

CHAPTER 12

HOLISTIC ENGLISH AT SYSU

Spring 2010

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INTRODUCTION

The EFL “Revolution” began at Sun Yat-sen University in the spring 2009 semester with approximately 600 post-graduate, non-English majors, in the Humanities, from 24 Provinces and representing 120 undergraduate institutions. It continued in the fall 2009 semester with 700 post-graduate, non-English majors in the Sciences, from 28 Provinces and representing 195 undergraduate institutions.

We now chronicle implementation of the Holistic English Program at Sun Yat-sen University in the spring 2010 semester with 650 post-graduate, non-English majors from Business and Humanities, from 26 Provinces and representing 201 undergraduate institutions.

I’M NOT LOVIN IT

In the first two weeks of the semester a new thread was posted on chinaholisticenglish.org and the students were encouraged to make their true feelings known.

This is the thread content:

I’m NOT Lovin it!

I am a post-graduate non-English major at Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China.

I am required to study English for one more semester. I do not want to study English. I am only doing it because it is required by the university. I will never need to use English after I graduate. I rarely attend class, never do the homework and frankly do not care if my English improves or not. When I do attend class I sit as far away from the teacher as possible to avoid any participation in the class activities.

Some of my classmates feel differently. They know that English is increasingly important in the job market. They are highly motivated to study English because they realize that with English they can earn a higher salary. These classmates never miss a class and complete all of their homework assignments. They always sit in the front row and constantly volunteer for participation in classroom activities.

Some of my classmates study English because their parents expect it and we Chinese do what we can to please our parents. They approach English study with a “so-so” attitude and their English capabilities are “so-so.”

Tell us your story, what is your attitude towards the further study of English?

The following are some examples of the students’ (unedited) posts:

Miya Class10C

March 4th, 2010 at 11:31 am

What is my attitude to English? Actually, after I passed the CET-6, I thought that I would not have to learn English any longer. Once upon a time, I felt that I had already gotten rid of the English, then I have given up on learning English. Since that, you can image how astonished am I when I saw the English courses on timetable this semester. There are not only reading and listening courses, but also oral English lessons, which are my weakness. Frankly speaking, if there are alternative, I certainly will give up the English lessons. C’est la vie. I have no choice. ...

George Class 1C

March 4th, 2010 at 12:16 pm

... Last year, in order to pass the national post-graduate entrance test, I had to restart my English study. Fortunately, I passed the exam with decent scores. From then on, I considered that I need some exam serving as impulse for my English learning. I still have no clear purpose on learning English, but I deeply adore people who are able to read essays on “economists” without effort and communicate with their foreign classmates freely. Though busy as this semester would be, I will attempt to treat this strict course study as an opportunity to enhance my confidence of English learning.

Sarah Class 4C

March 13th, 2010 at 11:09 am

In contrast with the author, I like English very much. Being born and raised in the countryside, I did not learn English until I was in the junior high school. Beside, oral English of teachers in the countryside is not very good. Therefore conditions for me to learn English are terrible. In fact, I learned English so hard that I was able to keep up with my senior high school classmates, who learned English when they were in primary school. To my regret, my oral English is not very good. I have realized the problem that there are some mistakes in my pronunciation, and it is also difficult for me to speak English as fluent as to speak Chinese. To some extent, this is due to my infrequent practice.

So many people, including my teachers and my friends, have told me that English is extraordinary important in this century, especially if my future job is connected to it! I agree with them, and I will practice it more from now on.

Last year, in the 105th Canton Fair, I worked as a translator for an exporting company. At the very beginning, I was nervous and shy, being afraid of making mistakes. Then a

foreign partner of the company said to me, "Girl, your English is good!" This encouraged me to speak English confidently! And of course I did a good job in the Canton Fair.

Stella Class 3C

March 2nd, 2010 at 4:56 pm

Frankly speaking, I felt a little nervous when I knew I have to study English for one semester. I thought maybe I would feel scared and bored with English from then on. I really don't know whether I can spend all of my energy on the English classes every Monday. "Sitting as far away from the teacher as possible, never participating activities in the class and rarely opening my mouth to speak English..." I must admit that I had also thought like above. But just like some classmates, I'm also aware of the importance of the English, especially for my future career. So at the beginning I try to bring up my motivation to attend the class.

But after I had the first class on the first Monday of this term, there was a small change in my mind. One of the things that the teacher had told impressed me a lot is "Here is the campus. We allow you to make mistakes. Others may laugh at you, you may feel losing face, but who cares? Everyone may make mistakes. But you will make a progress after you correct them." I was deeply motivated by these words. As I know I'm a lucky dog for still having the opportunity to study in the campus. What's more, whenever I have trouble with the English study I still can get the help from my teacher and classmates. It's a good idea, isn't it? Though I may spend out all my energy and time on every Monday for the further study of English, now I won't fear it and won't quit it. Because I think all of the efforts I have paid out are worthy. And when I look back for it, I will enjoy this hard but meaningful experience in my memory. If the study of English is predetermined, I'd choose to join my classmates and teacher in the class. Just enjoy it.

Zoey Class 10C

March 4th, 2010 at 12:28 am

When I read the material above, I feel so sorry of the student. There has been much controversy over learning English in the past years with each party owning convincing evidences. Obviously, the student in the passage is not in favor of studying English. He claimed that he studied English only because it was required by the university. Maybe it is really too useless to learn English in his live and even his future. But to me, I am eager to improve my English as the following reasons.

First of all, my major is comparative literature, which requires good capability in English reading. In my daily life, I have to read a lot of academic passages in English. And I am also interested in reading foreign novels, which will be better if I read in English.

Second, one of my favorite things is to travel. I began to travel since I was 8 years old. From then on I have already been to almost every provinces of China. But I have never been to a foreign country yet. So far I hope to visit London in 2012, because of the Olympic Games. It will be much more convenience if I speak English fluently.

What is more, with English I may be able to live a better live. I have learned piano for more than 10 years, and played bass for about four years. I have a dream to deeper my musical capability. So it will be a wonderful choice to go abroad.

Jennifer Class15C

March 5th, 2010 at 2:17 pm

We don't need to like English, but we need to use it for communication.

As obviously as we see, Chinese have been tortured by English for almost 30 years. Children were asked to learn English from the day they entered kindergarten. We are forced to love English when we are kid, and actually most of us hate it. And a big problem is that most of students are still can not use English well, after learning it for nearly 10 years. In my point of view, that is not only students' fault, but mostly are faults of the education system. Think about the way how we Chinese learn English. Endless vocabulary memorizing, boring analysis of long sentences, endless exams with ABCD choices, etc. This is not the right way of mastering a language. We don't learn our mother language in this way. And because of this terrible way of English educating, no doubt many people don't like English or even hate it.

Since it seems that this awful education system is going to live for a long time and single person cannot offend it, perhaps most of Chinese students have to go on be tortured. However, as the old saying "people change and survive, tree move and die", although we cannot change the background situation, we can change ourselves.

