually tell right away if I'm reading a story written by Chen Xue or Luo Yi-jun. Chen Xue is excellent at developing characters (which tend to be female), and her first person female narrator stories are so well written that I feel as if the characters are actually talking to me. Everyday life stories, ghost stories—whatever she pens is always a fantastic read.

Luo Yi-jun is also very special. He can create a very simple story where the content is ordinary and the plot is nothing to write home about, but his style is just so unique that you can't help yourself from reading to the end. I can't explain Luo Yi-jun's exceptional style, but the one thing I know is that he takes risks that other authors know they should never try. Nevertheless, he always ends up being successful in the end, and this is why I admire him.

Chen Xue and Luo Yi-jun aren't the type of writers that you just can't understand no matter how hard you try. Their writing style is straightforward, as they don't play games with words nor do they intentionally write in a confusing manner. Despite this simplicity, their amazing writing prowess is unlikely to be overlooked by readers.

A Book Both Taiwanese and Foreigners Should Read

Originally written in Chinese, and later translated by the author into English, *Barbarian at the Gate: From the American Suburbs to the Taiwanese Army* is a unique autobiography that tells the story of a western man who went on to become a Taiwanese citizen. The author, a white man with a small amount of Native American ancestry, grew up in southern USA's Florida, not coming to Taiwan until university when he was an exchange student. He's now lived in Taiwan for about 25 years. I may be a foreigner, but I've always wanted to immerse myself in Taiwanese culture, so I like to read and listen to the stories of other foreigners who call Taiwan home.

A lot of Taiwanese people ask me "Hey Luke, do you have to serve in the American military?" The simple answer is "No". From time to time a Taiwanese person will ask me if I were to become Taiwanese would I need to serve in the military here—the answer is "Yes". Very few westerners have given up their original citizenship in order to earn Taiwanese citizenship (note: if a foreigner wants to become a Taiwanese citizen, he/she must first forfeit his/her original citizenship). However, Taiwan's military history has seen a great number of non-Taiwanese people serve for the country, and one of them is TC Locke, author of the book I'm currently recommending.

Despite his very white and monolingual suburban childhood, Locke was always interested in Asian cultures and languages, and while in college he ended up studying abroad in Taichung for a year-and-a-half. After going back and graduating in the USA, he later returned to Taiwan to find non-English teaching work. Back then, Taiwan's immigration laws were extremely strict, and applying for a work permit was an arduous process. In order to keep living in Taiwan, he made frequent trips to Hong Kong just to process documents for immigration purposes, flying back to Taiwan as soon as he was finished. In order to live in this island country for the long-term (and stop spending so much time and money on immigration stuff), he decided that the only option was giving up his American citizenship so he could become a Taiwanese citizen. The extremely complicated immigration procedures of that time resulted in him being stuck in Hong Kong for months while the Taiwan authorities processed his documents. Ironically, he received a notice to begin his two-year military obligation not all that long after he was allowed back into Taiwan. He ended up doing his boot camp in Hsinchu and then finished the rest of his service in Miaoli. I'll let you read the many stories of his time in the military, as the author allows readers to see a foreign perspective of what countless Taiwanese men have experienced firsthand.

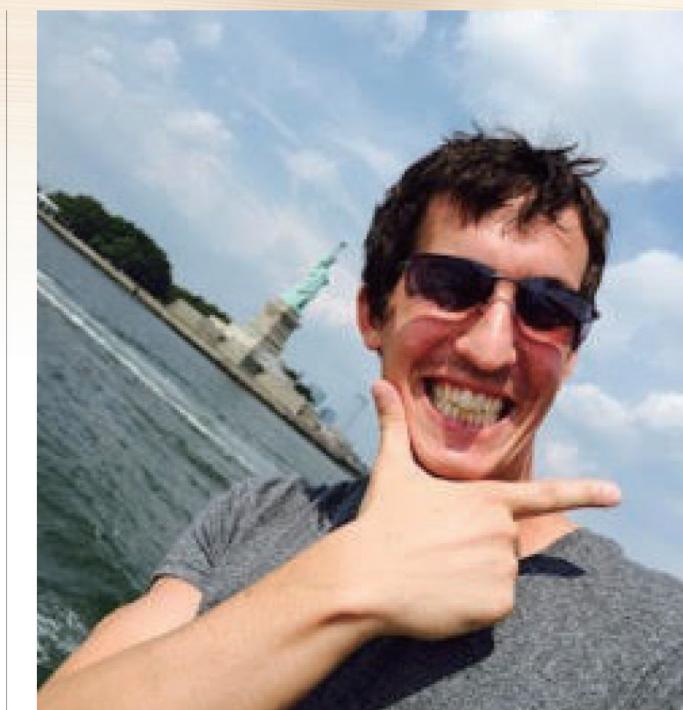
Reading so much Taiwanese literature has made me want to find my own tiny, little place in this country's literary circle. What I mean is that I want to become an amateur writer. Over two years ago I began working on my own novel, which is written in first person, has an English-speaking foreigner as its narrator, and features dialogue that's mostly Chinese. I'll give it my best shot, as I want to see if Taiwan can accept a novelist that blends Chinese and English together. Maybe I'll end up being a worthy opponent of the excellent Taiwanese literature I've read. Even though I'll probably end up failing miserably, at least I can be confident that literature's ability to survive for so many centuries is because writers don't fear failure, nor do they fear trying something new.

