

翁子涵

Good afternoon. Today my topic is: Get more sleep to succeed. After becoming a college student, we are occupied by many things, so every night we stay up late. Most of college students will put their heads down and take short naps in between classes. It seems that they are always lacking sleep. Well, today I would like to point out the importance of getting more sleep if you hope to succeed!

Let me begin with our life cycle, yes, the lifecycle of a university student. Usually, we stay up late, and of course, we will get up feeling tired. So throughout the day, we yawn and doze off in class. We promise ourselves that we will not stay up again and will go to bed earlier. However, due to all these things that happen in our life, we stay up late again. As you can see, this is a vicious circle. We stay up late, we regret it, we do nothing about it, so nothing changes.

But sleep is very important for our life and our success in life. Sleep will make you healthy: it strengthens your immune system, helps to restore your energy, and reduces depression. Besides, sleep will keep heart diseases away and help you stay in shape. Moreover, sleep improves our learning abilities too: it reduces stress and improves memory, it helps you concentrate better and spurs creativity. All in all, sleep helps you to succeed.

However, this does not mean that you should sleep too much or too long. The best plan is to get to bed early so that you can have more sleep and get up early. As the Old Chinese proverb goes: your day's plan depends on the morning. Here is an interesting comparison. Let's presume 11 pm is the perfect time to go to bed, and you have class at 9 am.

First lifestyle: You choose to stay up late and study until 2 am. You may have done 3 hours of studying, but because it is getting very late, you are all tired and the studying does not go so well. You wake up at 8 am to get ready to go to class, with only 6 hours of sleep. Naturally you doze off in class.

Second lifestyle: You choose to go to bed at 11 pm. You sleep well for 7 whole hours and wake up at 6 am. Between 6 am and 8 am, you still have 2 hours of clear-headedness to study because you have enough sleep. And what you have studied in the morning will stay fresh in your mind for your classes during the day.

Maybe you think losing one hour of sleep per night won't affect daytime functioning, and you prefer to gain one more hour to study. But losing that hour of sleep can affect your ability to work, learn, create, and communicate. 6 hours of sleeping is simply not enough. Most healthy adults need between 7 to 9 hours of sleep to function at their best. On the other hand, getting enough sleep and waking up early will give you a clear mind, better concentration, and efficiency in learning. Above all, you can stay healthy! All these advantages will lead you to a successful life!

So, my advice for all of you: Go to bed earlier, sleep more to succeed!

洪詩涵

Today I'd like to share with you my thoughts on the movie "Avatar." I chose this film because it is closely related to some of our readings this semester, and it also makes us think more deeply about environmental issues.

"Avatar" is not just a fictional animated film, but a film that warns us about the damage that humans bring to nature. The main characters in the film went to the Pandora planet because they have been hired to explore the forest resources for profit. In this process, the company uses all kinds of machinery to destroy the trees, the animals, and even the indigenous people, and the movie clearly shows the dark side of human nature when it is filled with greed. In the second half of the film, the scientists stood up against the military and worked with the Navi people to protect the planet. And finally the animals, the trees, and the Navi people, with the help of the scientists, defeated the military and the company. In the end of the film, a Navi and a scientist died. The Navi got together and pray to their goddess Eywa, hoping to bring another scientist back to life. I was very impressed by this scene because nature is sacred to the Navi in a way that modern people cannot really understand.

I think there are two important lessons in the film. First of all, even though the scientists seem to be good guys helping the Navi, we should not forget that they are also hired by the company in the first place. In other words, even the good guys may not that good. Secondly, Pandora is the home to the peaceful Navi people who live in harmony with nature, but humans proudly think that they can give a better life to the indigenous people. In fact, when humans come, the Navi way of life is almost destroyed.

It is very interesting that in the film, the hero is a handicapped person. He is considered useless in the human world, but with the help of technology, he could become very powerful as a Navi. The film shows how he learned to love the Navi way of life and gradually identified with them. When he learned that his companions are going to destroy the Navi, he turned against earth people and fought alongside the Navi. In the end, he almost gave his life for the Navi. He and the scientist who died in the battle redeemed all the bad things that the other humans did.

Through Avatar, we clearly see the selfishness of humans, and the preciousness of nature. The film reminds us to appreciate and protect nature because, as the Navi say: "all energy is only borrowed and one day you have to give it back."

李佳霓

In our readings this semester, I am most concerned about “the story of cosmetics” and all the toxic chemicals that may be found in our daily use of shampoo, lipstick, or nail polish.