Firstly, we should recognise that English is a usefull tool. In career path, the one who master English will have more chance than those who don't. In daily life, we also will meet many merchandises with their only explanation in English. It will be much more convenient for people who understand English. And no mention those interesting movies, TVplays, etc.

Second, forget the idea that English is difficult and feel free of using English. I think English as a tool for communication is just like Chinese, it should be used, be spoken. Only in this way, I can master it and use it for communication.

Shawn Class 15C

March 8th, 2010 at 3:16 pm

I understand your attitude and I have met many classmates in primary school, high school as well as college with the same attitude and performance as you. However, in spite of respecting your opinion and choice, I must say that my attitude is quite different from yours.

First of all, I think that English is academic career. My major is logic, a discipline completely originating in western culture and which Chinese have known for merely about a hundred years. I don't think that Chinese researchers have seized the essence of this discipline and kept pace with western scholars. Therefore, in order to do research in this field, good English is indispensable, although English used in logic is simpler than that in literature. For example, according to my observation, classical textbooks in this discipline are all in English, and textbooks written by Chinese researchers are often not as good as those written by western scholars. Nowadays, I have been used to using English textbooks and I will read more English books in future. In addition, I hope to study abroad and, when applying, a high mark in English test, such as TOFEL and IELTS, is required. As a result, English is one of the keys for me to study abroad.

In my opinion, English is money. As mentioned above, I'm going to take an English test. If I pay more than a thousand RMB and just get a so-so mark which would not help me to

be admitted by universities abroad, then the money is wasted. I don't know whether English is money as salary, but it is without doubt money as the fee of English test. Thinking in a less pragmatic direction, I would say that for Chinese people English is a road to a new world. Every old language is accompanied with a wonderful culture and English is a language in which a large number of great works are written. It's improbable for every English book to have a Chinese translation and, even if this is realized, the translation is inevitable to leave something subtle of the original book, according to numerous researches in linguistics. As a result, being unable to use English means losing the key to the wonderful English world and this is certainly a pity in one's life. I have made great effort to read a few English books and I enjoy them very much. In closing, I need and hope to improve my English, and I'm glad that I have courses on English this semester which may be helpful.

June Class 4C

March 10th, 2010 at 11:41 am

People hate requirement because it means something they have to do no matter whether they like it. This unconscious dislike overwhelms one's true feelings for English. Just try to think about it in another way. Since requirement is an unchangeable fact, why not accomplish it in a more comfortable and funny way? After all, the courses are not that boring in college, at least games, movies and optional topics are added. Just enjoy this entertainment as usual! You might think that the games and the materials that the teachers prepare are stupid and so you don't attend the class. But remember that the teachers are not the only responsible participator in this class. You are also a member of it and you should help improving it. Communicate with your teacher with your discontent and suggestion. To contribute to a harmony atmosphere is better than ruin it as being an outsider. Isn't communication the real aim of learning English?

People like to weigh the future benefit before they take actions. Utilitarianism! To them, English means salary promotion, parents' expectation or more. But to me, English is just a simple communication tool. A foreigner is smiling to me and I want to make friends with her. I like the rhythm of a song and so I also want to appreciate the lyrics. These deserve my effort! So don't think too much and make yourself so tired. Try to relax and enjoy it.

Rita Class 4C

March 11th, 2010 at 12:02 pm

Even though I am non-English major, I need to use English much often. For example, I need to search many English papers from American and British academic database for my paper-writing; I need to write my paper in English if wanting it published in the magazines overseas; also, English is very helpful for me to find a good job. As we can see, English is being paid more and more attention nowadays. English quizzes are required to take in many domestic exams such as China's Certified Public Accountant (CPA). Besides, I have heard of that not only the foreigner companies, but also China's government institutions are going to take English interviews to find a better employee. So English is becoming more and more important in our study and work.

I really want to improve my English writing, listening and speaking, so that I can find a good job after graduating. But although I realize the importance of English, I am just too

lazy to study it unless required to by my English teachers. Luckily one more semester I am required to study English now, but maybe this is not enough to improve my English skills. I should be more hard-working and make detail plan to practice my English, such as reading the English magazines and newspapers, listening to English radios, seeing English movies and so on, other than finishing my homework.

Doris Class 4C

March 11th, 2010 at 5:23 pm

My story about English learning

I began to learn English in my junior high school. It has been ten years until now. I have to admit that my English, especially oral English, is not good enough.

When I was in junior and senior high school, I didn't have much opportunity to speak English. I just learnt so-called "dumb English". Fortunately, I practiced a lot in listening English. As a result, listening English was not too difficult for me.

When I entered college, I chose International Economics and Trade as my major. In the college, I found I still had a long way to go to improve my English. Many of my classmates could speak fluent English. I really admired their good English ability.

Meanwhile, I had a feeling of inferiority for my poor English. Thanks for Lingnan College, many textbooks were in English. A lot of teachers teach us in English. And we had to use English to do many presentations, to write paper and to take examinations.

After class, I often saw some English films. Practice makes perfect. I have made progress in my English during the past four years in undergraduate school.

My attitude towards the further study of English

Frankly speaking, I like English and I know how important English is. English is some kind of interesting and useful language.

Since China joined WTO, English has become more and more important. We can see many foreigners in school, on the street or in the company. English is a necessary tool to communicate with the world. If you don't have good command of English, you may miss a lot of opportunity and interest things. For example, you can't make friends with foreign people and you can't enjoy the Hollywood blockbuster in English.

As for myself, my major is International Trade now. Obviously, English is definitely important. Besides, I hope I can find a good job in the world top500 companies. But most of the world top500 are foreign companies. That means I will face a lot of English interviews in the job-hunting process. In one word, English is very important for my future career.

I think the main problem existing in my English study is FACE. I am always afraid of making mistake and losing face when I speak English. In Professor Martin's class, I hope I can speak English bravely! I will try my best!

After class, I will try other ways to improve my English, for example, watching English TV and films, reading English newspaper, talking to some friends in English, etc. I do believe that nothing is difficult if I put my heart into it.

Marco Class 3C

March 2nd, 2010 at 8:32 pm

The Story of My English Name

I have been studying English, and speaking Chinglish for more than ten years. Professor Martin is the fourth teacher for my oral English lessons. The former two is Chinese, the third one is an England little handsome young man, Reza.

Before, we were asked to pick an English name. But the teacher did not care about what name you chose, and at that time, most of the English name of my classmates came directly from the movies they watched, as well as the textbooks, such as John, Max, Bill. I am not saying these names are not good, of course they are. But the problem is so many people picked names from the small English Name Pool, so a few of us would use the same name. The first time of my oral English lesson, I wrote "John Chen" in my Name Card before me. When I looked around, there were eight other "John" and five "Bill" there. So I had to change. However, all the names in my mind were already chosen. And this situation really got my poor teacher, a little girl just graduated from a normal university. Finally, I got my first English name as John C, followed by the first character of my family name. The other two Johns who shared the same family name got their name like "John CA" and "John CB". By the way, the first oral English lesson only lasted for 3 times. I thought the teacher did her best in order to open our month. But as to me, I did not know what should I say if I open my mouth. Of course, the input that time was so limited was one reason. The main reason was we do not used to say English.