The More You Read, the More You Want to Write

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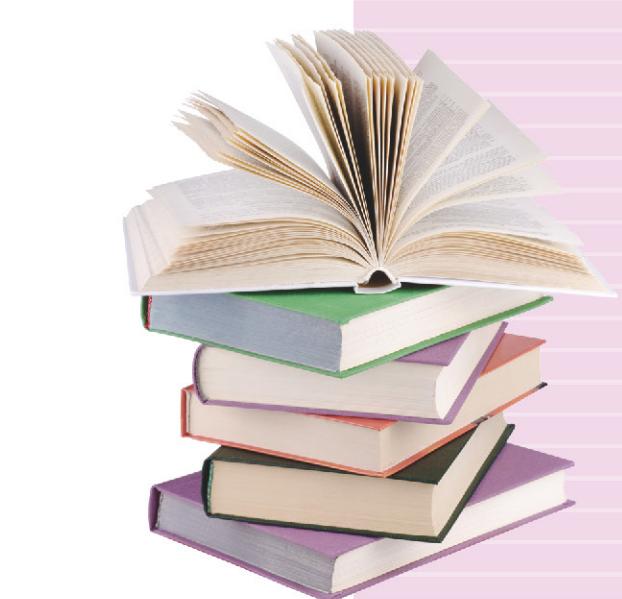
About the Writer

When asked by friendly Taiwanese people where he's from, Luke Adam Deming says his American hometown is Freeland, Michigan, which just so happens to be located somewhere in between New York and California. Growing up in what he calls rural suburbia, Luke feared the big city as a child...how he ended up in the crowded city of Taipei (and actually enjoys it), nobody knows. His alma mater is Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU); he originally majored in special education until he came to Taiwan as an exchange student. During that time, National Taiwan Normal University's Graduate Institute of Translation and Interpretation became the program of his dreams, so he ended up returning to the USA to finish a bachelor's degree in English Literature and then promptly returned, preparing for two years and then testing into GITI. He's now in his fourth year.



During his university days, he had the opportunity to be an exchange student for a semester. A friend advised him to go to a country where the culture would be very different than his American roots, and this is why he ended up zeroing in on Asia. He went to a Study Abroad Expo at SVSU and ended up being enchanted by Shih Hsin University and the freedom it offered to its exchange students. He also thought Taiwan was a rather unique island country. Looking back at it now, he ended up making the right decision. As fate would have it, he studied at Shih Hsin for a year-and-a-half, and for some reason this country decided it'd be ok to let him live here for seven years already.

A goalkeeper with slow feet and small hands, Luke currently is the captain of NTNU's men's football team. He played for a year on Shih Hsin's championship-winning basketball team, but, fortunately for all involved, his basketball "career" has already come to an end.



Novel Experiences in Taiwan for NTNU International Students

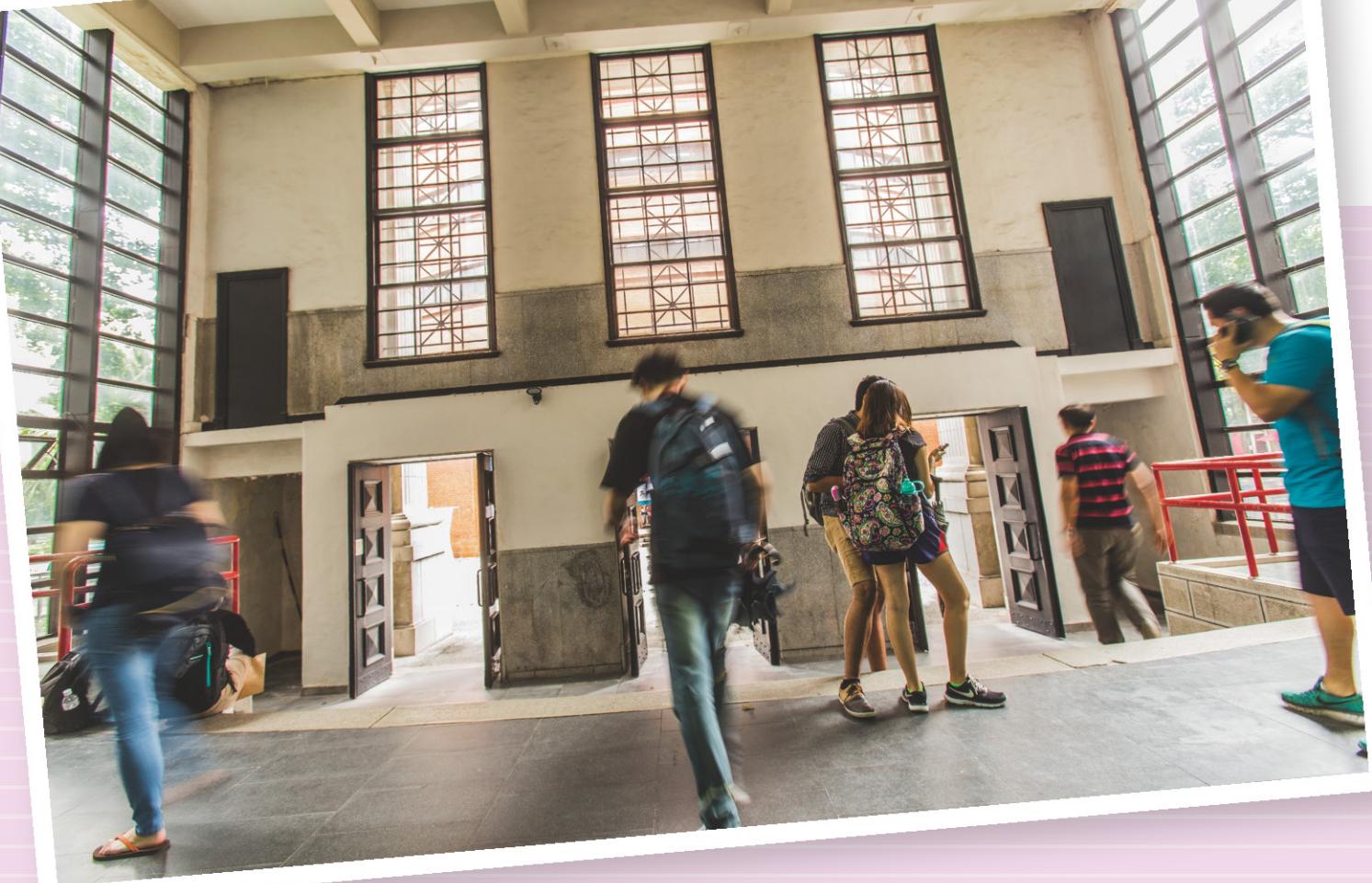
■ | Yu-xin Yu
Department of Education

National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) is the top pick for many international students studying Chinese as a foreign language. In recent years, more and more students who had gone home after studying at the NTNU Mandarin Training Center chose to return to our campus for Masters or PhD studies. They first arrived with little or no knowledge of Chinese, developed a liking in the language, became familiarized with the local culture and eventually blended in.

