



應用外語學系

National Taipei University 國立臺北大學
Department of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics

Newsletter

FLAL MAY ISSUE 2004

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😊 ANNOUNCEMENT

🎉 Congratulations! Our Department's First Graduates!

Our department finally has the first-year graduates! After suffering comes happiness. Our seniors suffered through the three-year predicament in Sanshia and hard studying, and they have gained the knowledge and special experiences on this campus. We heartily wish our seniors achieve their final goals and make their dreams come true.

Welcome to join the "Graduation Party!"

Time: May 22, 2004 at 6:00 P.M.

Location: Taipei Hero house

🎉 Well Done!! The First Golden Voice Award

The first Golden Voice Award [GVA(金嗓盃)], sponsored by our departmental students' association, ended successfully on 7 May with ten student-teams' and three professors' marvelous performances. Since we are foreign language majors, only foreign language songs could be performed in this award. Professor Chen, our GVA supervisor, also expressed that he hopes the GVA could become a tradition in our department.

Following is the name list of GVA's winners:

Overall (performed song)	The Most Popular Teams	Judge's Award
No.1 S Soul (When You Believe)	No.1 Four Classical Divas featuring Mortals II Men (In The End)	BBSix (Darling)
No.2 Veritas Chung (Moon River)	No.2 S Soul (When You Believe)	
No.3 Four Classical Divas featuring Mortals II Men (In The End)	No.3 BBSix (Darling)	

By Mavis 洪敬慈 & Cindy 陳盈心

A Special Column for Our Senior!

The Department of Foreign Language and Applied Linguistics in National Taipei University was founded in 2000. This year, we are so proud that we will have our first-year graduates. The column is made exclusively for them to leave messages to their fellow-students and professors. We hope it will provide a wonderful ending for their college life!

1. About their plans after they graduated this year:

According to our survey, we divide the graduating students into three categories. The majority of them will look for jobs as soon as they graduate. The second group will go further study at home or abroad. Most of them will stay in Taiwan for TESOL, linguistics or even journalism while the others are preparing to study in the U.S.A or U.K. The minority of graduating students will postpone their graduation for a minor degree or preparation of the graduate school entrance exams in the coming years.

2. Reflections or feeling of being the first-year graduates in FLAL department:

As the first generation of FLAL, our senior had suffered a lot at the beginning of studying at Sanshia, especially in Sanshia Junior High School. Now, they will graduate, how do they feel? “Parting is a sweet sorrow,” said Pauline. “I feel lonely and helpless,” said Maggie. And Sagbr felt very special. Some think that it is too hard to describe their feelings and that life is full of uncertainty. Others are proud of FLAL and learned a lot from these unique experiences. Still others wish everyone in FLAL a good luck.

3. Messages for professors and juniors:

In the following paragraph, we quote messages for professors and juniors from some of our graduating students. As they expressed in the survey, we know that everyone is grateful for professor’s instruction.

► *For professors—*

- “Dear professors, you are the persons accompanying us through lots of difficulties! We are quite thankful!”—Scott
- “Our professors are all excellent. I am proud of entering this department.”—Anonymous
- “Thanks a million for all you have done for us! I am certain that I could not have achieved so much without you.”—Percy
- “I am indeed grateful for our dear professors’ care and teaching during the four years.”—Thelma
- “Thanks for some of your hard work, it inspired me a lot!! Special tribute to Sy-inn Lee!!”—Anonymous

► *For junior—*

- “What a great fortune to be a member of FLAL! We are the best! So you gonna try your best!”—Scott
- “Nothing to say.”—Percy
- “Work harder than you do now.”—Pauline
- “Work as hard as you can and be mature!!”—Maggie
- “Life sucks! Be prepared!”—Anonymous

We appreciate what they have shared with us. We wish them a promising future. Because they are the first group in FLAL department, they have formed traditions such as Christmas Party and held the first graduation “senior plays” by their own creativities and efforts. We hope we can learn from their independence and model ourselves on them.

By Sharon 戴瑋諄, Wendy 廖苑君, and Cindy 楊明珮
Special thanks to Sonnie 劉紘彰 for distributing and collecting the survey

Enjoying Hot Springs

In the brisk and flourishing springtime, what would be a good place for relaxation?



Indeed, where a hot spring locates is just the perfect spot for people to spend their

weekends. Nowadays, hot springs in Taiwan are really “hot.” Enjoying the warm and cozy temperature of hot springs seems to come into vogue in recent years. Actually, the chief attractions of hot spring spots are the magical sanitary effects of springs on human bodies, the comfortable and pleasing environments offered by the hot spring hotels, and the scenery near each hot spring spot.