The second oral English lesson held in Maoming No. 1 Middle School, the best high school of my home city, Maoming City, Guangdong Province. This time, an Australian teacher Ken showed up. The name picking process was a lot better. I took Max as my English name. He gave a lot advice on our English names, and told some stories about these names. For example, he told us the story of that John the movie The first Blood. I still took John Rambo as a big hero. In college, I came across Reza; after a try to change my English name to Scofield, I still took Max as my English name according to the suggestions by Reza. The days with Reza was fun, sure under great pressure. Now I like the name Marco, I just like it simple and respect. Changes will unlikely happen.

Crystal Class 3C

March 2nd, 2010 at 8:50 pm

I am a post-graduate non-English major at Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China. I am required to study English for one more semester. I always like studying English since my first year in junior school. I really enjoy the process of learning so I learn English without enforcement. I use English in classes or daily life at times after I graduate. I attend class every time, finish the homework on time and try my best to improve my English. When I attend class I always sit with my classmates in order to take part in the class activities.

Most of my classmates have similar ideas to mine. We know that English is increasingly important in the job market. As a result, most of us are highly motivated to study English because we realize that with English we can find a better job. We seldom miss a class unless there is something urgent and complete all the homework assignments. We try to sit next to each other and constantly volunteer for participation in classroom activities. Some of my classmates don't like to study English because their weak English basis. They do want to express themselves without difficulty in English but it takes much more time and energy to catch up with other good English learners. As a result, they would feel uneasy if they are required to participate in English Class activities.



HOLISTIC ENGLISH LAB MARCH 2010

The students not only come from varied majors but also with varying degrees of intrinsic motivation to improve their English. With 650 post-grad students there are 650 different levels of intrinsic motivation.

One student stated “A discussion class with a foreign teacher who brings up ideological topics and who does not understand China and who does not know how to teach Chinese students is a waste of time. The topics are not interesting and they do not make sense.” This student failed the course. The opinion expressed in open class was rejected unanimously by the classmates but was insisted upon to the point of becoming a major distraction. It was insulting to the 8 year veteran China foreign teacher who had taught more than 10,000 undergraduate and post-graduate students and whose students not only expressed how much they found the class interesting and exciting, but repeatedly asked that the class time be expanded.

ENGLISH CORNER

Sun Yat-sen University encourages all of its students to voluntarily participate in a weekly evening unstructured English Corner on the south lawn. There is no topic, no supervision, just students mingling and chatting at will.

During the fall 2009 semester 98% of the Holistic English students attended a mandatory English Corner. Less than 30% of them claimed to have received any appreciable benefit from the experience.

During this spring 2010 semester the Holistic English students were encouraged to voluntarily participate in a specific English Corner. 10% of the students participated and 100% claimed to have received substantial benefit from the activity.

Those students with intrinsic motivation will seek out English speaking opportunities and will benefit in direct proportion to their motivation. Those students who have little or no interest in English should not be forced to participate in English speaking activities and should not be required to study English. English classrooms throughout China are

clogged with students who do not want to be there and who benefit little from the English learning experience.

UNREACHABLE AND UNTEACHABLE STUDENTS

Every semester there are students who not only lack intrinsic motivation, they are also impervious to extrinsic motivation. They have opted out and refuse to respond to any stimulus, positive or negative. Over a span of seven years the undergraduate rate of unreachable and unteachable has run between 5% - 6%. At Sun Yat-sen University the unreachable and unteachable post-graduate students for the spring and fall 2009 semesters amounted to 1.6% for the females and 8% for the males.

However, in the spring 2010 semester this rate rose to a whopping **14.2%** for both genders combined. (**75% males and 25% females**) Two entire classes refused to do any homework, daring the professor to try and fail the entire class. This level is unacceptable and it is not manageable. Many of these students are very vocal in their opposition to further required English course participation. "I passed CET 6 so when I come here and see my class schedule for more English I am anger." Sic To avoid meeting English course requirements these students curse at, swear at, threaten physical violence against the teacher and make up stories to have a teacher replaced or even terminated. This is not a one-off or unique experience but rather involves multiple students each and every semester at Sun Yat-sen. *In the eight year development and implementation of Holistic English, this phenomenon is unique to Sun Yat-sen University.*

It is noteworthy that most of the **14.2%** of unreachable and unteachable students were born, raised and educated in Guangdong Province. This abnormal, antisocial and uncivilized behavior is not unknown in Guangdong. Primary and Middle school students, parents and relatives are well known for beating teachers.ⁱ Professor Ge Xinbin of South China Normal University stated "teachers have the right to use proper ways to educate and criticize misbehaving students according to relevant laws and regulations. But the teaching environment now has become poorer compared to previous years and many teachers now dare not criticize their students in fear of retaliation."

What makes this situation unmanageable is the administrative culture that refuses to deal with this problem in any meaningful manner but rather suffers from the ostrich syndrome by simply advising to "ignore them." This induces further proliferation. Chinese teachers are able to ignore problem students because Chinese teachers teach to a group which happens to be made up of individuals, while a foreign teacher teaches to individuals who happen to make up a group. The foreign teacher finds it difficult, if not impossible, to ignore any student but this makes the Chinese student very uncomfortable. Students unaccustomed to such individual attention tend to rebel.

ⁱ Zheng Caixiong, (April 28, 2010) Beating of Teacher Leads to Strike, China Daily http://chinadaily.cn/china/2010-04/28/content_9782188.htm

A striking example of the students disconnect this term comes from the stats for the website instituted to provide an opportunity for them to read and write more English. During the fall 2009 semester the students made 13,500 posts. During the present spring 2010 term more students made fewer posts, only 1,500 total posts.

Commencing with the 10th week of the semester all students were informed that no student would receive a failing grade for this term. Thereafter, the class attendance rate immediately dropped by 46% across the board. Forcing students to take further English courses, when they have no intrinsic motivation, is unproductive to them and hinders the progress of serious students. As the old adage goes; you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink.

Identifying an unreachable and unteachable student begins on the first class day of each new semester. The students are given the first three questions on their oral final examination. They are also provided the correct answers. At the time of the final examination, 18 weeks later, those students who are unable to provide one single correct answer to any one of the three previously disclosed questions and answers, has clearly demonstrated that they have put zero effort into the class and instead have opted out. They have made a conscious choice not to improve their oral English. For 18 weeks these students were unreachable. For 18 weeks these students were unteachable.

Every semester a super majority of the unreachable and unteachable students stated on their end of term anonymous questionnaire that they deserved a final grade of "A" because they had a perfect attendance record. One student remarked "I deserve a B+. I did not have any expectations to improve my oral English in this class. And I engage little time in this course." This student failed the course. Many stated that since they had passed CET 6 they were surprised and angry that they were required to take additional English classes as post-graduate students.