Curious about how international students go through such transitions, and how they feel and think about NTNU, we interviewed PhD student Hector Muñoz from Spain and PhD student Yang Yun Jeong from Korea to find out the cultural shocks and interesting things they encountered during their stay at NTNU.

Through their stories, we are also hoping to offer a glimpse into their cultures so that local students can better understand their cultures and welcome them with even more hospitality.

Let's take a look at their stories.



▲ Inside the Mandarin Training Center building

Grasping the Art of Communication

Ming-zhi Mu (Hector Muñoz) is a Spanish PhD student studying at NTNU's Graduate Institute of Translation and Interpretation. His Chinese first name “Ming-zhi (meaning enlightenment)” was picked to match the sound and meaning of his Spanish name, and his family name “Mu” was taken from his uncle, a Catholic missionary who arrived in Taiwan in 1969. The deeply localized Chinese name “Ming-zhi Mu” was thus born.

Having lived in Taiwan for 4 years, Hector has observed some very interesting cultural differences between Taiwanese and Spanish people. For instance, Spanish people tend to speak their minds. If you talk non-stop, they would cut you off in the middle of a sentence. That's completely normal. Interrupting people like this would not be considered rude in Spain. On the contrary, it would be rude not to interrupt. Spanish people believe, if you don't cut me off, that means you don't want to talk, and you want me to keep talking. If I go on and you still don't cut me off, it means either you don't want to talk or are not interested in what I am talking about. Therefore, when Hector was teaching Spanish, he was hoping for students to interrupt him and ask him questions at anytime. However, after he came to realize such a behavior would be rude in Taiwan, he has learned to wait till people finish before he starts talking about his views.

Excitement Misinterpreted as Being Overly Emotional

With a lot of excitement and emotionally rich facial expressions, Spanish people often scare the Taiwanese.

Once Hector planned to play a Youtube video at his Spanish class to show his students how a real-life Spanish conversation was like, in order to reinforce the content he had taught that day. He thought that would be a perfect ending to the class. However, for some unknown reason, the video just wouldn't play. Hector was very disappointed. He had prepared so well for the class. If the video hadn't gone wrong in the last five minute, the class would have been perfect. Frustrated, he went back to the office and complained, “Man! The video I prepared just wouldn't play. I don't know if it was because of the computer or the internet! ” While his colleagues were still wondering about what was going on, he went back to work 5 minutes later, as if nothing had happened.

A week later, the program director came to him and told him people thought he got very angry the other day by the way he looked. As a matter of fact, he had completely forgotten about it by then. Hector said Spanish people may overreact and get emotional when things happen, but would carry on with what they were doing after just 5 minutes. That's just the way Spanish people are. They would not carry a grudge. Noticing the cultural difference, he tries to hold his temper in Taiwan to avoid any potential misunderstanding. He is thankful to his close friends in Taiwan for their tolerance as he does not constrain his temper in front of his close friends, and they accept him as who is. Sometimes when his Taiwanese friends don't get the logics of something he does, they don't get upset. Instead, they would ask him if it is done differently in Spain.

Falling in Love with the Hazy Appeal of Lanterns

Spanish people have their own ideas about interacting with people.

Hector feels that when you go shopping in Taiwan, it helps if you can build a good relationship with the shop owner and become a regular as you will likely get preferential treatment, or at least you won't be fooled. Likewise, if you are to sell things, people who don't know you may not trust you, or even buy from you. In Spain, there is no such thing as "working the connections" between the sellers and buyers. Spanish people tend to think as long as they can get the business done, that would be a good relationship. It is not necessary to treat your customers to dinner in order to get closer with them and in turn solicit business. They separate work from friends and family, drawing a clear line in between.

In Taiwan, Hector sees the combination of shop and family space in many family-run stores. Sometimes he would see a grandpa watching TV while attending to the shop, and his grandson doing homework in the shop as company. This is something you wouldn't see in Spain where a store is a place to run your business, not for family activities. There is a clear distinction between the two.

The Lantern Festival is one of Hector's favorite holidays in Taiwan. He just loves to see all sorts of lanterns. On his first trip back home from NTNU, he brought many lanterns back to give to his friends and family. He finds lanterns very attractive with their luminous and colorful looks. They carry a unique ambience nowhere to be found in the West. The West has its own style of lighting. Candles will be lit during Christmas or other holiday celebration, but the lighting style is fundamentally different. A big fan of lantern, Hector was completely mesmerized by its charm.

Like the UK and the US, Christmas is also an important holiday in Spain, but with different ways of celebration. Christmas celebration in Spain begins on December 24 and ends on January 6. Presents are given on both December 24 and January 6. While both dates are important, each has its own significance. Therefore, the presents to be given on the two days also carry different

meanings. While December 24 is a celebration for Santa Claus, January 6 is to commemorate the birth of Jesus, and the day the Three Kings set out to look for Jesus. Spanish people give presents to their important ones on January 6 to convey the message “you are very important to me.”

Hector saw some resemblance between the Dajia Matsu Pilgrimage Procession in Taiwan and the Holy Week (Semana Santa) tradition in Spain. In Spain, the core element in the processions is the floats with sculptures depicting different scenes from the different stages of Jesus's life, including when he first began preaching the gospel, his first Roman imprisonment, the Passion of Christ, the resurrection of Jesus, etc. The sculptures were carried by many different groups in the procession.



▲ The floats with sculptures are the core element of the Holy Week processions. Photo taken at Cehegín, Región de Murcia, España. Photo courtesy of Eduardo Pérez Sánchez.



Enjoying the Vital Vibe

Hector also likes how Taiwan is full of lush vitality. Much like the climate in Spain, the weather in Taiwan is generally sunny and stable, good for outdoor activities. The higher humidity compared to Spain makes it easier for plants to grow, whereas in Spain plants would easily wither from insufficient watering. In addition to the more humid air, more rains in Taiwan also make it a lot less work to grow plants. As plants can easily grow and thrive on rainfalls, they beam with lush vitality.

