

中外教师外语教学经验交流会
材 料 汇 编

Papers by Chinese and Foreign Teachers
To the Second Provincial Symposium on
Teaching Foreign Languages

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Evening Activities at Hubei University

Ian Chunn and Susan Reaney

(Hubei University)

At Hubei University this year, we have tried to take advantage of some of the suggestions these papers put forth, and have set up several different English Clubs and spoken, as a group, on several topics of interest to the students and ourselves.

Two of the English Clubs are for students not in the Foreign Languages Department. Groups of 1984 and 1985 students come on alternate Fridays to a free classroom with lots of space.

Other activities we have enjoyed include,

1) a "Scavenger hunt, " in which the students ask each other questions, in English, in order to discover things like, "Who has the oldest grandmother?" and "Who has visited farthest away in China? "

2) Show-and-Tell, which gives students a chance to prepare some new vocabulary and share it with others. The listeners should be encouraged to ask questions of the speaker.

3) Bingo, which is a fun, slightly competitive game that builds up counting and listening abilities.

4) Crosswords, which may be worked out on a blackboard with the students in two teams, each taking turns. The game can expand vocabulary.

5) "Impossible Stories, "which encourage composition and listening abilities. A student prepares a story with a number of falsehoods in it, the other students are to call out when an error comes up, and say what is wrong. A typical sentence might be: "The other day, I took a walk on the lake, and looked up at the green sky."

6) Free Talk—question and answer periods, which can be fruitful, as can role-playing (e.g. going to the cinema, buying a train ticket, visiting a friend's family) .

The other club is formed of 1985 students who are studying in the Foreign Languages Department. They enjoy similar activities, as well as the chance to perform short plays. (Since they study together, they can coordinate rehearsal time much more easily than could students in diverse departments.)

A further activity which has been fun is getting the group of foreign experts together, roughly once a month or every six weeks, to discuss aspects of a selected topic

from our different points of view. Our topics included "Holidays and Festivals, " "Science and Technology, " "Children's Literature, " and "Music in the West."

The evenings usually work like this: we take turns speaking, and while one of us speaks, the others sketch or write vocabulary items on the board. we also ask questions of each other on points of interest. As with the English Clubs, the students (or rather, the audience--these are open lectures) are provided with an opportunity to hear different pronunciations of the same words, and be exposed to different backgrounds. The audience, too, may ask questions, and it's hard to conceive of a better opportunity for them to improve listening and speaking abilities than when they have (in our case) four native speakers at their disposal.

On the whole, Evening Activities seem to have been a successful and enjoyable adjunct to regular teaching duties, and give the foreign experts a chance to see new (and familiar) faces in a setting slightly less formal than the classroom.

湖北大学的晚间活动

依恩 邱 苏珊 莉尼

(湖北大学)

今年，我们采纳了第一次交流会上提出的一些有益的建议，在湖北大学成立了几个不同的“英语俱乐部”。并以小组的形式，举办了多种学生和我们自己感兴趣的讲座。

有两个“英语俱乐部”是为公外学生成立的。八四级和八五级的学生每隔一周的星期五来到俱乐部活动。活动项目包括：

1、寻觅 学生用英语相互提问，以求找出象“谁的祖母年纪最大？”“谁在中国旅游得最远？”等事情。

2、看图说语 这给学生一个机会准备新词汇同其他人一起学习。鼓励听者向说者提问。

3、数字游戏 这项有趣的、带有竞争性的游戏培养数数和听的能力。

4、填词游戏 分两组在黑板上轮流做，扩大词汇量。

5、离奇故事 促进写作和听力的提高。一位学生准备好一个充满谬误的故事，其他学生必须指出错误。说明原因。典型的例句是：“有一天，我在湖上散步，抬头看着绿色的天空”。

6、自由会话 收获很大，扮演角色（看电影、买车票访友）。

另一俱乐部由外语系八五级学生组成，由于他们在一起学习，组织起来比较容易，所以除了上面相同的活动之外，他们还有机会表演短剧。

还有一项有趣的活动是外国专家一起，每月或六周进行一次讨论。从不同的观点来谈一个所选的题目的各个方面。所选的题目包括：“假期和节日”、“科学与技术”、“儿童文学”和“西方音乐”。