Taiwan is an island gifted with springs both affluent in quality and quantity, and different kinds of hot springs have various therapeutic functions. Take carbonic acid spring (碳酸泉) for example: Lower in temperature than other kinds of hot springs, it improves the blood circulation and the function of heart and vessels without triggering the heart to beat too fast. Well-known springs of this kind are in GuGuan (谷關), LuShan (廬山), and SiChongXi (四重溪). Another famous kind of hot spring is sodium bicarbonate spring (碳酸氫鈉泉) which can moisten the skin and soften the cuticle of human body. It pretties up women’s appearance and therefore has a local name, “beauty spring.” People can visit one of

them in WuLai (烏來), JiaoXi (礁溪), and ZhiBen (知本). The third sort is sulfur spring (硫磺泉). It is also called “rotten egg spring” for its special smell. Soaking in sulfur springs helps relieve itches and detoxifies the skin; thus, it is good for curing chronic skin diseases. Springs of this kind can be found in Yang Ming Mountain(陽明山) and BeiTou (北投). However, despite their various functions, all hot springs share the same quality—they help relax muscles and speed up metabolism.

Hot springs are not only healthy to human bodies but also quite effective for releasing pressure from intensive and fast-pacing city life. Nevertheless, it is not only the hot spring that is so tempting; besides emphasizing on the quality of spring, many spring hotels now make more efforts on the surrounding environment and additional facilities such as spas, swimming pools, and gyms. Some hotels even have their own restaurants, bars, or cafés, providing nice food and music. Having a nice massage in a room full of the balmy fragrance of the essence oil is also a smart choice after one has enjoyed the hot spring. All in all, what comes with the hot spring will definitely satisfy tourists from top to toe.

As a lover of hot spring, I recommend two wonderful spots: one is the Zhao Ri spring (朝日溫泉) in LuDao (綠島), a small island in the south-east off Taiwan, and the other is JiaoXi spring (礁溪溫泉) in YiLan (宜蘭). Adjacent to the Pacific Ocean, Zhao Ri spring is famed

for its rare and special formation: the sea water infiltrates through the layers of the earth, and being heated by terrestrial heat, it then oozes from the crevices of rocks because of the intense pressure underground. Zhao Ri spring is exceptionally treasurable because it is the one of the only three saltwater springs in the world; the other ones are in Japan and in Italy. Besides, the spring is even more beautiful and amazing than its name has indicated. In Zhao Ri spring, tourists can view the touching sunrise at dawn, colorful twilight at sunset, and starry sky at night.



Imagine how romantic it is to free oneself casually in the spring, listen to the sounds of the ocean, and at the same time feel the temperature of the water changing with the coming tide. In addition to the special hot spring, the natural ecology in LuDao is well-preserved. The rocky coast is spectacular with amusing shapes, such as the Mermaid Stone (美人岩), the General Stone(將軍岩), and a dog-shaped mound. Tourists can also take an adventure with the local tour guide, looking for wild spotted dears at night.

Finally, one should not miss the chance of scuba diving. With the guidance of professional divers, tourists can experience the cool and refreshing seawater by themselves and have colorful sea fishes swum around; if lucky enough, one can touch the slick skin of beautiful tropic fishes with his/her hands. I believe the distinctive spring and the paradisiacal island will never let tourists down.

The other nice place for enjoying hot springs is JiaoXi (礁溪). The hot spring there is sodium bicarbonate spring. The center of the spring is close to the train station and the area within 1.2 kilometers is the “spring area,” where there are nearly one hundred spring hotels. What satisfy me are the reasonable prices of the spring hotels. Tourists can decide which hotel to stay according to their budgets and will hardly find the service unworthy of the charges. In addition, there are many nearby scenic resorts worth a visit, such as the WuFeng Waterfall (五峰瀑布) and the JiaoXi Park (礁溪公園). Tourists can even go a bit farther to the LuoDong Sports Park (羅東運動公園), rambling about the park by bicycles or merely by foot, and appreciate the amazing scenery there. The winding streams, the tranquil lake with ducks roving about, and the thriving trees in the park are all man-made yet extremely natural, real, and beautiful in an artless way. People who are natural lovers will truly fall in love with JiaoXi and the countryside near it.

Although enjoying hot spring is a recreation for people of all ages, there are

still some points for attention. First of all, choose a hot spring with unquestionable safety and good condition of sanitation. Second, do not stay in the hot water for too long; it is safer for people to soak in the spring for 15 minutes and then get up for a rest of 5 minutes. Repeating this process for 2 or 3 times is enough and suitable for our bodies. Third, expectant mothers and people who have high blood pressure, heart diseases, or diabetes should consult the doctor before stepping into hot springs. Also, in case of indigestion or other symptoms, one had better not stay in the hot spring on a full

or empty stomach, nor should one who is drunk.