This situation presents an interesting conundrum at Sun Yat-s en University because the administration claims that their students are "all highly motivated." While it is common practice for Chinese administrators to accuse foreign teachers of not understanding Chinese students; apparently this is like the pot calling the kettle black.

Prior to the final examinations a class ranking was provided to the Vice-dean. The ranking was based upon the percentage of students who appeared to be performing at a university "A" level. This pre-final exam ranking is to be found in the left column of the following chart. Post-final exam the class ranking was adjusted to reflect the actual percentage of "A" students and to reflect those students who should have failed (no one actually fails in China) and could not properly and adequately answer any one of three questions given on the first class meeting of the semester. (The answers were also given along with the questions.) The percentage of unreachable and unteachable students is staggering and contradicts the administration's claim that "all of our students are highly motivated." This post-final exam ranking is to be found in the right hand column of the following chart.

CLASS RANKING CHART

The following is an analysis of the classes prior to and subsequent to the final examinations.

Class ranking pre-final exams based upon a percentage of students believed to be performing at a university "A" level

Best

60% **Class #11** School of Education

60% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

59% **Class #6** Research Center of Hong Kong and Macau

% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

47% **Class #4** Lingnan College

100% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

35% **Class #12** School of Education, School of Management

81% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

34% **Class #3** Lingnan College

98% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

33% **Class #1** Lingnan College

100% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

31% **Class #16** School of Philosophy, School of Tourism, School of Asia-Pacific

99% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

30% **Class #5** Lingnan College

100% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

28% **Class #8** Schools of Chinese Language and Literature

84% passed CET 6

100% passed CET 4

Class ranking, post final exams. The class ranking is based upon the actual percentage of "A" students and students who should have failed. Unreachable and unteachable are those with no intrinsic motivation and impervious to external motivation.

Best

59% **Class #6** Research Center of Hong Kong and Macau

77% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

14% UNREACHEABLE AND

UNTEACHABLE

47% **Class #4** Lingnan College

63% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

14% UNREACHEABLE AND

UNTEACHABLE

35% **Class #12** School of Education, School of Management

62% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

19% UNREACHEABLE AND

UNTEACHABLE

31% **Class #16** School of Philosophy, School of Tourism, School of Asia-Pacific

53% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

18% UNREACHEABLE AND

UNTEACHABLE

60% **Class #11** School of Education

42% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

21% UNREACHEABLE AND

UNTEACHABLE

25% **Class #14** School of Sociology and Anthropology

42% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

0% UNREACHEABLE AND UNTEACHABLE

22% **Class #15** School of Philosophy

40% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

2% UNREACHEABLE AND

UNTEACHABLE

34% **Class #3** Lingnan College

37% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

7% UNREACHEABLE AND UNTEACHABLE

33% **Class #1** Lingnan College

33% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS

5% UNREACHEABLE AND

UNTEACHABLE

27% **Class #2** Lingnan College
98% passed CET 6
100% passed CET 4

30% **Class #5** Lingnan College
29% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS
21% UNREACHEABLE AND
UNTEACHABLE

25% **Class #14** School of Sociology and
Anthropology
68% passed CET 6
100% passed CET 4

27% **Class #2** Lingnan College
27% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS
5% UNREACHEABLE AND UNTEACHABLE

22% **Class #15** School of Philosophy
78% passed CET 6
100% passed CET 4

13% **Class #9** School of Chinese Language and
Literature
24% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS
16% UNREACHEABLE AND
UNTEACHABLE

15% **Class #10** School of Chinese Language and
Literature
92% passed CET 6
100% passed CET 4

11% **Class #13** School of Sociology and
Anthropology
24% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS
32% UNREACHEABLE AND
UNTEACHABLE

13% **Class #9** School of Chinese Language and
Literature
80% passed CET 6
100% passed CET 4

15% **Class #10** School of Chinese Language and
Literature
22% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS
19% UNREACHEABLE AND
UNTEACHABLE

11% **Class #13** School of Sociology and
Anthropology
80% passed CET 6
100% passed CET 4
Worst

28% **Class #8** Schools of Chinese Language and
Literature
20% ACTUAL "A" STUDENTS
23% UNREACHEABLE AND
UNTEACHABLE
Worst

CET 4 and CET 6

The National English proficiency examinations known as CET 4 and CET 6 have become the gatekeeper to further education and employment.ⁱⁱ Students who have passed these examinations feel assured in their further education and eventual employment because they have attained the National standard in English reading comprehension and writing ability. (Oral English is not tested)

At the beginning of this semester the students were given the following written instructions:

Within 72 hours, send an email to sysu.postgrad@yahoo.com. Put your English name and class number followed by the letter C in the title bar. In

ⁱⁱ Chapter 2 infra

the email body state your undergraduate institution and your home Province, in English.

*TITLE BAR EXAMPLE: John Class 12C
BODY EXAMPLE: Guongdong Province
Zhongshan University*

40% of the Lingnan College students failed to comprehend and follow this simple instruction. (These students were reported to be the smartest in the entire Sun Yat-sen University system.) **98% of these students have passed CET 6.**

100% of the Department of Philosophy students comprehended and followed this simple instruction.

18% of the remaining students failed to comprehend and follow this simple instruction.

The proficiency level represented by the CET 4 and CET 6 certificate is apparently so low as to essentially be meaningless. This should be viewed as a National tragedy since these examinations represent the culmination of 10 to 16 years of English study.

Make a New L2 Friend

There are three extracurricular homework assignments each semester, English Corner, ABC For A Day. and Make A New L2 Friend.

The assignment Make A New L2 Friend was posted on <http://Chinaholisticenglish.org>

MAKE A NEW FRIEND

This is your final and most difficult homework assignment. You have two weeks to complete this assignment.

Introduce yourself to a foreign exchange student who is a complete stranger to you.. Engage in an extended conversation or even an activity such as inviting them to join you at English Corner, go to climb a mountain, go shopping, have lunch or just coffee, etc.

Write a 250 word summary of your experience.

At the beginning of your summary put your new foreign friend's name, home country and telephone number. Post your summary here.

THE NAME, COUNTRY AND PHONE NUMBER WILL NOT APPEAR ON THE PUBLIC WEB PAGE. The name, country and

phone number is required because if I think you are making up a story I will call your new friend.

The foreign exchange students have classes in the same building as HEL both on the 3rd and 4th floors.

Most foreign exchange students also speak English as L2 and will appreciate having a new Chinese friend to practice English. Last semester this was the most successful and appreciated homework assignment. Just read "Holistic English, A Revolution, not an Evolution" to confirm this.

The students who refused to even try this homework assignment were the same students who made excuses for nervousness during their final oral examination. Not a single student who completed this assignment had any discomfort or difficulty with nerves during their final examination.