晚上的活动是这样的：我们轮流讲，当一个人讲时，其他人在黑板上画草图或写上有关词汇。我们也就有趣之处相互提问。至于“英语俱乐部”，学生、或者说听众，有机会听一个词的不同发音，接触不同的背景。听众也可以提问。在这里，有四位外国人帮助他们提高听说能力是再好不过的了。

总的来说，英语活动开展得很成功，除了正常的教学任务外，我们也喜欢这些活动，因为这给我们外国专家创造了机会，在一个不象教室那么正规的地方接触新的和熟悉的面孔。

My Personal Teaching Experience

Mary E. Anderson

(Tongji Medical University)

I am a teacher at Tongji Medical University. All of my students are post-graduates with anywhere from three to seven years of sporadic English training. At this level the students are required to study English for one year and to pass a fluency exam before completion of their post-graduate studies. The students are also required to study and pass a German or Japanese exam. They need to master English primarily because most of the latest advances in medicine and science are published in English. In addition, as they progress in their research they are expected to publish reports and papers in both English and Chinese.

Tongji Medical University is often visited by foreign doctors and scientists who give lectures in their specialities to the staff and students. The lectures many times are given in English. Therefore it is necessary for the students to comprehend spoken as well as written English. Doctors and staff members often need to ask visiting specialist questions to clarify some points or to further their understanding. Unless a competent translator is available they must speak English.

The young doctors and scientists must master the four links of a foreign language, of any language for that matter, namely, speaking, reading, listening and writing. The text we are using (New Concept English Series by Alexander, Book 4) offers some very challenging readings which are typical of the wide range of English Writings. However, the texts fail to take into account the cultural experience of the non-western student. Therefore, the readings while being understood for the most part by the native English speaker, are often times beyond the comprehension of our students, whose knowledge of western culture comes mainly from television and movies.

These very bright students have little difficulty in understanding the words and phrases introduced in the text. They are able to readily incorporate the new terms into both their spoken and written vocabulary. But at times the underlying meanings and inferences are incomprehensible so cloaked in historical and cultural references that are far removed from the Chinese students-experience.

Chinese students study only those subjects that are pertinent to their major area. My medical students are well versed in all things pertaining to medicine and medical science, however, they know little about other areas. Those who have already completed four or five years in undergraduate programs, have not studied Chinese language, history, geography or philosophy since their high school days. Their knowledge of world by

the quantity and quality of the programs in their senior high schools.

Language being directly related to the culture of the people changes with variations in social conditions. Slang and colloquial terms are the modifications produced by the variations in economic, social, and educational condition. Since students majoring in foreign language and literature are usually required to study the history and culture of the language they are better prepared to understand the nuances of language. Whereas many doctors, engineers, technicians and scientists who study a foreign language have programs that leave little if any room for cultural studies.

On my arrival at Tongji Medical University in September I found a well-developed program in English. The students were divided into somewhat homogeneous groups by their scores on the entrance exam. They are required to listen and transcribe Voice of America's Special English programs. Moreover they are required to participate in extracurricular activities using English. One of these extracurricular activities is a bi-weekly lecture on some aspects of western culture.

These bi-weekly lectures, of which I am the main speaker, are the center of Tongji Medical University post-graduate cultural education program. The lectures, since I am an American, are based on different aspects of American culture—geography, history, customs. My lectures have been supplemented by visiting scholars and doctors from different parts of the United States who have graciously agreed to give off the cuff lectures on subjects related and unrelated to their field.

But this is not enough! Mr. Tien is always on the lookout for native English speakers living in Wuhan who would be willing to give our students a one to two hour lecture about their own country or their favorite subject. The difficulty in this lies not in the unwillingness of the foreign guest but in the foreign affairs offices and the departments that employ these foreign teachers. There is a reluctance to share foreign teachers. At times it seems as if the Chinese employers exhibit excessive possessiveness toward the foreign teachers in their departments.