A big coffee lover, Hector loves the outdoor cafe outside the library. The fact it is just a few steps away from his classroom building makes it even better. Hector often wanders among the red brick buildings on the main campus. He likes the historic air about them, the flowers and trees surrounding them, and the benches in between that offer a spot to rest whenever he needs one. This is his favorite part of the campus. In Spain, due to the dry weather, trees are scarce on the streets and grasses often yellowish. Being able to study in beautiful campus decorated with so many flowers, grasses and trees is a real joy for him.

Although he has to adjust his personality when living in Taiwan, Hector sees this as a good thing. Different cultural shocks have broadened his mind and vision. Living in Asia has shaped him into a different person, which wouldn't have been possible if he had stayed in Spain. Having spent 25 years in Asia, Hector finds himself a more mature person than before. He used to react quickly and strongly to things, but now he has learned to think twice. As a matter of fact, regardless of where you are, staying calm always does you good, and that's something he learned in Taiwan.



▲ View of Vienna Forest, at center is the historical piece "Liberty Bell"

Koreans Tend to Be Less Patient and More Straightforward

Yang Yun Jeong, a Korean student studying for her PhD program at the Department of Chinese as a Second Language (TCSL), grew up in the influence of Chinese culture imparted through his grandfather.

"I was named by my grandfather. The character 'Yun' means real, and 'Jeong' has an auspicious connotation. My grandfather packed all his best wishes and expectations of me into this name," said Yun Jeong.

Once a flight attendant at China Airlines, Yun Jeong felt she did not have an expertise and was confused about the future after working the job for 4 years. Then an opportunity of teaching Korean came along, and she began her career in teaching Korean as a second language. She also trained for teaching Chinese as a second language. After getting married in Taiwan, she began her further study at NTNU's TCSL.

When she first began at NTNU, Yun Jeong had trouble getting used to the semester schedule running from September to January the next year. This was because in Korea the New Year holiday is celebrated on January first, which happens to be the time for finals in Taiwan. When her friends were sending her New Year greetings from Korea, she was busy preparing for the finals in Taiwan, completely not in the mood for celebration.

Yun Jeong thinks Taiwanese people generally have a gentle personality, and are willing to hold their temper and try to communicate first. Koreans, on the other hand tend to be less patient. Their mood is immediately shown on their face; they would not hold back. One good thing about it though is that you can



▲ Author, Yang Yun Jeong

know how people feel right away, and work things out from there.

When Yun Jeong first began to study at NTNU, people often asked her, "Is it true that Koreans are bad-tampered?" Yun Jeong laughed, saying that she didn't learn the word for bad-tampered in Chinese until she began studying in Taiwan. She thinks Koreans are less patient because they live under huge pressure due to fierce competition. They always have to strive to reach their goals. In comparison, she feels more relaxed and at ease when studying in Taiwan. "I don't know if it's because of the warm weather in Taiwan, or the warm personality of my classmates," she said semi-jokingly.

Close Call at the MRT Station—a Sip of Water Would Cost NT\$7500?!

Pay on boarding or pay on alighting was something you need to pay attention to when taking the bus in Taiwan. At first Yun Jeong could not figure out how the system worked, so she paid both on boarding and alighting, following the rule in Korea. Sometime later, she finally realized the difference between paying on board and on alighting.

MRT rules in Taiwan also differ from those in Korea. Eating and drinking are not allowed in the MRT stations in Taiwan, but there are no such restrictions in Korea. There are even convenience stores in the subway stations for people to buy foods and drinks from. Believing it's a personal freedom, Korea does not prohibit eating or drinking on any public transportation, as long as you do not disturb others.

The no drinking rule put Yun Jeong in a close call at the MRT station. She was aware drinking or eating on the MRT could result in a fine of up to NT\$7500. However, when she was lining up for the MRT on a hot day, she got very thirsty and subconsciously took a sip from her water bottle. At this time, a MRT security guard blew the whistle as a warning. She thought eating and drinking was only forbidden on board, but she didn't know the rule also applied when you were waiting in line. When everyone

was looking at her, she was still trying to find out who the whistle warning for. And then the guard came to her and told her she could not drink here. Feeling an immense embarrassment, Yun Jeong apologized in a loud voice while various scenarios flashed across her mind: "Am I getting a NT\$7500 fine?", "I only have NT\$2000. Can I leave my watch here as deposit and make a quick run to the bank to get cash?" "What should I do?" To her relief, the guard only asked her not to drink, and did not ask for a fine, thus concluding her closest call in Taiwan.

"I was overwhelmed by people at the drink shops. They kept asking me questions that I did not know how to answer." Yun Jeong said seriously. Once she ordered a drink, and the cashier asked her "Hold the ice?" and she responded "Hold to where?" The person just couldn't help laughing out. And that wasn't the end of the questions, she has also been asked to choose between big or small pearls, honey or black sugar, etc. There were just too many choices to cope with. In Korea, the only choice available is hot or cold drinks as the drink shops all want to save time and limited the choice. "Drink shops in Taiwan are really thoughtful," Yun Jeong said.

Getting into the Habit of Proactive Learning in Taiwan

Yun Jeong loves the cafes and cuisines the NTNU neighborhoods offer. Wen-Huei Hall is her favorite place on campus where she can relax by listening to the briskly-paced music while reading. She thinks it's the least school-like spot on campus. Yun Jeong also likes the International Culture Week held annually by the Office of International Affairs in March which offers opportunities for people to taste cuisines from various countries and to explore different cultures.

Education styles in Korea and Taiwan are also vastly different. Korean teachers would prepare a lot of teaching materials and handouts for students in class. In Taiwan, the education style is more like the U.S. Students have to be proactive in studying the literature they want to learn, take the initiative to conduct relevant research, and then ask teachers to help them with questions they do not understand. Korean students tend to prefer group learning. They would discuss questions in group settings. If there are questions they all struggle with, they would send a representative to the teacher to ask the questions. After that representative gets answers from the teacher, he/she would then teach the rest of the students. In Taiwan, since students always direct their questions straight to the

teachers, Yunzhen also realized she had to be proactive and take the initiative to learn.