The following are some representative posts from student who completed the assignment:

Cidney Class 3C

April 27th, 2010 at 12:14 am

... After our nice Conversation, I know more about Thailand and Thailand people. And it is a very interesting experience in SYSU campus because I wouldn't accomplish this task without pressure from this oral class.

Allen Class 2C

April 27th, 2010 at 12:50 am

... I think this assignment is difficult but really interesting and inspiring, since it provides us with a golden opportunity to make new friends, share different experience and acquiring more English.

Selina Class 16C

April 27th, 2010 at 12:07 pm

It is a most impressive experience to me.... It is another strange but surprising experience

Rose Class 2C

April 27th, 2010 at 12:28 pm

... I think this experience will be a good memory.

Ci Ci Class16c

April 27th, 2010 at 1:16 pm

... However, now I think to have some foreign friends is a good idea, it will let me know more about different things and can bring me different ways to view the common things.

Amber Class 8C

April 28th, 2010 at 12:37 am

.... In short, I felt happy to have the first foreign friend. If I can always insist on talking like this, I believe that my English will certainly make a lot of progress.

Nancy Class 1C

April 28th, 2010 at 2:51 pm

“Experience is the best teacher.” Through this experience, I realized that practice was the most important element for English learning.

Ken Class 15C

April 28th, 2010 at 5:37 pm

... That night, we overcame our fear for foreigners.

Paul Class 16C

April 28th, 2010 at 8:56 pm

... . Thanks to the homework, I made a real friend.

Jassie Class 4C

April 28th, 2010 at 11:07 pm

... I think it is funny to make friends with foreigners, not only for knowing more about foreign culture but also having new friends and enjoying ourselves. From this experience, I went through cowardice and become natural and confident. In the future, I will be more brave and smooth to facing new strangers and new things.

Doris Class 4C

May 3rd, 2010 at 2:39 am

... Thanks for the tough assignment, I have foreign friends now. I have finished the tough job and enjoyed a lot of fun. In the future, what I should do is to be more confident and never be afraid of losing face. And I will tell my two foreign friends more about China.

Chloe Class 5C

April 18th, 2010 at 3:05 pm

... I would not view this assignment to be an ‘assignment’. It is an amazing trip helping me to get English-speaking confidence as well as a very good foreign friend.

Bruce Class 14C

April 18th, 2010 at 11:42 pm

... What a good and important experience for me! What’s more, I made a kind foreign friend.

Samuel Class 14C

April 20th, 2010 at 11:08 pm

... I thought it was a unique experience in my school life and I enjoyed it.

Eric Class 16C

April 23rd, 2010 at 12:32 am

... Thanks, Martin! You gave me an endless and interesting assignment.

EXPERIMENTAL STRATEGIES

Class 11 and 12 from the School of Education and the School of Management had the highest percentage of intrinsically motivated students going into the last movie discussion of the semester at 87%. This presented a unique opportunity to experiment with a discussion format previously untried. The movie was Gandhi, a three hour epic with British English, the only movie of the semester exposing the students to British English.

The usual discussion format is 15 minutes for groups of six students to discuss teacher generated questions to reach a consensus answer. Then each group delivers their extended answer in turn. Due to the high motivation and accelerated development of these two classes, liberty was taken in changing the format.

The students, working in groups of six, were given only five minutes to discuss a teacher generated question and to develop a one sentence answer to be delivered group by group in rapid fire succession. The entire exercise for each question and set of 5 group answers was limited to 10 minutes each. Then the teacher would deliver the definitive answer and move on to the next question.

The questions included:

1. Who killed Gandhi, a Hindu or Muslim and why was he killed?
2. Why is China concerned about the relationship between India and Pakistan?
3. Why does China have closer economic ties to Pakistan than India?
4. Why didn't Chairman Mao use Gandhi's non-violent philosophy?
5. Who unified China?

These students performed admirably and beyond expectations.

Classes 4 and 5 from Lingnan College were assigned the American documentary "Super Size Me" as their next to last movie of the semester. At the commencement of the semester, the administration claimed that the Lingnan College students are the smartest in the entire Sun Yat-sen University system. It was not until week 10 that this misinformation was corrected, but it was too late, the damage had already been done. Initially the bar was set higher for these students but they floundered and resented the extra pressure. Due to the unnecessary friction and hostility created through this unfortunate circumstance, a role reversal was instituted.

Instead of groups of six students discussing a teacher generated question for 15 minutes, the students were given 15 minutes to generate movie related questions to ask the teacher. There was adequate time for each group to pose two questions. Surprisingly the students centered their questions around sociological issues not business or economic issues. When business or economic answers were given by the teacher, the students seemed to be

operating without a sufficient grounding in either business or economics. Unusual for post-graduate economics majors.

Classes 1, 2 and 3 from Lingnan College were assigned the American documentary “Life and Debt” as their last movie. This movie was scheduled because at the commencement of the semester, the administration claimed that the Lingnan College students are the smartest in the entire Sun Yat-sen University system. It was not until week 10 that this misinformation was corrected, but it was too late, the damage had already been done. Initially the bar was set higher for these students but they floundered and resented the extra pressure.

This movie was scheduled because it fits with their major. Although the Lingnan students are economics majors, they lacked basic information about the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organization. This movie proved a real eye opener for them but their discussion was shallow and very superficial.

Classes 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 15 and 16 were assigned the movie “Hotel Rwanda.” When asked how they liked this romance movie there was unanimous protest that the movie was a war picture and not a love story. This is a typical response from Chinese students who are inundated with war movies on Chinese TV. Any day of the week there is at least one war movie on some channel at all times of the day and night.

However, the introduction to the movie in the Holistic English Workbook reads as follows:

EXERCISES BEFORE WATCHING MOVIE

READ MOVIE REVIEW

Tagline: *When the world closed its eyes, he opened his arms.*

Plot Outline *Don Cheadle stars in the true-life story of Paul Rusesabagina, a hotel manager who housed over a thousand Tutsis refugees during their struggle against the Hutu militia in Rwanda.*

Plot Synopsis: *Ten years ago some of the worst atrocities in the history of mankind took place in the country of Rwanda--and in an era of high-speed communication and round the clock news, the events went almost unnoticed by the rest of the world. In only three months, one million people were brutally murdered. In the face of these unspeakable actions, inspired by his love for his family, an ordinary man summons extraordinary courage to save the lives of over a thousand helpless refugees, by granting them shelter in the hotel he manages.*

Clearly the students either failed to do their homework or their reading comprehension level is unacceptable for post-graduate students.

This movie is a love story in a wartime setting. The love story is the front story and the war is background. The students saw the war as the front story and the love story was almost ignored.

The students' interpretation of this movie is consistent with a predisposition emanating from over exposure to a single ideology. In China there is at least one war movie playing on at least one TV channel every waking hour.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

All 650 registered students were post-graduate non-English majors ranging in age from 21 to 34. Men constituted 43% and women 57%. This is a marked departure from prior undergraduate Holistic English implementation programs where the percentage of women was 96% to 4% men. This difference in gender percentage may be influenced by the students' undergraduate majors being more attractive to men than some of the majors at other institutions where Holistic English has been implemented.