So far you have had adequate knowledge of hot spring; what are you waiting for, then? The charms of hot spring are waiting for curious visitors to explore. I am sure you will have an enjoyable holiday finding the fun of hot spring. Why not pick up a towel, hit the road right now, and remember to “soak yourself all in.”

By Joanne 魏嘉慧



Poem 1

In the intersection of my mind,
I wandered through this eternal puzzle,
Where no roads seemed to be clear,
All so gloomy, so obscure!

And all the way down through the river of memory
The childlike shadow of the seeming me I chased
Until the sparkling exit embraced me,
Slightly, warmly, gently.

And when I awoke, I knew this was
The homeland of vitality,
The heaven of serenity,
The world of eternity.

By I-ling Wang 王伊琳

Red Curtain Trilogy

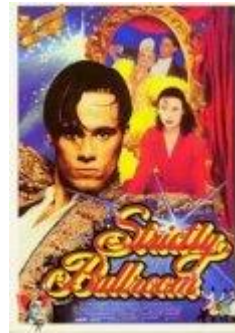
Anyone who has seen the movie *Moulin Rouge* would definitely be astonished at the flamboyant settings and the splendid music and dance in the film. If not for *Moulin Rouge*, who would ever find out that Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor can sing so well, and who would ever have a single clue that the dance scenes can be presented so spectacularly in a movie? And believe it or not, all these magical works put into *Moulin Rouge* can not possibly be done without the hands of Bazmark Anthony Luhrmann, a 41-year-old Australian director who has directed only three films to date.

The three movies that Baz has directed include *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), *Romeo + Juliet* (1996), and *Moulin Rouge* (2001). Besides being the director, Baz was also the screenplay writer of these three. Although the storylines of the three movies are based either on a widely known myth or a simple—or you may even say hackneyed—plot that one may have read in numerous storybooks, Baz can indeed use his creativity and unique vision to give these three movies a brand-new look, unlike the typical Hollywood movies. These three movies are also known as Baz's "Red Curtain Trilogy," since they all have displayed a theatrical style of storytelling and had the same purpose—raising the extent of audience participation.

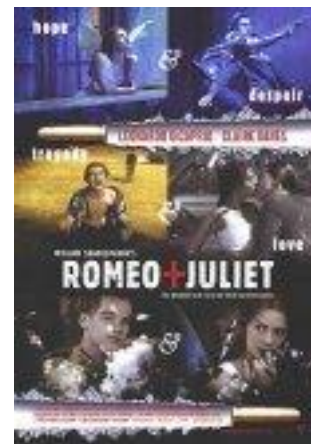
All these movies have several characteristics in common. First, the storyline is simple and plain, and the

audience knows clearly how the story will end right from the beginning. In *Strictly Ballroom*, a championship ballroom dancer challenges to break the rules of the traditional ballroom dancing, and partners with an ugly duckling girl to dance his self-invented moves. As for *Romeo + Juliet*, it is no doubt adapted from Shakespeare's great love story, except that the whole story changes its setting from the 16th century to the present day. The third piece of the *Red Curtain Trilogy*, *Moulin rouge*, gets its general idea out of the Orpheus myth. It tells about a young talented poet and musician, who descends upon the infamous but glamorous nightclub in Paris, and falls in love with the star in the nightclub; the story ends up a tragedy. As we can see that the storylines of the three movies are clear and straight; also, Baz has adopted a unique way of telling story by inserting images that forecast the ending of the movies. For example, in *Moulin Rouge*, when Satine sings the song "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend" in the dance hall, the image of her dying look flashes by, and therefore let the audience to foresee her death, due to the disease of consumption. Although the storylines are never the core of Baz's movies, they will definitely do no harm to the splendor of the movies; instead, they create more room for Baz to give play to his imagination and make the movies more unconstrained and rich in their artistic aspect.