My sister bought a bottle of shampoo for me for my birthday the other day, it is claimed to be all “natural and simple.” Its color is red and it says its ingredients contain different kinds of red berries. However, I don’t trust this “specially-made” shampoo because I smelt it and instantly felt the smell is too strong. My mother has told me that natural stuff should only have light fragrances so I have always distrusted strong fragrances. Actually, I am afraid of them. Our dorm had a cleaning lady who cleans the restroom and bathroom for us. I sometimes chat with her. One morning when I was brushing my teeth, she told me that there were many strands of hair on the ground in the bathroom and the loss of hair may have been caused by our shampoos containing too many unknown chemicals. My mother also had told me that when I use shampoo, I should try to use as little as possible and try not to wash my hair every day.

All these experiences warned me about the chemicals in shampoos, but the nail polisher is another big problem. These days, many girls like to put nail polish on their nails to improve their looks. But there are already too many acknowledged toxic chemicals in these nail polishes. I don’t like nail polishes either because the strange smell often makes me think of plastics. And the bright color also alarms me. It must be a sign of strong toxins.

I am saddened when I think of all the chemicals that pollute our life nowadays. Science has brought prosperity to us, but there is a price to pay: our health is getting worse every day as we lather chemical products onto our bodies. We are actually dying slowly and unconsciously, the victim of a heavily chemical world. But isn’t this also our own fault, as we are the ones who choose to use such products? In fact, there are other less harmful shampoos that we could have chosen. But somehow we chose to use the fragrant and colorful but toxic ones.

I have seen a movie called “The Legend of 1900.” I will show you a short clip now.....The pianist decided to end his life on the ship because he thought living in this world with so many choices and stuff is really beyond his decision. I think we are facing the same problem now. Even though many responsible cosmetic companies are already putting safer products on the market, and green chemists are working on reducing the toxins, we should also be more aware of our own choices. Thank you.

巫文凱

Last week, one of my teammates reported on the production of the chickens that we eat almost every day. I was interested in the report because I never thought about this topic before. Then I read in our reading that different parts of the chicken are favored by different cultures. That reminds me that we Chinese seem to enjoy the inside of not only chickens, but also of other kinds of animal. Even though now we are aware that it is rich in saturated fat, cholesterol and calories, and is bad for our health if we eat too much of it, it is still very popular in Chinese cuisine.

The organs inside animals are called “the offal,” which means the non-muscular part of slaughtered animals, such as the internal organization and internal organs. Eating offal has been a cheap source of protein in many cultures and is quite tasteful. Take for example the blood. In our culture, blood is used to make blood sausages and blood cakes. It is a main source of iron but also has more fat and cholesterol. The intestines (豬腸) are also popular because people believe it would help you lose weight. But of course it has to be thoroughly cleaned and cooked before eating, or else you might run into something that is not so tasty. The liver is rich in protein, iron and Vitamin A, but tastes fishy and is high in cholesterol. The tongue is a good source of iron and protein, but has high saturated fat content, so it is preferable to cook it with water and for a long time. Nowadays, there is another offal delicacy that is becoming very famous--it is the spicy goose heart. It became famous after a news program reported that a famous killer likes to eat spicy goose heart because the heart is also a good source of protein. It won't make you a killer but it will make you unhealthy if you eat too much of such food.

Although eating internal organs is common in the Chinese society, it seems that western cultures think we are barbarian for doing so. But let's not forget the French also consider goose liver to be the most precious dish in French cuisine. They call it Foie gras and it is very expensive. In fact, Westerners eat as many kinds of offal as we do. For example, horse heart, sheep face, calf brain, duck heart, pig mouth, cow belly, pig lung, duck tongue, pig ears, cow heart, cow kidney, marrow, cow liver, cow tongue, pancreas, chicken lung, cow face, etc. So in that sense, there is no reason for Westerners to look down upon us. Food is just food and we need to make use of food in order to survive. At least we are not wasting.

柯馨怡

The class has almost come to an end, and I think I have learned a lot and got many inspirations through this class. Looking back at the lessons we had in this class, the most impressive issue for me is “The story behind the Selfie.”

This report has challenged the old saying that “pictures always tell the truth.” In the report, three leaders from different countries took a selfie together in the memorial service for South African former president Nelson Mandela. The picture sparked controversy, and all the media reported it negatively. Actually when I first saw the picture, I was shocked and furious too. I thought it was ridiculous for people to do such a casual thing as taking a selfie at the funeral, especially when they are world leaders, significant role models that represent their countries! However, in fact the journalist just wanted to show that even the leaders of countries can act like normal people. Moreover, based on the culture in South Africa, the funeral should be happy and celebrated by everyone at that moment. So it is normal for people to sing and laugh at that time. After seeing the explanation of the journalist who took this picture, I felt very embarrassed because there was no difference between me and the irresponsible media: we all tended to use our own opinion to judge others first, rather than truly understand the whole story.