HOLISTIC ENGLISH CLASSES MARCH 2010

- Class #1 Lingnan College
- Class #2 Lingnan College
- Class #3 Lingnan College
- Class #4 Lingnan College
- Class #5 Lingnan College
- Class #6 Research Center of Hong Kong and Macau
- Class #7 School of History
- Class #8 School of Chinese Language and Literature
- Class #9 School of Chinese Language and Literature
- Class #10 School of Chinese Language and Literature
- Class #11 School of Education
- Class #12 School of Education, School of Management
- Class #13 School of Sociology and Anthropology
- Class #14 School of Sociology and Anthropology
- Class #15 School of Philosophy
- Class #16 School of Philosophy, School of Tourism, School of Asia-Pacific

CONTROL GROUP

- Class # 18
- Class # 19

SPRING 2010

The students represent the following provinces:

Anhui, Chongqing, Fujian, Gansu, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Hebei, Heilongjiang, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Inner Mongolia, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Ningxia, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Shandong, Shanxi, Sichuan, Tianjin, Xinjiang, Yunnan, Zhejiang

The students represent the following 191 undergraduate institutions of higher learning:

Anhui University, Anhui University of Technology, Anhui University, Anyang Normal University, Baoji University of Arts and Sciences, Beijing Forestry University, Beijing Institute of Technology, Beijing Jiaotong University, Beijing Minzu University of China, Beijing Normal University, Capital Normal University, Central South University, Central South University of Forestry and Technology, Centre China Normal University, Chang'an University, Changsha University, Changsha University of Science & Technology, Chengdu University of Information Technology, China University of Geosciences, China University of Mining and Technology, China Women's University, Chongqing Jiao Tong University, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing Southwest University, Chongqing Technology and Business University, Chongqing Three Gorges University, Chongqing University, Chongqing University of Posts & Telecommunications, Chongqing University of Technology, Dalian Nationalities University, Dezhou University, Dongguan University of Technology, Fudan University, Fuzhou University, Gannan Normal University, Guangdong Education Institution, Guangdong University of Business Studies, Guangdong University of Finance, Guangdong University of Foreign Study, Guangdong University of Technology, Guangzhou University, Guangxi Normal University, Guangxi University, Guangxi University for Nationalities, Guizhou College of Economy and Finance, Hainan Normal University, Hainan University, Hanshan Normal University, Harbin Engineering University, Harbin Normal University, Hebei Agriculture University, Hefei University of Technology, Heilongjiang University, Henan Normal University, Henan University, Henan University of Finance and Economics, Hengyang Normal University, Hubei Normal University, Huaqiao University, Huaqiao University in Fujian province, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Hubei Changjiang University, Hubei National University, Hubei University, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology, Hunan Normal University, Hunan University, Hunan University of Arts and Science, Hunan University of Science and Engineering, Hunan University of Science and Technology, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Inner Mongolia Normal University, Inner Mongolia University, Jiangnan University, Jiangxi Normal University, Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics, Jiaying University, Jilin University, Jingtangshan University, Jishou University, Lanzhou University, Liaocheng University, Linyi Normal University, Mianyang Normal University, Minzu University of China, Nanchang Hangkong University, Nanchang University, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing University, Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Nanjing University of Finance & Economics, Nanjing Agricultural University, Nanjing Audit University, Nankai University, Naval Aeronautical Engineering Academy Qingdao Branch, Normal University, Northeast University, Northeast Normal University, Northwest A&F University, Northwest Nationalities University, Northwest Sci-Tech University of Agriculture and Forestry, Northwest University, Northwest University for Nationalities, Pingdingshan University, Qinghai University, Qufu Normal University, Shaanxi Normal

University, Shandong Economic University, Shandong Institute of Business and Technology, Shandong Institute of Light Industry, Shandong Jianzhu University, Shandong Liaocheng University, Shandong Normal University, Shandong University, Shandong University, South-central University for Nationalities, Shanxi North University of China, Shanxi University, Shanxi University of Finance and Economics, Shijiazhuang Railway Institute, Sichuan International Studies University, Sichuan Normal University, Sichuan University, South-Central University for Nationalities, South China Agricultural University, South China Normal University, South China University of Technology, Southern Medical University, Southwest University, Southwest University of Finance and Economics, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Sun Yat-sen University, Tangshan normal University, Tianjin Foreign Study University, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, University of Science and Technology Beijing, Wuhan Institute of Technology University, Wuhan Polytechnic University, Wuhan University, Wuhan University of Technology, Xi'an International Studies University, Xiamen University, Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an Post and Telecommunication University, Xi'an University of Electronic Science and Technology, Xiangtan University, Xidian University, Xinjiang University, Yanshan University, Yulin Normal University, Yunnan Normal University, Yunnan University, Zhejiang Gongshang University, Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics, Zhengzhou Institute of Aeronautical Industry Management, Zhengzhou University, Zhongnan University of Economics and Law, Zhongyuan University of Technology, Zhoukou Normal University, Zunyi Normal College