Korean girls never go out without makeup. If they did, they would feel awkward and embarrassed. Yunzhen noticed that a lot of Taiwanese are natural beauties with healthy skin without the help of makeup.

Another observation from Yunzhen is about the water dispenser. In Taiwan, 3 options are available at your choice—hot water, warm water, and cold water. In Korea, you can only choose between cold and hot water. When Yunzhen was new to NTNU, once she was helping a friend to get some water, and the friend asked for warm water. Without knowing the warm water option was available, she had to use a cup to slowly mix in the hot and the cold water. Yunzhen said that Korean dispensers reflect the personality of the Koreans—It's either black or white; there is no grey area. Koreans are easier to understand. When speaking to Koreans, just be straightforward. Don't be ambiguous. If you are hungry, just say so. Don't say "I am okay." "When Taiwanese people say that, it's really confusing to Koreans," Yunzhen added.

▼ Wen-Huei Hall, the place open to group meeting, studying and student activities





▲ Calla lily fields in Yangmingshan

Best Choice Formosa

Hello Friend, Where
Would You Go
for Holiday?

Jing-wun Wong
Department of Adult and Continuing Education

For international students studying at NTNU, there are plenty of opportunities on weekdays to explore the wide variety of places in the neighborhood that offer special culinary and cultural experiences. But what are the must-goes in and around Taipei that just can't be missed for your weekend or holiday trips? In addition to recommendations by local students, we also invited international students to recommend some of the places they like so you can get a taste of the beauty of Taiwan through their eyes. We'll start with Northern Taiwan this time, featuring Yangmingshan, a national park dubbed "Taipei city's backyard garden", and Jiaoxi hot springs in Yilan, a place fondly known for its beautiful water and mountain landscape. Let's find out what NTNU local and international students would recommend for holiday trips.



▲ Leshan Ramen Shop at Jiaoxi, Yilan

Jiaoxi,
Yilan

Enjoying Ramen While Bathing Your Foot in the Hot Spring

Recommended by Sayuri Goma

Thanks to its genius landscape design, the hot spring bath in Yilan's Jiaoxi Hot Spring Park seems like a mysterious spot tucked away in the forest, ideal for a relaxing and delightful hot spring experience. Sayuri Goma, a Japanese student studying at NTNU Mandarin Training Center loves the comfy feeling about this hot spring. While enjoying the hot spring experience in Taiwan, she spotted a cultural difference here. In Taiwan, even for gentlemen-only or ladies-only bathes, people would still wear their swimsuits, unlike in Japan where people always bathe in the hot spring naked.

Goma also recommended a hot spring ramen noodle shop she finds special. The shop, located in an alley across the street from Tangweigou Hot Spring

Park, has a family restaurant atmosphere much like Japan's. Although the same cannot be said about the ramen noodles here as they are not exactly authentic Japanese style but more like a fusion between Taiwan and Japan, the taste is still quite special. What she would most recommend about the shop is the outdoor tables where you can eat your ramen while bathing your feet in the hot spring tub below. Many guests would particularly ask to be seated outdoor so they can enjoy the piping hot ramen noodles in their mouth and the hot spring water around their feet while feeling the cold wind blowing over their faces. This is a thorough hot spring experience from head to toe nowhere else to be found.



▲ Chili ice cream

Jiaoxi,
Yilan

Try "Fish SPA"

Recommended by Jung-hsuan Chang

Jung-hsuan Chang, a junior at the Department of Applied Chinese Language and Culture, thinks Yilan is a terrific travel destination, especially Jiaoxi hot springs. Once you step on streets lined with banners printed with the character "Quan" (the Chinese character for "spring"), you can't help feeling relaxed, and would feel like rushing to a hot spring. The most interesting thing would be the fish SPA experience where fish would eat off your feet. Many hot spring shops would have fish pools available, and fish of different sizes offer different feels. The bigger they get, the harder they bite. Jung-hsuan said her foot skin really became very smooth after the fish pedicure.



▲ Ice-cream menu at the Chili Hunter shop

Jiaoxi,
Yilan

Chili Ice Cream—Try It for Fun or Challenge Your Limit

Recommended by Yin Chit Yal

Yin Chit Yal, an overseas Chinese student from Thailand, is a junior at the Department of Adult & Continuing Education. As a big fan of chili, she recommended the chili ice cream shop by the Tangweigou Hot Spring Park. She thinks the ice cream there is an authentic Taiwanese creation and the world's only spicy product of its kind. With 8 spicy levels ranging from 0-7, the ice cream offers something for everyone. If you are not a chili lover, you can try it for fun, and if you are, you can challenge your limit here.

Aside from the chili ice cream, you will find many other chili products in the Chili Hunter shop, such as chili jam, chili chocolate, chili truffle, etc. There are also displays of chili grown in different countries around the world for you to gain more knowledge about the spice while enjoying the heat on your palate.



Toucheng, Yilan

Visit the Lanyang Museum and Learn About the “Qianggu” Culture

Recommended by Chen-yi Hsu

Chen-yi Hsu, a sophomore history student stresses the Lanyang Museum is a must-see. Interactive displays in the museum will paint an in-depth picture about the development history of Yilan. Through interactive games, visitors can learn about the wetland ecology of Wushi, and the orogenic movement from intra-plate crustal deformation that made Taiwan what it is today. There is also a role-play activity that allows visitors to relive the hustle and bustle of Wushi Harbor. The museum's architectural landscape, inspired by the cuesta (a geological feature common to the local area with a ridge having a steep cliff on one side and a gentle slope on the other) is best viewed from a distance in the park outside the museum and often triggers discussions about Yilan's unique geological formation and landscape.

When comparing the Lanyang Museum to the National Palace Museum from the perspective of a

history student, Chen-yi noted that the two museums offer completely different historical memories and discourses. While the National Palace Museum presents an in-depth historical dissection of the Chinese culture, the Lanyang Museum uses entertaining and approachable ways to disseminate the understanding of local Yilan culture.