The misunderstanding of pictures makes me think of one of the classic scenes in popular TV drama. A girl sees her boyfriend hugging another girl and becomes furious and wants to break up with her boyfriend. In the end, she'll find out that the girl her boyfriend was hugging is actually his sister. It is one way to tell the audience not to believe what they see through their eyes. Though the principle is easy to understand, it is really hard to achieve, for our emotions often rush to our heads too quickly.

This picture also reminds me of one other serious problem--what about the pictures of the past? This time, the selfie can be explained because the photographer is still alive and can explain what really happened. However, the historical pictures, whether photographed or even drawn in the past, have already lost their creators. How can I be sure if the pictures are what they seem? Who can tell the story of what really lies behind the pictures? Perhaps we will never know the truth! It is a horrible feeling that the text book and the history I have believed in my whole life may be actually false!

This is what I have thought many times after taking this course, and I am learning to always question everything and never take for granted the knowledge I have learned since I was a child. I may not have all the answers, but I will try to consider more things before I make a judgment.

蔡宜軒

Today I want to talk about Hallyu. In recent years, Korean songs, Korean singers, Korean TV drama, and even Korean cuisine are sweeping across Taiwan. Why does this phenomenon occur? How can Hallyu fascinate so many people?

K-pop is really popular among teenagers, and it has some characteristics which are different from Taiwan's popular music. Korean entertainment industry created many idol groups, and these groups not only have good appearances but also well-crafted performances. Furthermore, before the debut of the groups, members have to go through a series of rigorous training so their artistic level is really high. And there is a toxic quality to their music and dance steps too, which are widely imitated by teenagers.

Besides, Korean entertainment companies use other strategies to attract fans. They often create certain group images for their performers, and the performers have to stick to these images whenever they appear in public. The entertainment company would make fans feel that the idols have good relationships among themselves. This is their strategy, because they know that fans love to see the natural interaction among group members whether in public or on private occasions. The friendship not only holds the group together but also holds the fans together.

Korean TV shows have also achieved successful product sell in Taiwan. They have many types of programs, such as music shows, talk shows, game shows, and situational shows (情境節目). Some shows are really quite creative. For example, this is a show in which two famous performers must somehow fall in love during the program. This is a new topic for us, so we will be attracted by these new things.

Although Korean entertainment industry is really successful, the stars are under enormous pressure. There is a site that introduces the bitter process of becoming a performing artist. (in PPT) If you want to be successful, you have to give up your family, your friend, your lover, your freedom, your health, even your life. In fact, in the past years, quite a number of Korean stars committed suicide. Although hallyu is really successful, how many people know about the hardships behind the lives of these glamorous stars?

黃郁容

After nearly a semester's oral training, from the individual sharing famous quotes to group representations of different worthy discussion topics, every one of us has experienced tons of speaking opportunity in front of the whole class. Most of us might rarely have the opportunity to speak in English in our daily life so often. Even in school, there is seldom chance for us to communicate in English in class, not to mention having a speech or presentation in English in front of the crowds. Therefore, not until we finally start to talk in full English did we realize how poor our English might be. Perhaps our English proficiency isn't as good as we thought.

Even giving a speech in our mother tongue language isn't that easy, not to mention speaking in a foreign language. But after a semester of watching other classmates perform, we noticed that everyone has his or her own characteristic in speaking, and there are always a few presentations that can draw more attention than others. There are some common features among those people who are outstanding in speaking on stage. First of all, they are not intimidated by standing on stage, while others experience butterflies in their stomachs when getting on stage. There is definitely no way that you can do well on stage in that state. Second, the successful speaker always has a clear and loud voice. The audience is attracted by your words only if they can fully understand you. Third, cadence. A dull voice bores the audience, but a speech with different tones keeps the listener attracted and continue to pay attention. Fourth, an interesting content. Just like reading a book, no one like to hear boring stuff.

It may be a good idea to recall the faces that impressed you in class or in daily life: politicians, businessman, celebrities, such as Obama, Steve Jobs, Oprah, etc. We rely on language to communicate with each other, so learning the skills of being articulate is a great advantage.

Nobody is born to be good at something. What determines who is more outstanding is who will put in more effort. In the end, perseverance is the key.

徐資雅

I learned a lesson in the first oral training class of this semester. That is, you need to read the syllables carefully and be well prepared, especially in the first class.