One means of improving this condition and perhaps aid all the students in the Hubei Province in their study of a foreign language would be for the Hubei Provincial Education Commission to sponsor a lecture exchange program. The foreign teachers could list with the Educational Commission the cultural topics that they would be willing to speak on. Those colleges, institutions and universities interested in having an occasional lecture for their students could contact the commission to inquire about the availability of lecturers. The inviting institution would then be responsible for providing transportation and hospitality to the guest lecturer.

In this way the students would not only have the opportunity to learn about the cultural aspects of the foreign country but also hear the foreign language spoken by a wide variety of native speakers. The students, too, would get to hear the differing views of the foreigners since most have widely different opinions on many subject.

教学体会

玛丽·安德森

(同济医科大学)

我是同济医科大学的教师。我的学生都是研究生，在这以前受到3~7年的个别英语训练。在这一水平上，要求学生学习一年英语。在完成研究生学业后要通过流利的英语考试。学生们还要学习德语或日语并通过考试。首先，必须掌握英语，因为大多数最新的医学科学是用英语发表的，此外，当他们的研究取得成就时，需要用英语和中文发表他们的成果和论文。

同济医科大学经常有外国医生和科学家来访，他们给该校的教工和学生进行自己的专题讲座。在许多时候是用英语讲。因此，学生必须有足够的阅读能力和听力。为了弄清某些观点及加深理解，医生和教师常常需要向来访专家提问。如果没有翻译时他们就必须会说英语。

为此，年轻的医生科学工作者必须掌握好一门外语的四个环节，对任何语言都是如此：即听、说、写、读。

我们所用的课本（亚历山大的新概念英语第四册）提供了一些很需要的读物。它们是广泛的英语写作中的典型例子。但是，这个课本未考虑非西方学生的文化基础。因此，尽管读物大都能为说英语国家的人所理解，但常超出了我们的学生理解范围。因为这些学生对西方文化的知识主要来自电视和电影。

这些聪明的学生对课文中的单词和句子的理解没有什么困难。他们很容易就能将这些新词融于说话和写作的词汇中。但是，有时基本词意及其引申意须参考历史和文化背景才能理解，由于这些与中国学生的经历相距甚远。因此，就使学生难以理解了。

中国学生学习的科目只与他们的专业课题有关。我的医学生对于所有与医学科学有关的事物均很熟悉。但对其它领域的事却所知甚少。这些完成了四年或五年大学课程的同学从高中以后就未学过语文、历史、地理及哲学，他们对世界史、地理、哲学知识则更由于其高中课程的质量数量限制而缺乏。

语言是与人民的文化直接相关的，且随社会状况的变化而变化。土语和口语是随经济、社会及教育状况的改变而改变。由于外语专业的学生通常需要学习相应语言的历史文化，他们能够理解语言上的细微差别。而许多学习外语的医生、工程师、技术员科学工作的课程安排中几乎没有什么时间学习文化。

当我九月份到达同济医科大学时，发现英语课已经制定好了。学生们按照入学成绩分成程度不同的几组，要求他们听美国之音特别英语节目，并记录出来，而且用英语参加课外活动，其中包括两周一次的有关西方文化的演讲会。

这些双周演讲会，我是主讲，它们是同济医大研究生文化教育课程的中心。由于我是美

国人，因而演讲的内容是以美国文化的不同侧面为基础——地理、教育、历史、风俗习惯。此外，一些来自美国各地的访问学者和医生也给予与他们课题有关或无关的即兴演讲。

但这是不够的。田先生一直在寻找住在武汉，而又愿意给学生讲课的，以英语作为本国语的学者来给学生讲一到两小时的有关他们国家的文化或他们所喜欢的科目的课。困难不在于外国客人不愿意这样做，而在于外事等部门及聘请这些外国教师的单位，他们不愿意别人来借用外籍教师。有时中国方面似乎表现出对本单位本部门外籍教师的过度占有性。