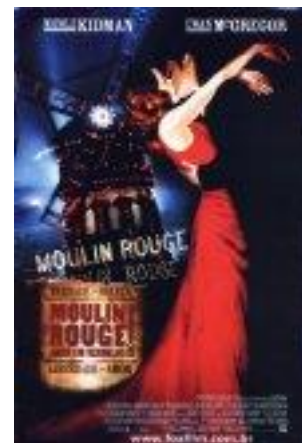
The second characteristic these movies have is that the backgrounds of the movies are always set in reality. *Strictly Ballroom* is set in the ballroom community in Sidney; *Romeo + Juliet* in modern day Miami; and *Moulin Rouge* in a nightclub in Paris, 1899. Concerning this aspect, the most noticeable among the three may probably be *Romeo + Juliet*, since its primary story is set in the 16th century. In Baz's movie, he has adopted the original Shakespearian dialogues, yet has put them in the background of the modern generation. In the new version, Romeo and Juliet are the son and the daughter of two opposing gang families, and the weapons used are guns instead of swords. But this innovation creates a new problem; that is, how can all the references in the original Shakespearian lines fit in the reality nowadays? Baz has a clever solution to the question. He has made good use of imageries in the movie to make these lines sound reasonable, even in a completely different setting and age. The most representative example is how Baz has transformed the word "sword" into a different meaning in the scene of the two opposing gangs' confronting. When Benvolio, the cousin of Romeo, encounters Tybalt, the cousin of Juliet, at the gas station, he said, "Part fools, you know not what you do!" Then the camera zooms towards his gun and reveals the brand name—Sword 9mm Series S. Later when he cries out to Tybalt, "Put up your swords!" the meaning of the word "swords" became apparent instantly.



Strictly Ballroom (1992)



Romeo + Juliet (1996)



Moulin Rouge (2001)

The third characteristic is that each movie has a certain device that thrusts the story to go on. In *Strictly Ballroom*, it is clearly the dancing; in *Romeo + Juliet*, the iambic pentameter; and in *Moulin Rouge*, the songs that the characters burst

out singing. The devices not only are the characteristics that make these movies more vivid and exhilarating, but also serve as reminders suggesting to the audience that they are watching a movie. And this is the way Baz has used to arouse chemistry between his movies and the audience; that is, to make the audience feel more participative and enjoyed.

“A life lived in fear is a life half-lived.” This is a line from *Strictly Ballroom*, and I think it can best describe Baz’s attitude towards movie-making. In the arena of movie, Baz is always a pioneer who has abundant energy and great courage to explore something new.

He invents his own way of interpreting stories, and never limits his vision to the cinematic boundaries. His creativity and talent that he invests in his movies are by all means a gift to all the audience.



Bazmark Anthony Luhrmann

By Monica 張雅億



Poem 2

One black carpet is stumbling,
I can read his innocence,
through his blue eyes.
You can smell his shyness,
while he swing to and fro.

He is a portable buffoon,
earn each laugh without making a joke.
He is a mobile signboard of happiness,
quiet, soft but effective.

Tell me. Who is he?
Well, he is a little puppy live on love land.
with long beard, but not senior.
He is everyone’s little Tiger.



By Hanna 劉翰瑜



TOKYO DISNEYSEA



Tokyo DisneySea is a theme park with seventy percent of the area filled with water. It is also the first amusement park of sea in the world. Opened at Chiba, Japan in 2001, DisneySea is different from Disneyland because DisneySea targets adult tourists. There are seven ports in the park—*Lost River Delta*, *Arabian Coast*, *Mermaid Lagoon*, *Mysterious Island*, *Mediterranean Harbor*, *American Waterfront*, and *Port Discovery*—each has its special theme. The themes are about the myths and legends of the sea and are full of adventures and romances.

Every amusement park has exciting rides, and so does DisneySea. In *Mysterious Island*, there is an attraction called *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Tourists take a submarine to go undersea for an exploration trip. *Indiana Jones Adventure* is another exciting facility which is located in *Lost River Delta*. In the *Indiana Jones Adventure*, tourists have to take an adventure in the jungle to search for the Fountain of Youth. In order to find the Fountain of Youth, tourists ride in jeeps running through the bumpy mountain road to dodge the big rocks which rush down the mountain. An amusement park cannot be fun without roller coasters. Of course there is a roller coaster in DisneySea. It is called *Flounder's*

Flying Fish Coaster which is located in *Mermaid Lagoon*. The shape of the coaster is a long and colorful flounder. It runs in a high-speed with tourists screaming on it. All these facilities are thrilling and breathtaking. The exciting rides bring lots of fun for people who like adventures.

The main targeted customers of DisneySea are adult tourists, so besides the exciting facilities, there are more transportations for tourists to take and to enjoy the beautiful scenery in the park. There is *Transit Steamer Line* in every port. Tourists can appreciate different scenes of different ports on the steamboats. In *Mediterranean Harbor*, tourists can take a relaxing trip along the waterway by Venetian Gondolas. On both sides of the waterway are buildings reminiscent of Venetian flavor. Tourists can enjoy a European afternoon with the exotic and charming scene in *Mediterranean Harbor*. In addition to the transportation on the water, there is also a railway in DisneySea. It is an elevated electric railway from *Port Discovery* to *American Waterfront*. On the elevated old style train, tourists can overlook the whole park. If you want to take a glance of the full view of DisneySea, it is a good choice to take the train.