In order to enhance the public's understanding about the meaning of the “Qianggu (ghost grappling)” culture, Lanyang Museum organizes special Qianggu festival activities and exhibition to show visitors how the “Qianggu” ceremony came about. By doing so, the Museum hopes to better engage the visitors and enhance the visitors' identification with the local culture. He highly recommends the event to international students.

▲ Lanyang Museum



▲ Close-up of Calla lily

Jiaoxi, Yilan

The Spectacular Wufengqi Waterfalls

Recommended by Jing-wun Wong

Looking at the recommendations by local and international students, I can't help recommending another place in Yilan—the Wufengqi Waterfalls. With its beautiful mountain and water landscape, Yilan has always been a popular travel destination. Among its many natural attractions, Wufengqi (literally five-peak flag) Waterfalls is Jiaoxi residents' favorite place for strolling and hiking. It got its name from the five sharp peaks that stand behind the waterfalls. The water falls in three cascades, with the second cascade measuring 100 meters being the most spectacular. The Wufeng Pavilion by the waterfalls offers a panoramic view, a perfect photo stop for visitors.

Getting to the Wufengqi Waterfalls from NTNU is easy. First take the MRT to Taipei Main Station and then transfer to a long-haul bus bound for Jiaoxi, or take the TRA railway train to Jiaoxi train station. At Jiaoxi, there will be free shuttles to take you to the Wufengqi Scenic Area. How convenient is that! And you ask how to get back to Taipei? Go figure.

Yangmingshan National Park

Up and Close in Cherry Blossom Woods, Strolling on Calla Lily Field

Recommended by Mihaela Lonescu

Mihaela Lonescu was born in Romania and has studied in Italy, the UK and China before becoming a PhD student at NTNU's Graduate Institute of Taiwan Literature. Mihaela loves being in the nature and finds Yangmingshan National Park's sceneries very attractive, especially the giant flower clock landmark with a 13-meter diameter. Wonderful music (well-known local folk songs) is played every half an hour from 8:00 to 17:00 daily. When the music plays, it's visitors' favorite time to take photos at flower clock plaza and enjoy the scene.

During the cherry blossom season in April, yaezakura cherry trees and Taiwan cherry trees by the flower clock plaza and along the trails all compete to bloom, decorating the area with amazing colors. Strolling up the mountain trail, you will see the calla lily avenue. Juxtaposed by the towering Datung Mountains on two sides, the calla lily fields seem tranquil. Lily farmers here have opened part of their farms to visitors for flower picking. You may experience the fun of picking the lilies for a reasonable price and take a few lilies home with you. Not just pleasant to watch, the flowers can also be therapeutic.

Yangmingshan
National Park

Sunset Over Arrow Bamboo Woods by Xiaoyoukeng

Recommended by Jung-hsuan Chang

Xiaoyoukeng is one of the most famous geological formations in Yangmingshan National Park. At an elevation of 805 meters, Xiaoyoukeng has a lower temperature than the sea level, and is often shrouded by fogs. In addition to the magnificent view, Jung-hsuan Chang, a junior at the Department of Applied Chinese Language and Culture believes the strong smell of sulfur unique to this area is something that you have to try. The constant sulfur vapor is a reminder of Xiaoyoukeng's birth as a landslide terrain formed by post-volcanic activity. The extremely hot and active fumarolic steam rises from the terrain all year around. This is about as close as you can get for a volcanic breath in the Datun Volcano Group.

Behind the visitor center, there is a trail in the arrow bamboo woods where you can closely observe arrow bamboos, and a silver grass field. The arrow bamboo has a very thin and yet resilient stalk. Because of this characteristic, it was used by the aborigines in the early days to make arrows for hunting (hence the name arrow bamboo). Two lookout platforms sit amidst the condensed bamboo woods. Watching sunset at dusk from here would be quite a treat.

Dadaocheng,
Taipei

The Nostalgic Streets at Dadaocheng

Recommended by Kori Miho

Taking a walk along the old streets of Dadaocheng, a marvelous fusion of traditional mom-and-pop shops, tasty foods and goodies with creative designs is one of the most wonderful memories for Kori Miho, a Japanese alumna of the Applied Chinese Language and Culture. While at NTNU, Miho often spent her holidays exploring attractions in search of a dose of authentic Taiwan. Among the many old streets she has visited, the history-packed Dadaocheng was her No.1 recommendation. In her view, Dadaocheng differed from other old streets because much of its look and spirit of the old days were still kept whereas some of the other old streets were renovated to a formulaic look, hence losing the nostalgia—the very thing people look for in old streets. Major old street revamps in Taiwan oftentimes resulted in a standardized architecture style for buildings, and there would be no differentiation in vendors and their products. The only thing that's different would be visitors' faces. Dadaocheng's architecture style, on the other hand, was very well kept in various forms. That's what she loves about the place.



▲ Photo taken at Xiaoyoukeng

Yangmingshan
National Park

Sit Back and Enjoy the Nightscape of Taipei

Recommended by Chit Yal Yin

Yangmingshan is “the” place many people, especially couples, would go for a good bird's eye view of the Taipei city. Chit Yal recommends that international students should go to Yangmingshan for the night view at least once. It would be a good idea to invite a couple of good friends along to a restaurant with a good view to enjoy

the enchanted city nightscape from a distance, and to look for the well-known landmarks. Although you would be looking down to the city and household lights from the mountain, it feels as if you were right by the sea. It's an indescribable magical feeling you will have to try for at least once.



▲ Daan Forest Park

Ubike Guide

Come Explore the Beauty of the Daan District

■ | Shao-yu Teng
Department of Civic Education and Leadership

Now that you are studying at NNTU, do you know what you can do in your spare time in between classes? NTNU's main campus is located in Daan District, an area with a rich cultural blend. There are obviously many cafes, each with its distinctive character. Besides that, plenty of city government-designated historic sites are hidden in the allies. Ying-ying Xu, an overseas Chinese student from Malaysia enjoys riding the YouBike around to explore the neighborhood. Having been studying at NTNU for six years, Ying-ying knows the neighborhood inside out. She has recommended three bicycle routes to help you discover the beauty of the Daan District with ease.