改善这种状况的方法是，由湖北省教育委员会召开一个学术交流会，这会有助于全湖北省的学生学习外语。外籍教师可以向教育委员会列出他们愿意谈的文化课题。有兴趣让学生听一次演讲的学院研究所和大学可与委员会接触，寻问演讲的可能性。邀请机构负责交通及对演讲人的接待。

这样的话，学生不仅有机会学到国外的文化知识，而且可以听到各种各样的英语，且由于大多数人对许多课题有不同的意见，学生们因此可分别听到外国人各种不同的观点。

Experience in Teaching Literature to Graduate Students

Donald Baker

(Wuhan University)

Although my experience in China is short, my experience with Wuhan University goes back nearly four years. After some friends had taught in Tianjin during 1981-2, and told us at length how interesting their year had been, I applied to the Chinese government for a university job for a year. A few months later, the English Department of Wuhan University responded, in the form of a letter from Wang Guoqiang, inviting me and telling me about the new MA program at Wu Da, then less than two years old. It was a three-year program, a program of very unusual length, when one is accustomed to one and at the most, two-year programs in western universities. But as Wang explained it, the reason was simple, and the length of the program was necessary. Since English students had spent their undergraduate years immersed in the language, with exposure to a very small number of literature courses, the MA program naturally had, in a sense, to begin again, with training in literary research and criticism, with writing research papers, which none of the students had done, by way of preparation for the master's thesis, which was to be written in the third year. It seemed interesting and challenging, and we were eager to come. I had just retired from the University of Colorado, and had, in common with most such people, found that I missed the classroom rather more than I had expected to do. My arrival at Wu Da was to be delayed for three years, however, because of illness in the family, but when we were once again free, we found the program still available.

On our arrival, we had experiences much like those of everyone here, and I need only list the types, so as to present my credentials, so to speak. In spite of the fact that I quickly learned to like and respect my Chinese colleagues, and now know nearly all of them (in this I suggest we have an instance in which criticism by my predecessors from the West has had an effect, for as you will see if you read the reports by others who taught language and literature at Wu Da, one of their chief complaints was that they never got to know anyone--in our case, there was a faculty meeting at which we were carefully introduced to everybody, and most took pains later to mention their names again so that my western sound-deafness to Chinese names would gradually be overcome). I was impressed by their seriousness and idealism. Although I at first found the rather limited facilities difficult to adjust to, such as not having an office, having

to wait weeks for duplication of teaching materials, having few or no texts, and having to resort to stratagems familiar to peoples under siege in order to overcome them, I found to my surprise that I responded to these difficulties with enthusiasm and considerable amusement. The only thing that really threatened to drive me around the bend was the difficulty of getting information. No one really seemed to know the kind of hard, ineluctable facts that in America, Canada, or Britain, are usually to be gathered from a departmental secretary. When did classes really start? I was given three different people, each of whom, when I asked them, adopted the look of a hunted animal being cornered. As a result, I appeared, with a complete collection of notes, for one lecture for a graduate class two weeks before the students did. I had no idea that in the years since my retirement, which have been devoted to research, that I had become so starved for an audience. On my way back to the Wai Zhao, when I passed the free market, I had a momentary temptation to park my bicycle, start ringing the bell, and announcing loudly that I had Greek mythology and early English literature for sale. Fortunately, I did not, for the local residents already have quite enough stories about crazy westerners.

During these weeks in limbo, when I was contemplating the possible quality of the Chinese graduate students I would encounter, I had would encounter, I had the occasion of meeting one of my youngest colleagues, who just finished his master's degree last spring. He would have been in my beginning graduate class had I been able to come to Wuhan in 1982 as originally planned. I learned that his master's thesis had been on Shakespeare. Extremely curious, I asked to read it. He was clearly both flattered and worried, and a couple of weeks went by before he produced a copy, pieced together from several imperfect ones, typed on paper which I have come to know so well, which resembles newsprint of western tabloid newspapers. My heart sank. As I began reading, slowly I began to ignore the somewhat florid prose style, which is derived of course from the fact that training in Chinese universities is drawn from the better English 19th century essayists like Macaulay and De Quincey, and 20th century English essayists who in turn imitate them, and to realize that I was reading the entirely original remarks of a brilliant young man, who was intimately familiar with the most difficult figures of speech in one of Shakespeare's most difficult plays, and wrote with enthusiasm in a form of the language which Samuel Johnson would not have found foreign. The student had not read enough, but then he had had no opportunity to. My first experience with Chinese graduates on their home grounds was thus very encouraging.

