

羅元君

The most memorable lesson this semester is the lesson on the memorial of Mandela. It not only raises the question of the fake interpreter but also the controversy over the selfie Obama took during the memorial. At first when I saw the news of Obama taking a selfie at someone's memorial, I thought he was both rude and offensive. But after learning that South Africa has its own customs and attitude toward death, it changed my way of thinking. Death is not considered as a sad thing in South Africa but something that is supposed to be full of joy and celebrated. It is the media that were rude and disrespectful, because they did not understand the culture of South Africa. Moreover, they should not impose their own cultural values above others. Come to think of it, I really appreciate the way South Africans treat death. Since we all can not escape death, why not face it with joy and celebration?

The part that shocked me the most was that I had thought the same way as the media did. I realized that I was not thinking independently, and my response was influenced by the US-centered media. That leaves another question in my mind: how much is Western culture affecting us or controlling us? This question is what Jo has mentioned in another class: why do we worship western culture so much? We should stand up for own culture. We are learning English because we want to be able to fight the influence of American culture, not to flatter Americans by doing whatever they want us to do, and thinking whatever they want us to think. This class has taught me many things and the most important is to always look at things from various different angles.

徐郁蕙

At the end of this semester, I have to confess that I didn't study hard enough. Though I had promised myself that I would give it all I have got, I often relaxed my will to fight. For example, at the beginning of this course, Jo had said that she used to go to the river bank of NCCU every morning to read English while she was in college. It was at that moment that I decided to follow her example. What's ironic is that I overslept the very next morning and I never got up early to study. Jo had also consistently urged us to absorb useful knowledge from all kinds of sources, from watching American and English TV shows to learn our listening and speaking to watching Chinese TV programs to learn developments in that very different world. I had hoped to do it, but so far I haven't done any watching at all.

Although I have failed in many of my plans, I still learned a lot from this class. First of all, I've learned from my teammates the right attitude in preparing for classes, or even in preparing for our lives. Also, from listening to every presentation made in class, my listening comprehension has advanced a great deal. Now I can understand almost every word. Last but not the least, I had been quite awkward in making presentations in English for I didn't have that much enthusiasm in English and speaking English makes me anxious. Through Jo's insightful instructions and encouragements in every class and email, I recognized my problems in pronunciation and presentation and I know how to improve them now. What's more, I also detected that the more presentations I make, the more I want my audience to understand what I am trying to say. And this desire to communicate has really changed my attitude to

English. I now enjoy speaking English and I hope I will continue to improve. For that, I want to thank Jo and all of you for helping me to progress step by step.

黃郁容

Do you remember the first time we had Jo's freshmen oral training class this semester? I remember that I was full of curiosity about the famous professor that everyone is talking about and meanwhile a bit nervous about the stern atmosphere when no one knows what the teacher expected us to perform on stage. I remember the first time when I went up stage and shared my quote about Steve Jobs, "Stay Hungry, Stay Foolish," the comment Jo gave me was that I was being moralizing and that's not what an intelligent speech should be like. I had rarely been criticized since I started to learn English in kindergarten. English has always been a subject that I didn't need to put too much effort on to acquire a high score or a good performance. However, my belief that "my English proficiency is better than others" was shattered after taking this course. I realized that my English speaking has become rusty from lacking practice. As I watched the huge improvement of everyone else in class and felt my own inadequacy, I began to cherish the opportunity to speak on stage every class and have a chance to revise my speaking styles. What I gained from this class the most, however, is a new attitude in viewing my college life and learning. There is so much more to learn in daily life than my narrow vision allowed, and I am determined to strive to reach a higher goal.

林詩賢

Hi, I would like to share a feedback from Jo several weeks ago that really made me think. Let me try to phrase it in English. She said, "You're a little screw and you are like a little ant." I was shocked that this was the feedback I got for my quote presentation. I had just read my script aloud and carefully on stage and I thought I did quite well. Why, then, did the teacher say I was a little screw and ant?

I have thought about the question over and over again since that day, and I think the problem is I always deliver my speech in a voice without much variation in tone. My audience cannot feel any enthusiasm in what I say, and as a result they don't find much interest in listening to me. This has always been my problem when I speak in public, even though I had practiced my script many times before coming on stage. The outcome reveals that I should try harder to add more expression to my voice in order to persuade my listeners. I know I am cowardly and I'm not the leading kind. In the past, it was ok since I did not have much chance to really express my thoughts. But now that I am in college, and I have to make presentations all the time, I need to seriously think about changing myself and stop being a screw and an ant.