Though the targeted customers are adult tourists, there are still play areas for small kids. After all, kids love Disney. In order to cater to small kids, there is *Ariel's Playground* in *Mermaid Lagoon*. It is an adventure playground with many colorful settings such as big turtles and crabs which

children can climb on them. There is also a tunnel which children can crawl through it. The playground is designed especially for small kids.

DisneySea is not only a place for playing but also a good place for dating, because there are many nice restaurants. *Magellan's* in *Mediterranean Harbor* is a table-service restaurant with elegant decoration. It has splendid light and furniture of the sixteenth-century style. It is a romantic restaurant for fine courses and wine. There is a giant traveling ship called *S.S. Columbia* which berths at the port *American Waterfront*. On the second deck of the ship is another recommendable restaurant — *The Teddy Roosevelt Lounge*. It serves drinks and light meals. It is embellished in a luxurious but comfortable atmosphere. Tourists can enjoy a novel dining experience on the ship.

Furthermore, there are nighttime entertainments in the park. DisneySea gives a firework display in the night. 300 fireworks brighten the dark sky with the accompaniment of beautiful orchestral. Tourists can watch the show from any spot of the park. The program of the firework show and the songs will be changed from time to time. Tourists can end a day by watching the fascinating firework show.

DisneySea is such an interesting, creative, and picturesque place for tourists to discover. DisneySea has just been opened for a few years, and there will be more and more attractions built in the future. If you are tired of the childish amusement parks, DisneySea is a great place to have fun in.



Transit Steamer Line



20,000 Leagues Under the Sea



S.S. Columbia



The Teddy Roosevelt Lounge

By Reiko 劉稚瑋

The Old House

In my memory, my old house is always the best place in the world. It is so big and beautiful that it makes me feel proud of it. Like the castles described in fairy tales, my old house is surrounded by the green lawn, lovely flowers, and upstanding trees. Pushing a heavy iron door open, you can see a narrow path rolling through the green lawn and gardens, meandering toward the stairs. There is a short fence which separates our house from the neighborhood. The short fence is decorated with flowerpots and the freshest flowers in the season. Encircled by the fence is a yard full of little stories and traces of naughty tricks, which seem vague today. When I was still a child, I often strode across the short fence to play with my neighbors. Every time I jumped down from the fence, I would be very careful, for on the border below was planted my father's jewels—roses. They were frail but prickly. I still had to pay attention to those flowerpots put beside the stairs leading toward the porch.

My old house is the entrance to my childhood imagination. The fence is a great wall to protect the injured from war, and I am a soldier; the trees and bushes are large forests, and I am an adventurer. My childhood was built in a magic land, and I was as free as the floating dreams. I could spend an entire afternoon laying myself down on the cool marble floor, playing chess with my brother, or reading those adventurous books on my soft

flannel bed. When I felt tired about flying in my world, I went downstairs to eat dinner and watch TV, took a comfortable bath, and then went to sleep. Nothing would hurt me when I stayed at home. Yes, my old house had guarded me with magic and gave me warmth and protection to grow up.

Some day the spell was broken, and somehow I no longer used the particular angle to see the world. I had learned to be practical and logical. Those fantasy and amazing adventures has become my inspiration when I am composing poems. Though I have lost my magic to life carelessly, my old house still preserves its charm. Its charm makes me always think about it. The days in the old house were the happiest part of my life. I had lived there for ten years, from my childhood to adolescence, from my obedience to rebellions, from unfamiliarity to dependence, and from the first sight I saw it to my last glance at it. The unspeakable melancholy emerged when I really left home. And suddenly I find that “home” does not mean the house but a place I desire to stay forever. Therefore I know, everywhere can be a house to live in, but there is only one you recognize as home.

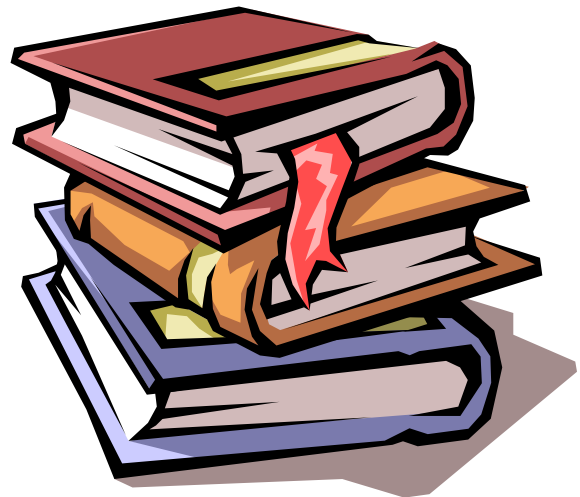
By Akira 蔡雋彬

What Did the Textbook Reform Do for Our Students?