YouBike rates

First 30 minutes	NT\$5
30 minutes- 4 hours	NT\$10 per 30 minutes
4 hours-8 hours	NT\$20 per 30 minutes
Over 8 hours	NT\$40 per 30 minutes



1. Jinan Market 錦安市場 (Google map still shows the old name Longan) Market 龍安市場)
 2. My Warm Day Café & Brunch 麥味登
 3. La Petite Perle 小珍珠烘培坊
 4. Lime Organic Juice Bar 東海萊姆園
- Recommended stay: 2 hours • YouBike rental fee: NT\$35



1 Jinan Market 錦安市場

(Zhaoheding Antique Market 昭和町文物市集)

The area had its hayday during the Japanese rule when it was known as Zhaoheding. You'll find intriguing old items from Taiwan, China and Japan at this market. Though small in size, each shop has amassed a dazzling collection of antiques.

- Address: No.60, Yongkang St., Daan District, Taipei City
- Business hours: 14:00~21:00
- Recommended stay: 30 minutes



2

My Warm Day Café & Brunch 麥味登早餐店

(Chaozhou Branch 潮州店)

Located at the back alley behind NTNU's Main Library campus, the shop is just a stone's throw away from the university, and is Yingying's most frequented place for breakfast. She recommends fried chicken wrapped in Chinese omelet and rice noodle from this place.

- Address: No.158, Chaozhou St., Daan District, Taipei City
- Business hours: 6:00~13:30
- Recommended stay: 30 minutes



3 La Petite Perle 小珍珠烘培坊

The moment you step into the bakery, you can smell the cinnamon in the air. Ying-ying learned about the place through two American friends. Black sugar cinnamon rolls are the best sellers here, often flying off the shelf soon after they leave the oven.

- Address: No.25, Lane 243, Jinhua St., Daan District, Taipei City
- Business hours: 8:30~22:00
- Recommended stay: 10 minutes



4

4 Lime Organic Juice Bar 東海萊姆園

Located within the Yongkang Street area, the shop serves freshly juiced lime drinks mixed with different fruits. Different choices are available depending on how sour you can take it. Lime and pineapple mixed juice is the star product here.

- Address: No.14, Lane 4, Yongkang St., Daan District, Taipei City
- Business hours: 12:00~22:00
- Recommended stay: 10 minutes



1 Qingtian 76 青田七六

A former residence of National Taiwan University Professor Ting-ying Ma, the place is a Class 3 historic site designated by the Taipei City Government. The architecture of the house is a mix of the Western and the Japanese styles. Come here for a glimpse into the old Taipei, or join a guided tour to discover the stories behind this place.

- Address: No.6, Lane 7, Qingtian St., Daan District, Taipei City
- Business hours: 11:30~21:00; closed on the first Monday of the month
- Recommended stay: 20 minutes



2 Taipei Grand Mosque 台北清真寺

The most famous venue of worship for the Muslims in Taipei, the Mosque houses the headquarter of Chinese Muslim Association. It is also a city-government designated historic site.

- Address: No.62, Xinsheng South Road, Sec. 2, Daan District, Taipei City
- Opening hours: 8:30~22:00
- Recommended stay: 20 minutes

▼ Inside Daan Forest Park



3 Daan Forest Park 大安森林公園

Sitting atop a 25-hectare land, the park is Taipei's largest greenery, and acts as the "lungs of Taipei." A jazz musical festival is held annually at the park's amphitheater. Listening to jazz on a green pasture under the blue sky has become a big summer treat in Taipei. MRT Daan Station, built with an arched ceiling and a curved glass facade, opened in 2013 and has been a stunning compliment to the park. At the small plaza outside the station, you can watch fountain shows that run at a fixed schedule.

- Fountain show schedule-
 - Weekday: 10:00~20:00
 - Weekend & holiday: 9:00~21:00
- One show per hour
- No fountain shows on the first Monday every month due to equipment maintenance
- Recommended stay: 30 minutes



▲ The building of MRT Daan Park Station



1

Wistaria Tea House 紫藤廬

The tea house was named after the three vines in its courtyard. In the 1960s, it was a meeting place for political liberalists, offering a small space of freedom in a time during the authoritarian regime. It is now a Taipei City Government-designated historic site

- Address: No.1, Lane 16, Xinsheng South Rd., Sec. 3, Daan District, Taipei City
- Opening hours for the historic site: 10:00~17:00
- Tea House business hours: 10:00-23:00
- Recommended stay: 30 minute



3

Liugong Canal branch in the University Village 大學里瑠公圳支流

The Liugong Canal was constructed by land cultivator Kuo Hsi-liu during Kangxi's reign in the Qing Dynasty as part of the irrigation system for eastern Taipei. The branch in the University Village is the only entirely uncovered part of the system remaining. After canal regulation works by the community, it is now a vibrant ecological oasis of plants and animals.

- Address: No.2-2, Lane 49, Wenzhou St., Daan District, Taipei City
- Recommended stay: 10 minute



2

Former Residence of Yin Hai Kuang 殷海光故居

Professor Yin Hai Kuang taught philosophy at National Taiwan University.

As a man who “would rather die a critic than live muted”, Professor Yin bravely stood up against authority with his political criticism, and had a strong influence on the academic and social developments of Taiwan. Professor Yin was recognized for his significant contribution to Taiwan’s progression to democracy. Taipei City Government designated his former residence as a historic site.

- Address: No.1-1, Alley 16, Lane 18, Wenzhou St., Daan District, Taipei City
- Opening hours: Refer to www.yin.org.tw
- Recommended stay: 30 minutes



4

Le Chat 路上撿到一隻貓

Le Chat, known as Lushang jiantao yizhima in Chinese (literally meaning picking up a cat on the street) is an Italian Café whose name was drawn from the owner's encounter with a stray cat. The then stray cat now has a name—“Baozi (leopard),” and has become the key highlight of the café. Ying-ying likes the vintage style of the café which gives it a cozy, homey feeling.