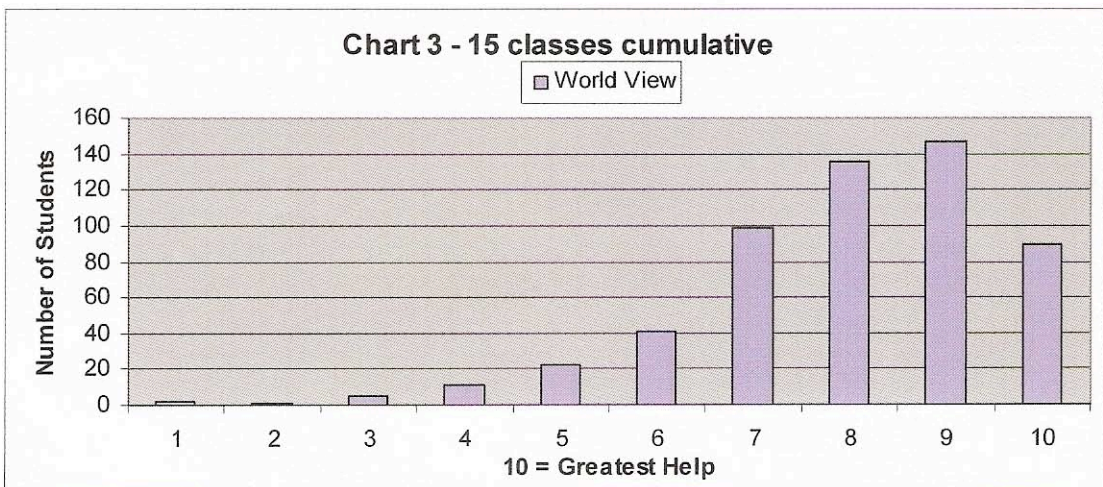
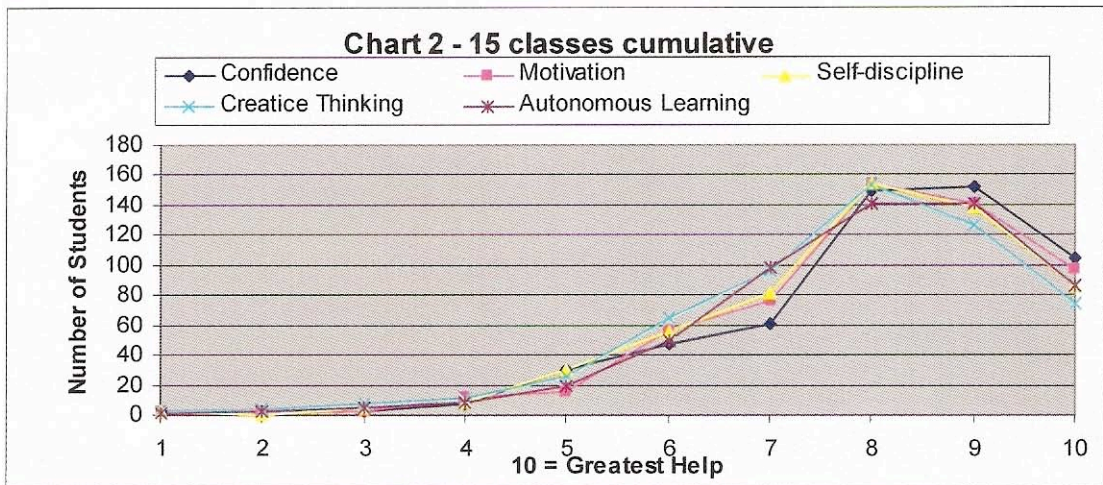
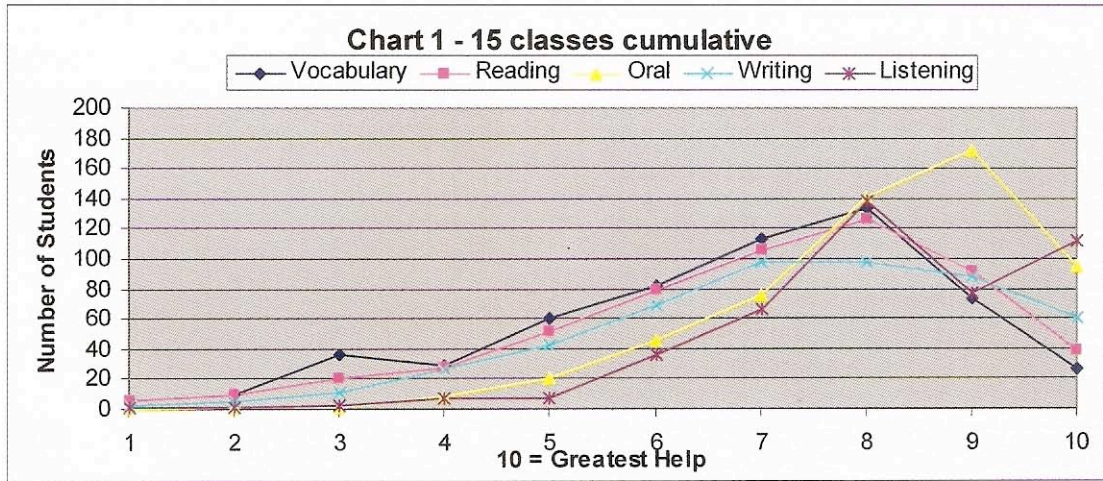
STUDENT EVALUATION OF HOLISTIC ENGLISH

At the end of each semester the students are asked for a self-analysis of their perceived benefits from the Holistic English program,. They fill out an anonymous questionnaire indicating their appraisal of the benefits they believe they have received in the areas of vocabulary, reading, conversation, writing, listening, confidence, motivation, discipline, creative thinking, autonomous learning and world view.

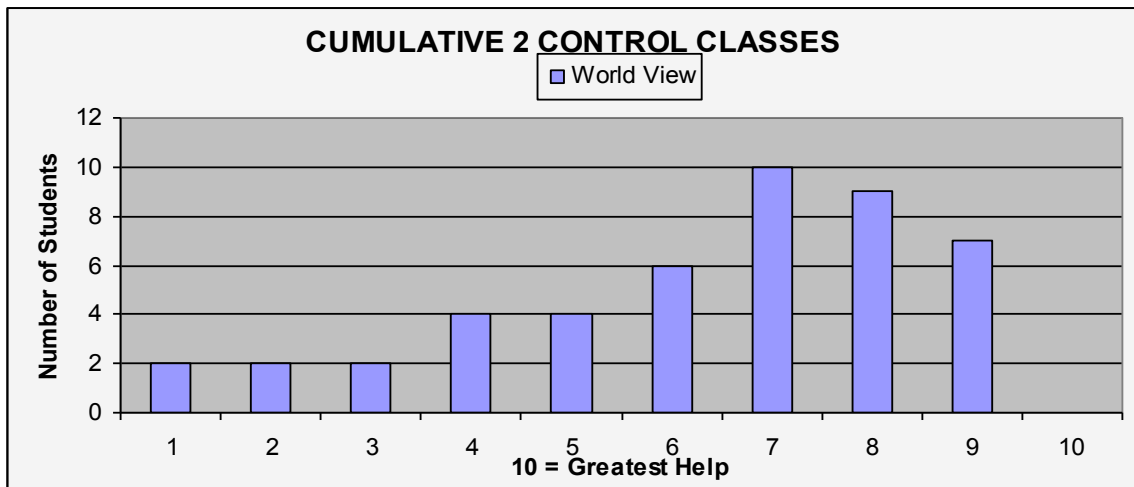
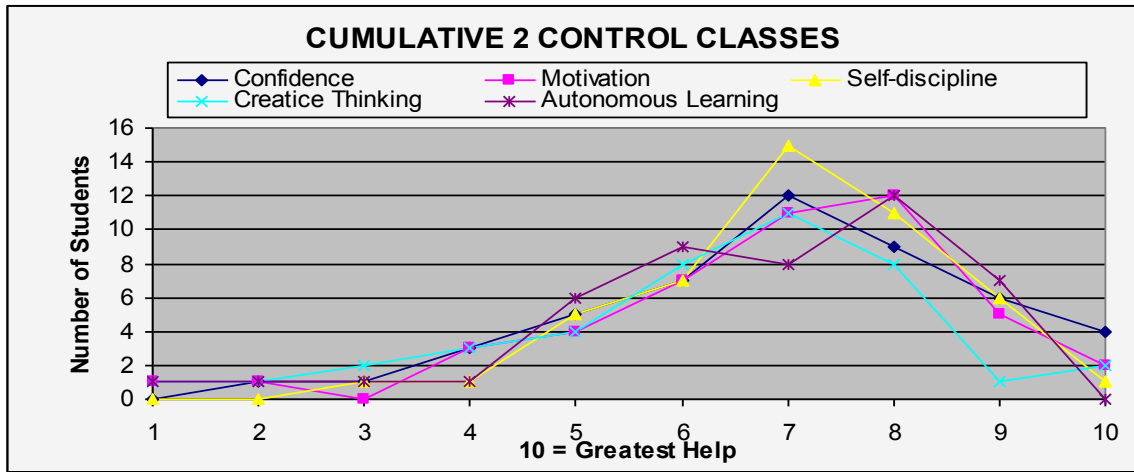
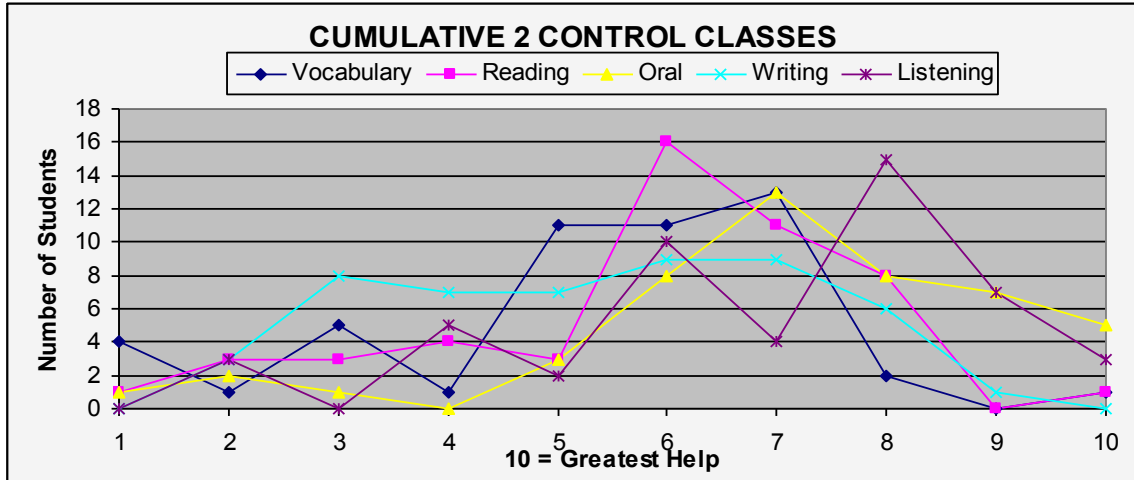
The individual class results of the end of term anonymous questionnaire for 15 HE classes and 3 control classes appear in Appendix A.