In our first class, those who didn't bring a quote were assigned one. I got a quote which was spoken by a famous inventor, Thomas A. Edison. The quote "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work" indicates that the process is more important than the result. No matter success or failure, we certainly have learned something from our precious experiences. I remember I had added a sentence at the end of my introduction. That is, "Maybe he will succeed in the 10000 and 1 time." After my presentation, Jo told me that the main point of this quotation was not about success or not, but the knowledge which Edison had gained via the 10000 times of trying. This comment gave me a new aspect to analyze quotations. In the past, we all regarded famous quotes as a doctrine of encouragement, but actually there are many more meaningful things in a short sentence. Jo inspired us to think and to decipher sayings in more creative and more unique manners.

No matter in the East or in the West, there is the same saying that "Seeing is believing." This slang tells us that if there is an image for something, then we can believe it because the evidence is there. But the article on "that selfie" gave us a lesson to reconsider what we should believe. The story behind that selfie was written by the journalist who had taken the selfie of three well-known politicians during South Africa's farewell and funeral ceremony for Nelson Mandela. Somehow this image seemed to win more attention than the event itself. The photojournalist stated that he accidentally took this picture in a relaxed carnival atmosphere in which South Africans were singing and laughing to honor their departed leader. Simultaneously, he captured a stern look of Michelle Obama, but in fact it was just this very moment after she had joked with those around her. So this article totally subverted our recognition of the three leaders' indecent behavior during a solemn occasion, or our initial belief that Obama was being disrespectful to his beloved wife while taking a selfie with a beauty besides her. This article proved that seeing does not equal believing, particularly when we do not possess a full understanding of the issue. Consequently, we should both look carefully and understand it fully before delivering our comment, and do not blindly follow the opinion of the public.

Throughout this semester I learned a lot and became more active and will still keep progressing in the future days.

黃佑竣

The Oral training class I am taking this semester is a course that widely broadens my view. The topics we discuss in class are all inspiring and sometimes even shocking. For example, in the first week, I learned that photos could tell stories totally different from the truth; in another week, the professor asks us to visit an art exhibition of Vemere which I never thought I would have the interest to go. From environmental issues like green washed products to cultural impact like Korean wave, these are topical issues in our lives. However, beyond all these impressive lessons, what stimulates me the most is a question Jo once asked in class.

“Why do we study English?” She asked.

The first idea that came up to my mind is that with the ability to communicate with foreigners, I could have a better career and could enjoy living in a “high-class” foreign lifestyle. However, Jo’s answer was a punch directly in my face. She said “Learning English is not for you guys to lick American asses but to kick their butts!” I was totally embarrassed and could not make a sound. All I could do was to shout to myself “Shame on you!” again and again in my brain. Jo said that people are disgraceful if they worship foreign things and envy foreign powers. Western countries are no doubt strong, but how could we keep flattering them and lowering our own poor self-esteem? In studying English, we understand western thoughts, we learn their merits and improve ourselves. Learning their language is not helping them to exploit us, but to let them know we are on the same level. No way could they bully us.

This talk Jo made in one class might seem to be just a passing statement, but this lesson had definitely changed my thoughts 360 degrees.

劉婷昀

In this semester, my favorite lesson is the one on Korean Wave. Although we know that Korean Wave is current nowadays, few teachers take it as a course subject because many people think it is a sensitive topic. Now, I want to share my views about Korean Wave.

Actually, I was not a fan of Korean Wave before. I became a follower of Korean Wave only after I came into contact with Korea dramas and found their stories always brought me surprises. From the dramas, I gradually learned about Korean culture and came to love it. First, I love its language because I think it sounds cute. There are many words in their language that sound like auxiliary words in Chinese. And, I love Korean cuisine very much, especially kimchi. In addition to Korean culture, I am also keeping up with developments in their creative industry.

But I am not blindly crazy about Korean super idols and Kpop. I have never spent my money on any concert or fan meeting tickets because they are always expensive, and I think the money can be spent to help more people in need in the world. Instead of spending my money there, I only choose to scream when I share my favorite idol with my friends or download pictures of my idols as my cellphone background or stay up late to immerse myself in Korean dramas. That's the extent to which I would go to show my fondness of the Korean Wave. I can't endure it when some people show their disdain when I talk about my favorite Korean culture. I don't like to be treated as a traitor.

It is strange that fans of Lady Gaga or fans of Japanese animation films are never looked down upon, while those of us who like Korean cultural products are somehow considered to be inferior. There is also the same attitude toward Korean merchandise, such as Korean refrigerators or Korean cellphones. When the costumers choose Korean merchandise instead of local brands, they are criticized for not loving our country enough. However, when people buy clothes from Japan or the US or other countries, they do not receive much criticism and are often envied. There is obviously some discrimination here.