As a tutor of a second grade student in senior high school and the sister of a first grade senior high school student, I am really aware of the problems textbook reform brings to us. My sister and my student always complain that the materials in their textbooks are too simple, but when they take tests, the texts are difficult and some of them are even not in the textbooks. As a result, many of their classmates choose to go to cram schools to gain more knowledge beside the textbooks. After the textbook reform, student's pressure does not reduce but even increases. What is the matter with our textbook reform?

After the educational reform, our students have multi-choices of their textbooks. There are textbooks of various editions from various publishers. Presently, there are six textbook editions on the shelf. The original idea of the members in the educational reform team was to bring diversity into our educational system. Nevertheless, they can hardly imagine that because of this "diversity," students lose the only one standard—the national compiled textbook (the old textbook version)—when studying. Since, each textbook edition is different from others, students are easily confused when studying more than one edition. However, if students study only one edition, they will start worrying about missing some important materials in other ones. Now, the old textbook edition becomes more

and more popular among students. Instead of dealing with the six new textbook editions, they choose to read the old one—clearer, more informative, and less confusing. Because the old textbook edition had already been off the shelf, students try their best getting the old textbooks from their upper schoolmates, brothers, sisters, and any person who has the book, or they even do on-line shopping to buy the books. The price of the old textbooks rises up from tens of NT dollars to hundreds of NT dollars.



Another purpose of the educational reform is said to reduce the amount of students going to cram schools. Cram school culture is deep in student's and parents' minds. Once a student's grade is getting worse, he or his parents are very likely to think of cram schools. And the educational reform didn't give any significant change to the situation above. According to Taipei City Government, in 2000, the first year of educational reform, there were 1,253 cram schools in the

Taipei city. The number grew 6.19% since the end of 1999. And almost 55.14% of high school students went to cram schools in 2000. The percentage increased 0.64% since 1999. Students spent 5.93 average hours per week in cram school in 2000, 0.17 hour more than in 1999. Students still go to cram schools for help of their school work. And now, there's one more reason to go to cram schools—students are overwhelmed by various textbook editions, and cram schools can help them deal with that.

The textbook reform also brings some troubles to teachers. First, they already got used to the old textbook edition for many years, and now, they had to adapt to the whole new editions during the summer break; it took a lot of hard work for teachers. Second, teachers have to decide which edition to use in the immediate semester. Although they only have to teach one edition each semester, they still have to prepare extra materials from other editions for students. That may have impact on teacher's teaching schedule, lower the teaching efficiency, and increase the teaching pressure. In the last year only, there were 9,000 teachers applying for retirement, two times more than the amount in 1997. We cannot take

textbook reform as the only cause of this result; however, it's one of the main causes for this retirement tide. A teacher from Chin-Mei senior high school said teachers are more tired than before because they have to deal with various textbooks, but the fulfillment and effect of teaching do not increase.

Although the educational reform made many changes on the surface of our educational system, they didn't solve the most essential problem—the “test culture” in Taiwan. Students go to the cram schools because they want to get good grades in the exams; they study for tests; they take their grades more seriously than whether they have learned something useful from their study. Teachers give tests and exams to ensure that students have studied. Tests and exams almost become the purpose of teaching and learning. Instead of working on the superficial changes (such as textbook reform), our educational reform should focus on some fundamental issues, making education the true learning process for students.

By Mavis 洪敬慈



It is always said that a good song or a good movie is able to touch people's hearts in depth. Seabiscuit is just the movie of this kind. The story is about horseracing. Usually most of the people will not be interested in a movie about horseracing. But amazingly, this nonentity movie was nominated for seven Academy Awards last year, including Best pictures, Best Adapted Screen Play, Best Art Direction, Best Cinematography, Best Costume Design, Best Film Editing, and Best Sound. Seabiscuit is adapted from a genuine story in the 1920's when America was facing great depression that caused many people unemployed. Three lost men (a son-bereaved father, a depressed jockey, and an obsolescent west cowboy), who encountered the bottlenecks of their lives, had seen their hopes through one another. These three men were linked together by a horse—Seabiscuit.

