



"ExpLoRErs' LoRE"

22nd November 2009

Number 4

*"Be good, be
happy."*



Message from Alan (Language Explorer)

Hello everybody. Welcome to issue 4 of "*ExpLoRErs' LoRE*"

I enjoy making this small magazine for you. It is really nice to receive your contributions.

My news for this month.

I went to a French "chat" day in Manchester last Saturday. Soon I will attend a German "chat" day in December (this will be nice because we will talk about famous German Christmas)

On the 26th November I will sing some French songs at a French club in Yorkshire.

I am also trying out an idea about learning and remembering words better. I'll make a podcast about it soon.

For Chinese friends who visit my podcast, I am thinking about making a new Chinese/English website. What do you think about the idea?

Also, this month, I have added some really nice recordings from Carrie, Yuli, Kay and Dawn friends who like to visit my website. I really want to thank them for doing this. I also want to thank Regina, Vivi and Zoe for some great articles!

Now here are some articles from other Explorers!



Here is an article from Dawn in China.

One of my favourite books

I like reading books very much. I've read a lot of books up until now. Books help me understand life a lot. My favourite book is《 Three Days To See》 . It is an autobiography written by Helen Keller, who was American. She was blind and deaf. I think this is one of the worst situations in our life. And almost all people who are in only one of these situations would lose the courage to face life. But Helen was really very forceful, she not only didn't lose courage for living her life, but she also worked harder than anybody could imagine.

At last, she not only learnt how to read and speak, but also graduated from a famous college of America with excellent scores, and mastered another five languages. I've learnt a lot from this book, actually from Helen herself. I know how to face difficulties in my life. And when I have difficulties, I'll be as forceful as Helen. I believe any problem can be solved.



From Zoe in China

Random thoughts on translation

I have been doing some English-Chinese translation recently. Once you have been there and done that, you would know that it's actually not that easy to get them right. Every time I read in English, I enjoy what I am reading a lot, because there are always many uncharted waters for me to explore and basically I'd love to be an adventurer.

The compelling plots plus a variety of characters in novels; the bizarre and funny facts in the news, as well as melodious words depicting each lovely season in prose are invariably inviting to me. It's a bit like coming across a remote valley with all those exotic and fragrant flowers, babbling brooks perpetually flowing by, birds singing cheerfully in the treetops, leaves rustling merrily to accompaniment of bird song. What a fabulous landscape it is!

Now let's get down to basics and here is where the problem comes. What you have seen is a total foreign land to your counterpart who obviously have never been to such a wonderland, so how could you show them with your words what you have seen there?

And I think translation is pretty much the same thing. A good translator can always restore the origin beauty of the words, bringing the readers together to experience a wonderful journey. And besides, while translating, you need to read more carefully than a casual reading since it's not just about getting grasp of the main idea and being done with it, you actually have to find an equivalent in your native language so that you can rewrite it in your way. It's quite a task, I must admit, because I am always running short of my Chinese words and expressions while doing the translation. Thus it seems that I need to polish up my Chinese. In the meantime, I'd love to keep exploring my English "treasure island" while waiting for my Chinese to catch up.

And now a text from Regina dos Santos from Brazil
Brazilian Literature: difference and equality

Brazil is a very big country, with all its differences: regional, climate, economic, cultural and historical. But its people are known for their warmth, joy and hospitality.

Those characteristics are also present in the arts: as in painting, literature, television, and on the movie screen. There are two main features in Brazilian Literature. Essentially these differences are in two different styles of literary production: one works with the complexity of feelings common to anyone from anywhere around the world, and the complexity of human relationships in contemporary life, such as the frustrations of the daily routine in big cities or in the regions. The other style discusses social exclusion: such as with violence, questions of race and the conflicts between poor communities and the middle class generated by extreme social inequality. This second literary style encourages discussion for the inclusion of new social voices, using literary images as a strategy and a means of mass communication in a language that is accessible and closer to the colloquial style of language.