Today I'm standing here because through this oral training class, I have gradually found my own voice. And now when I am on stage, the teacher and the classmates seem to listen to me and understand me. I'm very happy now that I can share and express my thoughts with you without much fear, and I hope I will keep on growing and changing in the coming years. Thank you.

鄭雅方

Today I would like to share an important lesson that I learned in this oral training course: be active in learning.

An old saying goes, “Learning is like a boat sailing against the current; we either forge ahead or get swept downstream”. This proverb teaches a very simple piece of wisdom from our ancestors, but it is more necessary for our generation. Born to the age of knowledge explosion, we have to keep learning every single day and broaden my horizons so as to survive in the face of competition from all over the world. We have to equip ourselves with knowledge and competitiveness, or we’re going to lose. However, active learning is what most Taiwanese students usually lack. We have been relying on what is taught in class, yet obviously it is not enough. Taiwanese students can do very well in academic performance but are usually too passive in learning something new by ourselves. I think that’s why Jo asks us to check her website regularly to acquire the latest information. Active learning means not only an attitude toward studying but also a sense of responsibility for ourselves. And we will benefit from it for the rest of our lives.

廖元儷

As I’ve mentioned in my previous presentation, I was caught by the belief that good English equals to having no special accent. But in this course I learned that the purpose of speaking English is to communicate with people worldwide and broaden our views, instead of imitating or pretending to be a person that comes from the English-speaking nations. I used to be a bit proud of myself for being able to listen and understand the English in Western movies without the help of subtitles. But when Jo taught us that merely understanding American English, the kind of accent that we are familiar with, is not truly knowing English, my pride was shattered. I thought of my Japanese friend who speaks English with a heavy accent. I often ask him to repeat his words during our conversation and secretly tease his accent in my mind. I did not even try to respect and understand the features of his original language system. After a bit introspection, I realized that his English is actually quite good, because gradually I got used to his accent and can talk to him easily. This experience and the lesson I’ve learned in this course gave me a huge wake-up call that I still have a lot to learn about languages and about the world. The way to communicate with people from different countries is not demanding them to speak the “correct” English, but demanding ourselves to diligently learn more about the different varieties of English that are spoken worldwide.

吳昭穎

Good afternoon everyone. There are four things that I learned from this course that I would like to share with you. First of all, in quotation presentations, I learned how to expand my own thoughts from the original quotation. This training is very useful because it encourages us to develop various perceptions on one issue. Second, I learned the importance to control the ups and downs of the tone when we are speaking English. For example, if a sentence isn’t finished, we are not supposed to lower the tone. Or, when we use clauses that begin with the word “that,” there

should be a pause before it and the connecting words should not be stressed. Third, the different themes of the course content—from the quotations to the selfie, to the new technology, to environmental issues, to food safety problems—opened my eyes and ears to issues that I had never met before. The world is huge and there are many things to learn. That's why Jo reminds us to never be content with little pleasures for we need to learn to arm ourselves to face the competitive world. When I see my hardworking classmates, I feel that I need to work much harder. For example, 子涵's attitude and diligence. She not only studies the sources in detail but also adds her own ideas. This is what I lack and should be my aim to cultivate myself. Last but not least, I would like to thank JO for giving us an influential and impressive course to broaden our horizons. Of course, I also want to thank all of my classmates. You have helped me see my disadvantages and helped me improve myself. Thank you all very much.

吳昭穎

Good afternoon. My topic is: the magic of rearranging a house. Many people have a similar question: why is my room still messy after I have tidied it up many many times? Well, today I'm going to introduce an expert who will help you solve the problem.

I got my ideas from a book by a Japanese house arranging counselor, Kondo Mari Megumi. She started to read housewife magazines since she was five years old, and started to do research about house arrangement when she was fifteen. Now, she is a professional house arranging consultant. She once said, "After a thorough house re-arranging, not only our thoughts, lifestyles, but also our lives will have a dramatic change." Here are some of Kondo Mari Megumi's customers' feedback after their houses have been rearranged. "I found my childhood dream, so I decided to quit my job and start my own enterprise." "I realized what is necessary for me and what is not, so I divorced my husband. I'm really happy now." "After rearranging my house, I enhanced earning for my company." "I unknowingly lost 3 kilos." Can you feel a little sense of her magic in arranging a house? So now, let's talk about her basic principle of arranging a house.