In the 1920's, horseracing was the most popular entertainment. Under the great economic depression, many people had lost their hope of living, or, say, their purpose of life. People lined up every day as a claimant, in hope to get some money or even better, a job. They never knew if the money they earned one day would be sufficient to last to the next day. Subsequently, many people committed suicide. For those who kept struggling,

they sought for hope in life. In a time when everyone lost everything, everyone considered himself a loser; horseracing brought a gleam of hope for them. At least there is always a winner on the race field. That's why horseracing became the most popular entertainment, or maybe the only entertainment at that time. This entertainment also made completed four downcast lives. The sad father, Howard, had made a fortune selling cars. But he had lost his only son and his wife left him. Then Howard met Tom, the obsolescent cowboy, who knew quite well about horses. These two men decided to invest in horseracing business. Howard hired Tom to find a horse and train it. Then Tom found Seabiscuit. When Tom caught the first sight of Seabiscuit, he could sense that there was a spirit in it that would never give in; soon he realized that it would be the one that they had been searching for. This thought surprised many people and some even took it as a mockery, because though Seabiscuit had a great lineage (its father and grandfather were great racing-horses), it was a bad-tempered horse whose figure was smaller than other racing-horses and who had never won any game. No other jockeys except Red, abandoned by his parents and holding no hope for this world, dared to get close to the



hot-tempered horse. That was how the fate of three men and a horse was intertwined in the story.

In the beginning, people scorned this group of people. But when they saw the first winning race Seabiscuit had won, the table turned. This skinny, short and ugly horse raised the hope everyone had been searching for a long time—a loser can win one day. To everyone's surprise, Seabiscuit won many trophies. This horse has also broken some records. For the race between Seabiscuit and another great racing horse of the time, one out of three, including President Roosevelt, listened to the radio broadcast. When Seabiscuit won, people shouted, laughed, and cried out of joy, partly for Seabiscuit and partly for themselves. However, things did not flow

so smoothly. For some reasons, Seabiscuit might have overexerted his legs; its old wound relapsed again. Meanwhile, its jockey, Red, also broke his leg over an accident. At first, many doctors said that Red could never ride a horse again, and Seabiscuit would always be limp for the rest of its life. It seemed that their career over horseracing was finished. But at the end of the story, Red and Seabiscuit recovered their injuries with their strong will, and they strode to the race field again.

Just as a line from the movie says, “We cannot deny a person's worth just because he's got a little injury.” No one is perfect. Everyone makes some mistakes. Still, we have to be confident in ourselves and let no one deny our worth. We may stumble, but we can always choose to stand up or keep lying on the ground. We can, to some extent, find ourselves in the characters in the movie. Like them, we all have tasted the bitterness of failures, but eventually, we shall overcome. As long as we keep on trying and never give up, we shall receive our own trophy of life. The fruit of success must be sweeter than ever.

By Janet 劉貞伶 & Lillian 巴鈺

Drugs in Sports

Cheating is not something new in sport competition. Taking banned drugs is one of many ways to cheat. By taking drugs like steroids, amphetamines, and the human growth hormones, athletes prolong their endurance, improve their footwork, increase stamina, beat fatigue, and boost alertness—in short, drugs make them perform better. But what comes along are side effects, and behind the winning illusions is sometimes something deadly. The side effects include edema, heart disease, liver cancer, diabetes and so on. However, the issue raised by the use of drugs is not only the dangerous side effects which shorten the lifespan of players and harm their bodies, but also the fact that drugs stain the essence of sports and jeopardize the belief we hold in the integrity and the rules of a fair play. But still, this kind of cheating never stops. According to NCAA survey, it says that almost 60 percent of college athletes use nutritional supplements that are unregulated and may contain banned substances; on the world wide level, the recent statistic shows that nearly twenty percent of athletes in Western countries admit using drugs and it also shows that the biggest users are soccer and track athletes. It is quite scary to see that drugs in modern sports are so prevalent.

So, why can't sportsmen stop using drugs? Two main factors result in prevalent drug-using. One is the rise of professional sports. The other is the fact

that sport is getting more and more competitive and physically demanding.



As far as the professional sports are concerned, they are more organized and they involve a lot more money than ever. Take tennis for example: there are three professional unions—ATP is for male tennis players; WTA is for female; while ITF runs the four grand slams. Sponsors and commercial contracts wait in line to found the unions and the tournaments, and to sign with those big stars and the rookies full of prospect. The pressure on the pro athletes' shoulder is extremely heavy today: the pros make a living on every game they play—every game which is only the entertainment for the audience can change their lives in any minute. Thus, athletes are faced with keen competition—sometimes even out of control—and the money along with the sponsors can only make things complicated and worse. Under such circumstances, it is not strange that

athletes take drugs to enhance their performance.