Literature searches for a way in its line of thought to establish its social function: as a means of acquiring knowledge and for the humanization of the reader. The differences in the country are dissolved by the universality of its social function through language. It helps to bring together people from all walks of life, different social classes, races and creeds as one.

This is by Vivi from China.

Have you ever heard of a saying "having breakfast like a king, having lunch like a common person and having supper like a beggar"?

Breakfast takes such an important place in my daily life. It's been like this for a long time. Everyday in the morning when I open my eyes, I find myself smiling as I begin thinking what I will have for my breakfast today. It's not a big project but I think about it carefully. Yes, it makes me feel like a king

There are many different kinds of breakfast waiting for me. Such as traditional Youtiao(Fritters), Baozi(steamed stuffed bun), Jianbing(Pancake), Fensi(Vermicelli soup), Zhou(Porridge) and so on. Sometimes I even have a western breakfast in my home, I make toast with a toaster and then add jam or peanut butter with an omelette, bacon or oatmeal.

I don't have any fixed breakfast, I just change my breakfast everyday according to my feelings and circumstances.

Anyway there is one thing confirmed, that I do enjoy my breakfast everyday. Are you crazy for your breakfast? I hope you can enjoy it too.



Great article from Carrie (USA)

The Importance of Reading

*Here is a quote from a book I read this summer called *The Linguist* by Steven Kaufmann. He says:*

“We must READ, READ and READ again. It's the same as learning English as a child. Yes, children have a greater capacity because they don't have to devote so much of their time to paying the mortgage. If you read twice a day for no fewer than 30 pages a time, you'll see results.”

Well, I think that is a little extreme, thirty pages is a lot, but I think he has a good point. While reading, a person gets the rhythm of the language, increases his or her vocabulary and reinforces grammar rules. You begin to “hear” the language in your head and it becomes ingrained in your memory. If you don't have access to books in your target language, there are lots of places on the internet to find stories or reading passages in the language you are learning. So happy reading, everybody! Bye!



An article from Yuli in China

I Love Cuckoo Clocks

I have known about cuckoo clocks from films and TV for a long time.

When I visited Switzerland last year, I did so much want to buy a cuckoo clock. And when I caught sight of the German-made cuckoo clocks in the shop in Switzerland, I fell in love with these kind of cute clocks.

But its price was more expensive than what I expected, and it seemed a little more difficult to bring it with me, as we were to complete the rest of travel around Europe over the coming days. So I didn't buy one at that time.

I will move in our new apartment quite soon. When I was thinking of a new clock that would be suitable for our new living room, I brought the idea of a cuckoo clock to my mind once again. I then looked up it on the Internet. Luckily, I eventually found a webpage where they had cuckoo clocks made in Germany to sell. I then decided to buy one on the Internet.

The day before yesterday, my cuckoo clock was delivered from Germany at last. The actual clock looked even more beautiful than its picture on the Internet. There are four people are dancing to the nice music; a woman who is dragging a rope to knock the ring on the roof, and many other amusing little things to see around the little cabin on the clock. And of course there is a very cute cuckoo inside the little doors.

I then asked my husband to help me fix a nail and hang the clock on the wall in our new apartment. But he didn't seem as interested in such an amazing cuckoo clock as me. When he was hanging the clock on the wall after fixing a nail, he turned round and asked me: "What if the noisy bird and the dancers will still go out to tweet and dance every midnight?"

An article from Kay in China

I asked my son to practice playing the piano this morning. He refused to do it and complained it was boring. I felt a little annoyed and tried to persuade him to do what he should do. Unfortunately I failed. The stubborn little one was not afraid of his mom's threat.

At last, I calmed myself down and thought of a good idea. I told him that I like listening to him playing this piece of music and that was a gift for his mom. If he could give that gift to me, I would tell Santa that he was a very good boy! He was motivated and followed my advice and played the piano very well, because he believed that he would be given a gift from Santa if he behaved well. So, encouragement is a good way to get kids to keep doing what they should do!