I think her number one principle is to clean out what is no longer needed or meaningful so that you know what is left to be arranged. If your house is filled with all kinds of souvenirs, there is not much you can do to rearrange things. And don't think you can just put them out of sight and they will disappear. No, they will still be there, occupying precious space. So leave only what makes your heart beat faster and get rid of all the other stuff. If an object doesn't give you some special feeling, or you haven't used it for years, then just get rid of it. Don't waste space. Always remember, when you are saying, "I'll use it one day," the day never comes! Of course, there is an important reminder: don't let other family members see what you are throwing away. Well, I think it's no need to explain the reason. If they see what you are doing, your efforts will surely become in vain unless you can change their minds.

This number one principle is very important in rearranging the house as well as in rearranging our lives. Perhaps we are keeping all this stuff because we are obsessed with the past instead of living for the future. Of course we should treat

what we already own with sincerity, but we also need to get rid of what we no longer need so that our life will be refreshed and we can go on with a new arrangement. So, the next time you clean out your room or rearrange your house, think about cleaning out your life and rearrange your mind too. It will really make a difference.

柯馨怡

This is the last speech I will present in this class, but it is definitely not my best yet. I want to talk about some important skills I learned in this class. I used to greet my audience loudly as I began my presentation; however, Jo reminded me that my tone was so heavy that it sounded more like a command than a friendly greeting. So now when I say hello to my audience, I always remember to soften my voice. The second thing I learned is that if my sentence hasn't come to the end yet, I shouldn't lower my tone. Or else my audience will think that I have finished my thought, and it makes my sentences sound choppy too. Jo also told me that I often confuse the long 'a' in words such as "great" with short "a" which makes it difficult for my audience to know what I have just said. Now I will pay more attention to the words with "a" in it.

I like Jo's teaching style very much, she is really cool. She knows many new and popular things, from news to drama. And she tends to question things rather than accepting them easily, which really influences me a lot. It is Jo who tells us: "Don't accept facts and opinions easily; try to ask why and find out more information first." Thank you, Jo! I will try to remember all these lessons and use them well in the coming years.

李佳霓

I didn't practice oral speaking much in the past. Though my reading comprehension has greatly improved by reading novels, I never took care of my oral skills until this semester. In this class, I learned many new words that are very useful and informative. Also, I found that I could speak bold and fluently, and I realized that I am somehow improving gradually.

I learned a lot from some classmates. Tsu Han, who works very hard for each presentation, amazes me. And Danica, who is profound in her thinking fascinates me by her confidence. June is the one who impressed me the most. She seldom sends her script to Jo, because she thinks every time she looks at her script, she finds something imperfect about it, and she'd like to adjust it. Besides, she doesn't write many words, she wants to challenge her reaction when she's on stage. The most important thing is, her way of talking, the air of her speech always holds charm over the audience. She puts her own opinion in it, and her speech is usually entertaining, making the audience want to hear more. I hope to be more courageous like her.

There are also other classmates who inspired me in different ways. I think this is one of the merits of taking this oral training class: we see our own deficiency when learning from others.

翁子涵

P.1 Good afternoon. Today is the last class and I am going to share with you my final reflections on the Oral Training course. I remember my pronunciation was awful not only because of my French accent but also because of lack of practice. After a semester of oral training, I realized simple words have the most difficult pronunciations. So it is important to articulate and pronounce words clearly and in the right way in order to let others understand us.

P.2 It is still difficult to pronounce certain words that sound similar, but I can tell we are improving. At least we know we should pay more attention when pronouncing them these words.

P.3 For example, word and world.

P.4 War and wall.

P.5 Now that we know where the problem is, knowing how to improve one's pronunciation is another important thing.

P.6 You can type in "pronunciation" on Youtube and you will find millions of videos which can help you. I found a Youtube channel which is called Pronunciation book. It has many videos that teach pronunciation.

P.7 And of course, there are still many other ways to improve our pronunciation. You can choose to watch talk shows, films and TV series. You can listen to the radio and practice with friends. Most of all, practice, practice, and practice, which is the only way to succeed.

P.8 This semester we did lots of presentations, almost every week! Here I would like to share a tip for preparation.

P.9 Since I don't have a super smart brain or super sharp memory, I always write down my script and practice with it before going on stage. If today I am going to give a speech along with a powerpoint, I will write down what should I say and mark it with the number of the corresponding page. It would be easier to memorize and the speech will be well organized. However, to give a speech without peeking at the script and to have the wit and courage to range beyond the written script are the most difficult things that we need to master.

P.10 We still have a long way to go. But after a semester of oral training, at least we had found the right way and the right attitude to do our learning.

蔡宜軒

Time flies, the oral training course will be ending soon. In this class, I learned a lot and realized that my classmates's English level is quite high because they are really good at expressing themselves and they have enough courage to speak English in public. This is what I need to learn. In the first class, Jo told us to think about how to explain a quote, and she gave us 30 minutes. This was a test for me because we had to prepare a short presentation in 30 minutes and deliver it in public. I still remember that tension. But day after day, I gradually overcame the fear and nervousness when I delivered my presentations. Thanks to the weekly presentation, I think I have made some progress in this course.