One time, when my classmates and I discussed a news about an accident of Korean airline in an American airport, she thought that Korean ambulances hit the passengers and she said "Korean dogs" immediately. Yet, in fact, it was the American ambulances that did it. When she was corrected, she said that maybe there were gaps in coverage so that the drivers caused the accidents. This was a real example that I encountered.

I am not partial toward Korea. I still love my country, Taiwan, more than Korea. I just want to speak my mind. I think every country should be treated equally. Even though Korea did something shameful in some athletic games before, we should show our self-cultivation in judging the matter as it stands and respect everyone's preference.

徐郁蕙

Good afternoon, everyone! Today I would like to take the chance to thank my teammates who have taught me and helped me a lot throughout this semester.

First, I want to thank Tzu Tzu, who always has something on her mind and makes marvelous presentations for class. As everyone knows, she is a member of Student Ambassadors and she also takes some courses in the French Department. Though she always says she is a leisurely person, as her roommate, I know very well the magic of this busy bee who performs everything perfectly. I remember at mid-term, Jo asked us to report our visit to the Vermeer exhibition. Before we went to class, I saw TzuTzu working on her power point for the presentation. I wondered whether it was necessary to do so much for one report. However, after listening and watching her presentation, I learned that the more you prepare, the more you will get, and your audience will be more impressed about your report.

Next, I'm going to thank Frances, the girl who always strives to be perfect. She's also busy this semester for she joined the summer camp of NCU English Department and has to work part-time to prepare for the camp. Busy as she is, she still works very hard in this course. For example, in the second half of this course, when we have to work in groups, Frances always volunteers to be the person who goes on stage for our group, because, as she says, she wants to overcome the nervousness that keeps her from making perfect presentations. Her courage has inspired me too as I watched how she progressed in pronunciation and presentation. I think our team is growing stronger together during our discussion and practice.

Next I would like to thank Gary! He became our team mate because Jo said that every team must have a boy. Honestly, before that first day of class, I don't think we knew you at all. However, after working together with you in this course, we recognized that you are a very charming and responsible person. Since your performance on stage is always so delightful, we often ask you to make the conclusion part to liven up the atmosphere after we presented our serious and a bit boring presentations, and you lived up to our expectation every time. Thank you for your effort and we look forward to the chance to work with you again soon.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Angela!! I think she is the most mysterious member in our team. I am always puzzled by her fluent and beautiful presentations but we never knew when she did the preparation and practice. Then I realized that she watches American and English talk shows such as the Ellen show and Conan O'Brien's show regularly. And after Jo told us that the 2014 Oscars was worth watching, Angela stayed up late that night to watch the show and practice her listening and speaking. Many teachers had encouraged us to be in touch with English as much as we can. Having lived with this living example of the result, now I believe I should do the same to improve my oral and listening skills.

And finally, I want to say a big thank-you to all my teammates. You have been supportive and encouraging throughout the semester, and every time we have our meeting, all of you prepared your parts so well that I wish I could be more like you. Now at the end of the semester, as we say goodbye for the summer, I wish you all happiness and a fruitful vacation. Thank you.

鍾明君

Hi, today, I'm going to talk about the phenomenon of selfies.

This course began with two lessons on selfies that left me thinking for quite a while. In the first lesson, we talked about the boy who dressed himself in a girl's uniform to teach us how to take pure and innocent selfies. He used facial expressions and deliberate postures to tease at the phenomenon of fabricating selfies. Then in the next lesson, we read about US President Obama's controversial selfie at South African President Mandela's funeral. Both stories taught us an invaluable lesson: we simply cannot trust what we see by our eyes these days.

We now live in a world where visual images affect people's perception, so in the internet world, people put up specially angled selfies to hide their real looks. They also judge others according to the latter's sophisticated pictures and decorated posts. In the end, people exchange their names, looks, and words without exposing their hearts. We may find comfort from the virtual community, but lose our passion for the real world.

Some may say that girls put up hundreds and even thousands of selfies because they want to catch men's attention. But in fact men also take a lot of selfies wherever they go and whatever they do these days. I think they do it not just for creating good images but also to prove to others that they have an interesting life. So they take pictures all the time and keep a record of even the smallest meaningless things they do. This may be a sign that instead of **doing something** that makes a real difference in our lives or other people's lives, we are busy trying to present our boring life as meaningful. That, I think, is the most important lesson about selfies.