Sports competition demands a lot physically. Nowadays, it is a time of power sports: look at those big chunks of muscles in NBA players. No wonder Yao Ming is trained to gain some weight and muscles—who want to be Shawn Bradley if you can be Shaquille O’neal? Again, Graf’s forehand was once called “powerful” in tennis, and who could have thought that the monstrous ground strokes from the Williams sisters will take over now? Fitness and power are basic requirements to a successful professional career life nowadays. And using drugs promises the chance of winning; in another word, doping is the easiest way to survive through the final.

The fact is that athletes are forced to be stronger, faster, and better. The more power a player generates, the more money he makes, and the more people will come to watch. But players are not machines, they have ups and downs. Taking drugs to

keep in form violates the nature of sports and will finally take the tolls from the players. Furthermore, the audience will lose their faith in modern sports eventually. Imagine this: you lie in the couch and watch those supermen playing on TV. You are amazed by their speed, agility, and power—only you can’t help but wonder: “Clean and fair play?” Isn’t it just sad?

By Dana 蕭湘

Holding A Bowl

This winter vacation, I joined a seven-day meditation camp. In the camp, participants learned to focus our mind on every single moment of life. In meditation, we need to concentrate, to experience life with all our hearts, to let ourselves merge with the environment, and finally to achieve enlightenment. Thus, we can experience every sensation, knowing

clearly the feeling of moving and being still. In another word, meditation is a kind of description of life because we observe our life in details. Through one special activity in the camp—“water-bowl holding”—we experienced the true essence of meditation. This activity gave us a chance to put meditation into practice.

It was a warm day. The two-o'clock sun in the winter afternoon shone above. We lined up at the starting place, moved slowly forward, picked up a steel bowl with water in it, and started a whole new experience. I was a little nervous because I used to spill things out whenever I carry a bowl with liquid in it. But I wanted to try, to see if I could break my own limit. We had to go up a small slope of hill and turn back to the beginning without spilling out a drop of water. Nine-tenth of the steel bowl was filled with clean and cold water. In my bowl, there was a dandelion seed floating on the water. Holding the bowl with both hands, I stepped forward carefully. From the edge of my sight I saw other people walking either fast or slowly beside me, but I had to ignore them to concentrate on my own business.

I walked step by step like an old man, staring at the water in the bowl. The steel bowl reflected my face and the sunlight vaguely. I thought of nothing except the water. Following every step I took, the water waved high and low, back and forth. My heart went with the water, tensing and releasing. I murmured to myself silently and repeatedly, "Once a step, once a step. I can make it." As this self-encouraging voice went through my mind, I seemed to hear some sounds around but I could not clearly tell what they were. I went up the hill. For the first time in my life, I exactly knew the feeling of my feet touching the ground. My feet sensed the slope of uphill; then I stepped on the level ground again. At the turning-back point, a volunteer was

there, pouring some more water into our bowl. Therefore, we had to move downhill even more slowly and carefully. The sensations of going uphill and downhill were totally different. The feelings of turning my ankles surprised me because I was not aware how my feet move when I walked before. The water in my bowl was going warm because of the sun and the warmth of my hands. I was trying hard to keep my pace balanced, so my mind did not run away. I knew the sun glowed in the sky and the forward direction we walked; I knew my surroundings but I was not disturbed.

Steadily I walked back to the terminus and returned the bowl of water. To my surprise, there was little disturbance during my water-bowl holding. I was relieved to complete this mission. Somehow I could still hear my heart beating. The heart in my chest was pumping, and my mind was so quiet that I sensed the feeling of my body. The bowl of water was no longer in my hands, but I could never forget the concentration of holding the water-bowl. This was my first time doing one thing at a time with all my heart; practicing meditation really does me good.

By Tina 林立婷

Poem 3

Break thy journey at Florence,

Because no because, romance no romance.

Running flying foreign existence,

Alone I walk away from the starlight with slight reluctance.

Nevertheless nevermore inspiration or direction,

Map out when intuition becomes broken-hearted.

Ciao is a word within sight without attraction,

My exotic soul finds its own exoticism so light-hearted.

Where are the first faint rays of dawn I miss?

Have I said my sunrise has another name Norton.

But it shall be Chaos just as what thy loss is.

Thou forgot what ought never be forgotten.

If not love, what keeps me being in such a picturesque risk?

Nowhere now here whether it makes any sense off I whisk.

By Melissa 董嘉馨