- Address: NO.2, Lane 49, Wenzhou St., Daan District, Taipei
- Business hours: 13:30~01:30
- Recommended stay: 30 minutes



▲ MTC Dragon Boat Team Members for the 37th year: Norio Goya from Japan (left), Mathias Théron from France (middle), and Nio Dolly Siswanto from Indonesia (right)

NTNU Dragon Boat Team— A Team that Shines with 37 Years of Outstanding Tradition

Winning Records
for 37 Years

■ Ying-xi Guo
Department of Special Education

Composed of international students, the NTNU Dragon Boat Team always steals the show when they compete in the annual dragon boat race in Taiwan.

The NTNU Dragon Boat Team was established in 1976, comprising international students from far and wide (mostly Europe, America, New Zealand, Australia, and Asia) who were then studying Chinese at NTNU's Mandarin Training Center (MTC). The purpose for MTC to organize the team was to promote international and cultural exchange, and to allow international students to gain first-hand exposure to the traditional Chinese culture through participating in the dragon boat event.

90 Days of Tough Training

NTNU Dragon Boat Team starts recruiting members in March every year, primarily among MTC students and alumni. Each year 70 rowers are selected from over 100 applicants to form the team. After members are selected, MTC would designate 2 experienced rowers as team leaders after which 3 deputy leaders would be selected by the team leaders and other members. MTC staff member, Ms. Ai-jia Zhuo serves as the team manager while Mr. Jian-guo Yen, Head Coach of Qunying Martial Arts School serves as the advisor to the

team to facilitate training and coordinate other matters concerning the race.

For the team that represents NTNU to compete in the Taipei International Dragon Boat Championships, training is extremely arduous. Since team members still have to attend their day-time classes, they have to wake up in early morning for training before they go to class. As the race date draws closer day by day, training gets more and more intense. Without strong self-discipline and the ability to perform under pressure, this would be a mission impossible.

The team trains from 6:30am to 9:00am from March through May. During these times, you may catch a glimpse of the team in training either at the stadium or the track and field. Items required in the training program include running, basic physical training, muscle strength training and stretching. Such training has to go on for 3 months. In the meantime, members also have to learn how to work as a team and strengthen their muscular endurance. After 90 days of non-stop training, the coach would assign members to different roles depending on their characteristics. In principle, the coach or well experience members are best suited for the helmsman position. For the drummer or the flag catcher, someone light in weight and quick in response would be the ideal candidate. Team members not involved in these roles would be responsible for rowing the boat.

37 years of bond with the NTNU Dragon Boat Team

Mr Jian-guo Yen has coached the team for 37 years since its establishment in 1979. His first encounter with the team happened in 1979 when he was serving in the army near the Zhongxing Bridge in Taipei. One day Mr. Yen came across a bunch of foreigners training hard for the dragon boat race. Seeing that the dragon boat was zigzagging across the river due to rowers' lack of paddling skills and poor team coordination, Mr. Yen quickly ran up to help. He told the team that rowing the dragon boat is a team sport. With 21 people on board, rowers have to synchronize and coordinate their moves as they paddle to ensure they reach the goal successfully and safely. Otherwise should the river suddenly rise or

the weather turn bad, the boat may tip over. Mr. Yen's volunteering to help thus sent him on a 37-year journey with the NTNU Dragon Boat Team.

With team members from all over the world, everyone on the team wants to showcase the best part of their country and culture. This has created a positive vibe that motivates and stimulates the team. Leveraging such nature of the team, Mr. Yen constantly reminds the team members of why they are here in the first place and what they want to achieve. Through a strategy that focuses on fostering a positive training environment and atmosphere, Mr. Yen facilitates his team members to reach their physical training goal in three months.

▼ Group photo of the NTNU Dragon Boat Team



Dragon Boat Team Leaders—Leading by Example

For 2016, Pavel Borissenko from Canada and Howard Zeke Li from the UK, both students at MTC, are the leaders of the NTNU Dragon Boat Team.

Pavel, a big sports fan who enjoys meeting new friends, first joined the team in 2014 in a hope of getting a taste of the unique dragon boat experience and getting to know more international friends. With his new responsibility as the team leader this year, he is committed to carrying on the tradition and spirit of the NTNU Dragon Boat Team. Rowing a dragon boat is a sport that requires a high level of teamwork. How the team members get on with each other would affect training effectiveness. Knowing this, Pavel tries to design different exercises to engage his teammates in the daily training so they don't get bored. Meanwhile, different exercises will also help team members get through the painful initial training so they can enjoy exercising their bodies.

"I always make sure to demonstrate every move in the training to everybody, instead of just talking them through. I also avoid giving negative feedbacks. I believe that's the more effective way to lead a team." Pavel emphasizes the importance of leading by example. When training with his teammates, Pavel would try to maintain a good rapport within the team. He chats with his team members casually to divert some of their attention so as to reduce their sense of frustration from the training. Pavel hopes that his teammates can spontaneously devote themselves to the team training and push themselves to do better.

As for the other team leader, Howard, he originally joined the team under peer pressure, but was later touched by the spirit of the team. To share the joy of rowing and to give back, he feels the need to keep the tradition going. That's what motivated him to be the leader of the team again. He also insists that team leaders should lead by example. He always personally demonstrates the moves before asking his teammates to follow, and expects nothing but 100% effort from his teammates. Howard sees the opportunity to serve as



▲ The NTNU Women's Dragon Boat Team

the Dragon Boat Team leader as a valuable learning experience. He learned that when you want other people to work with you, you have to motivate them from within so they would want to improve for themselves. Leading the team has given Howard a lot of precious hands-on leadership experience.

For the two team leaders, dragon boat rowing is no longer purely for racing during the Dragon Boat Festival. It's also a way to showcase the good chemistry, willpower and friendship of their team members, with whom they have developed a family-like bond. Howard said "dragon boat rowing is not like any other sport. When you are on the same boat, you have to work as a team. During the training process, we share the same experience, experience the same difficulties, and laugh the same laugh. We support and encourage each other." To the two leaders, the dragon boat race feels like a new one every year and always brings new challenges. While new members to the team are usually the attention grabbers, incorporating them into the team has always been the biggest challenge for the team leaders. Pavel thinks that the most memorable feeling is when mutual trust is built among team members.