My own classes I found the mixed bag of students that you are all by now accustomed to. A few were very young, had just graduated and were preparing for a clearly-conceived career as teachers of English who were adding a literary dimension to their preparations. Others were budding journalists, still others were hardened veterans

of the Cultural Revolution whom you have all met-people in their early or middle thirties who have already done and seen more than most people in their lifetimes. People of maturity, steady determination not easily defeated by lack of books and facilities, or anything else. Many were trained to be mathematicians, engineers, nurses, anything but teachers of English. All had done their years as rice-planters, sewage haulers, chicken feeders, latrine-cleaners. Their attitudes seemed a strange but healthy mixture of bitterness, amusement, and cynicism. But their motivation was indeed strong, and the experience of teaching this mixed bag of people has been one of the genuine pleasures of my academic life. The only period of my career with which it can be compared was that of the years immediately following the second world war, when a stream of high-school students was blended with a remarkable assortment of men and women who had been through hell took nothing for granted, brought an extraordinary breadth of practical knowledge and experience to their studies, and mixed cynicism and enthusiasm in something of the same way.

I do not of course recommend either a world war or a cultural revolution in order that a by-product of better student motivation may be achieved; I merely point out that some advantages accompany most human disasters.

Although I discussed my plans for the semester's work with my colleagues, most of what I have done has been in response to the immediate problems of my students, as I perceived them after our first meeting. The first was that although they had read a number of complete works of English literature in Chinese translation, none had read a major longer English poem in the original. None had written a long paper, either a research paper or a critical paper, and they were now engaged in a program which would culminate in the writing of a master's thesis of about a hundred pages. And none had written any work which required the usual documentation, use of footnotes and preparation of a bibliography. The second problem was that, although my survey was to begin with Beowulf and go as far as Milton, none of the students, in spite of their intensive linguistic training, had ever encountered the English language in a form older than Shakespeare and usually even in Shakespeare their experience in the original did not go beyond a single play. These were the specific problems for my course: my other problems were universal; not enough text books, few books in the library, a very small collection of periodicals, etc.

About the first problem, there could only be one solution. Beowulf had, of course, to be read in a modern English translation, and I had anticipated this by bringing ten copies, to which three other copies were added from the University library and from the departmental reference room. This for thirty students. However, they cooperated fairly well in spite of the usual Chinese student reluctance to let go of a text once he has his hands on it. I spent one whole meeting on Anglo-saxon language and the versification of Beowulf. I fully expected that they would be mystified and bored to

death, but we were saved by the students' interest in language and their curiosity about poetry. Most learned nothing, really, of course, but did get a sense of the language in its infancy when parallel sentence structure was the usual, before the language fell into its mad habit of subordinating clauses to one another. They perceived that the paratactic syntax perhaps bore a relation to the way the events of the poem were put together. And they also responded to the poem as to something which was familiar to them. In spite of poems great emphasis upon individual action, it has, of course, an overriding emphasis upon action undertaken for the common good. The fame that Beowulf seeks is the fame for being a mighty warrior, a good king, always considerate of his people. This, together with the fact that the poet's technique is to leave all physical description to the readers' imagination, allowed my students almost to see in Beowulf one of the early half-mythological Chinese emperors famous for quelling the flood and relieving his people. This emphasis in Chinese culture, of course, far antedates Marxism, and is, I believe, entirely non- or a-political, however political the language in which it may be expressed. Beowulf the poem seemed to be a success in spite of some rather dull and historical which I delivered on the subject.