After the quote presentations, we entered the next part of the course when we had to prepare group reports. I learned how to divide up the work fairly so that

everyone has a role to play. I also learned a lot from working with others. 元儷 and 子涵's presentations are always informative, and they can clearly and fluently convey the topic and contents to us. 昭穎's accent is my favorite. I think her accent is really nice and her voice is really tender. 元君's spot reaction is really good. She can answer sudden questions without much hesitation. I really admire that. In fact, in this class, both the professor and my classmates are all great models for me.

I still remember Jo saying, "You cannot blame people for having an accent that you find difficult to understand; you have to be able to understand every different accent if you claim to know English." It really taught me a lesson. Not everyone's English accent is really standard, but we still have to understand what they are saying. In addition, we must shape our own accent to let everyone understand what we are saying. If we make strong demands on ourselves, then we will progress. I really love this class because I learned a lot in it. Thank you, my classmates, and thank you, Jo.

王慶華

Good afternoon. Today, I want to share my feelings with you concerning this course. At the beginning of this semester, when I learned that everyone needs to take the oral training course, I was very worried about it for I was rather afraid of speaking English. In the first oral training class, everyone needed to explain a quote prepared by Jo. "No cliché!" upon hearing Jo saying that, I became more nervous. At that moment, my head was filled with lots of things except the explanation for the quote. Seeing my classmates stepping to the podium and giving their presentations, I thought to myself, "Oh my god, it is nearly my turn." My brains were empty; I could not focus on what others were talking about. Finally, it was my turn to say something about my quote. I stepped forward, stood without facial expression, and recited my quotation and the explanation. After going back to my seat, I was very happy to have finished it. Just like every time when I completed my oral report, I knew that I could do better but I was still pleased to see my own progress. And I learned that a few-minutes report needs lots of efforts to prepare and practice. What's more, making your contentions clear is necessary. If no one understands your report, your efforts are all wasted no matter how much time you spent on it or how much you studied for it.

徐資雅

After a semester's training in English speaking, the most crucial lesson I have learned is to slow down when I speak English. Not only English but my Chinese speaking speed is relatively faster than my peers. Although I have been reminding myself of this matter, I haven't made too much progress in the semester and for good reasons too. Firstly, habits are hard to break. Once we get used to speaking at a certain tempo, changing it would affect the fluency of our speech. Secondly, stage fright sometimes get in the way and affect our performance. Naturally, we respond by unwittingly accelerating our talking pace. Aside from the speed problem, emotion is also significant in speech-making. When we put our own sentiments into the speech, our audience will be drawn into the content of our talk and experience our thoughts. They will feel interested in what we say and this is what motivates us to

prepare more and talk more. My target is to speak as fluent, clear and informative as Jo, so I will continue to practice to become a good speaker. Thank you.

鍾明君

At the beginning of the semester, I tried very hard to get into this class but was not successful. On the first day of class, I came to this room hoping that I could persuade the teacher to take me in. When Jo asked all the students to give their first presentation right in class, it frightened me, but it also taught me a good lesson on how I should always be ready. Fortunately, I got in. As the weekly class unfolded, I gradually understood that “always be ready” takes the efforts of paying attention to all the things that happen around us and even far away.

My problem in pronunciation is that my long vowels are not long enough, and there are some sounds I do not pronounce clear enough. After being corrected by Jo several times, I now read very carefully when seeing the long vowels. But it is still not good enough when I get nervous on stage. I understand my pronunciation would take more time and more efforts to improve, and I promise myself I will keep working at it.

劉婷昀

At the beginning of this semester, when I settled upon this course, I didn't know how lucky I was and that I would be transformed in the following classes. I have always lacked confidence on stage. I was ashamed that my English pronunciation is not standard enough, so I was afraid of giving speeches in front of people. However, in this course, Jo always encouraged me and waited for me to improve patiently so that I can be relieved to speak my mind.

To continue to improve my pronunciation, I think I will actively listen to the Ellen's show and imitate her pronunciation. But, the most important thing is I should conquer my fear of speaking in front of people. Nobody can really help me to remove the obstacles but myself. Through giving presentations in class, I have learned about the importance of clear logic and central ideas. And from the practices every week, I am gradually developing the ability to clearly express my thoughts instead of repeating the moral lesson. This course has really broadened my horizon and I will continue to improve my speaking and my thinking.