The next experiment was with Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. A considerable part of this poem we attempted in the original middle English, a difficult chore because its dialect is strange even to students who can read Chaucer. But I felt it necessary because the powerful stanza form is very difficult to reproduce in modern English, and has a fascination of its own. But the main challenge of the poem lay in its shift from the austere- outward-looking heroic figure of Beowulf to the concentration upon the interior man, the focus of the romance upon sensibility, the and world of manners and symbolism. Again a connection was found, different from that of Beowulf, but equally rewarding, with Chinese culture. They students were fascinated by Gawain's pentangle, the remarkable symbolic cluster of adventures in threes, the symbolism of the lady's green girdle, and, of course, the disconcerting figure of the Green Knight himself, stalking into the warmth and selfassurance of Arthur's court like the roar of a wintry wind through a door suddenly blown open. Again, a success, producing several papers on the symbolism of the poem, some delightfully and almost puzzlingly subtle.

I had been intoxicated by the success of Beowulf and Sir Gawain, and I longed to begin Chaucer. Here, alas, we encountered our only serious setback. Although the students remained afraid of Chaucer's language, we had done the General Prologue, and the Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale in the original, and most seemed to have no real trouble, aided as they were by the fine notes of A. C. Cawly. The difficulty lay in defining a perspective, and here our political problems arose. For Chaucer is, of course, one of those English poets, like Shelley, highly favored by Marxist critics. The students were prepared by years of Marxism classes to like Chaucer. Because, of course, Chaucer was a satirist. And he satirized the dying culture of the

Middle Ages, particularly the church, the rising bourgeoisie, the declining chivalry, etc. etc. ect. I explained that if one liked Chaucer simply because he satirized something, then one was missing most of Chaucer. Satire, I argued is merely a mode with Chaucer. Dozens of medieval poets satirized the church, chivalry, marriage, courtly love etc., etc., ect. but we don't read most of them. John Gower is a more consistent satirist than Chaucer, and far more socially conscious, but is a far worse poet. I had in short a reverse of my usual experience in teaching Chaucer in America or England.

I did not have to explain to my students what Chaucer was satirizing and why; here my students knew that, and knew far too much of it. I had to argue and demonstrate that Chaucer's fascination with people far transcended his satire. Such a character as the Wife of Bath could not have been created by someone whose purpose was simply to satirize pushy women, or church hypocrisy about marriage and sex. Nor is the Wife simply a 14th-century forerunner of Womens Lib. She is a worldly-wise woman with a keen sense of her own importance, an equally keen sense for the false [and pseudish and hypocritical, and with some fairly Christian ideas about gentility. But more than anything, she enjoys life; "It tickles me about my hertes roote that I have had the world as in my time." The students began to see that easy political labels had no place in the description of such a full-blooded character, that labeling demeaned such a character and forced a four-dimensional figure into a one-dimensional frame. I have not seen it as my duty, naturally, to denounce Marx and Marxist. I have in fact used Marxist terminology wherever I have found it useful. But I have been very much aware that some of the best students have hopes of studying in the west, and I would be guilty of unpardonable neglect if I left them with the notion that their ideas about literary criticism were adequate for they might encounter. And, in any case, without knowing quite what to do about it, they were more than just a little aware of this weakness themselves. The Wife of Bath proved a splendid subject for trying out critical wings. As with Beowulf and Sir Gawain, I received some papers which, though marred by a certain oriental floridity, idiomatic lapses and occasional back-to-front sentence structure contained some gems of insight. I do not mean, of course, that my students papers have been unalloyed gold. There have been the usual desperate plagiarisms, about which I have been understanding, some very awkward and weak attempts at literary discussion, and some essays absolutely devoid of any organization whatever. Some clearly will not make it through to their master's essays, for there is simply too much to make up and not enough time. But Some will, triumphantly. I am in fact writing an essay now about teaching Beowulf in Wuhan, which will be illustrated by half-a-dozen comments by my students which contain insights of value which I have read in no publication. One remark puts a critical truism into an entirely different perspective. Writing about the function of the many digression in Beowulf, my student shrewdly observed that the digressions might have been, for many of the poem's