The cumulative results of the end of term anonymous questionnaires for 15 HE classes and 2 control classes appear in the following charts.

15 CLASSES Cumulative



CUMULATIVE 2 CONTROL CLASSESiii



iii 4 control classes were promised but staff with a “so-so” attitude only provided 2

These consistent results, every semester, must be rather perplexing for the Sun Yat-sen administration for two reasons. First, there is the claim that the post-graduate students are highly motivated, mature, well disciplined and autonomous learners. Second, Sun Yat-sen University has developed its own oral English program that has won many National awards.

If either or both of these claims were realistic, the Holistic English Chart #1 would be flat lined in comparison to the Control classes Charts #1; and both The Holistic English and Control classes Chart #2 would be flat lined. The charts constitute conclusive proof that the Sun Yat-sen award winning program is still deficient and the students are not well understood by their Chinese administrators.



EASTER IN THE HOLISTIENGLISH LAB

The Holistic English students' questionnaire responses included a plethora of written comments that the HE course was interesting and exciting but should be longer than 2 periods, should meet more than once every other week and should last more than one semester. The Control Class students' questionnaire responses overwhelmingly stated that their traditional English course was boring, not interesting, lasted too many hours and students are not given enough opportunity to speak.

OMINOUS WARNING

At mid-term a senior administrator warned that relations between China and the US were strained and at a flash point over the RMB valuation, sale of weapons to Taiwan, Dali Lama and trade relations. The safety of US teachers was a question mark because Chinese students react emotionally and not intellectually. (This is a known truth with respect to uneducated Chinese farmers, peasants and migrant workers.) It was suggested

that controversial issues should be avoided, students should not be pushed into creative thinking and homework levels should be greatly reduced to appease the students.

Chinese post-graduate students reacting to controversial or thought provoking issues with an emotional mode is a blatant admission that China's higher education system concentrates on core knowledge while ignoring psychological and social development. The system fails to develop a well rounded citizen. This also relegates China to a future generation of educated idiots and uncivilized leaders.

Although some Chinese scholars lament students' lack of creative thinking ability, China's higher education system discourages this at every level. This is primarily because the colleges and universities are actually administered by CCP secretaries assigned to every department in every school. All decisions must be approved by the Party Secretary who insures that any decision comports with CCP objectives. Academic freedom and creative thinking are not in the best interests of the Party. One dean stated, "The purpose of this college is to train future Party cadres. We need people who will follow orders and not think independently." And if the most highly educated Chinese are so immature, then the CCP is correct to limit personal freedoms, censor the internet, censor news, censor foreign books, foreign films and TV; for how else than this uncivilized hoard of humanity be kept under control?

Admission to a Chinese college is seen as the key to a prosperous future. A college education is required for the most menial government job. Government jobs include SOE's such as government owned hotel where the doorman must be a college graduate. This also explains a man wearing a 3 piece suit along the roadside working with a shovel or pick axe, the project is a government job and everyone is a college graduate.

College graduation is seen as entitlement, a reward for the hard work that resulted in receiving the most coveted prize of college entrance. The college students feel that college is a kind of reward for all of their prior hard work and college is a place to relax and not engage in further hard work. Homework is seen as unnecessary or unwelcome.

Holistic English is the serious pursuit of English proficiency in a manner to which the Chinese student is totally unaccustomed. Every semester begins with a degree of student complaints due to both a culture shock and an educational shock. However, a majority of the students make the adjustment and progress greatly in their English development.

Every semester there is a certain percentage of unreachable and unteachable students. Pandering to their complaints to appease them brings the level of education down to the lowest common denominator. This is not higher education, this is babysitting. Administrators who are guilty of this are more concerned with their own job preservation than the quality of education

When Chinese students are treated like babies they act like babies. When they are treated like responsible young adults most rise to the occasion and act like responsible young

adults. The Chinese educational system turns them into perpetual babies. Holistic English treats them like the responsible young adults they should be.

However, due to the ominous warning from the senior administrator, many adjustments were made in the Holistic English Program mid-term. These changes did not go unnoticed by the students, many of whom complained about the changes.

Some representative student reactions follow:

Shaw Class 9C

Sir, I respect you, I like you, and I really prefer the tough you, the real "WOLFF" that you used to be. ...

Sir, as I have mentioned I respect you and I really like you. Don't lose your heart. You have changed some of the students. Don't just pay attention to those who hate you. You have your fans! And I wish, even if someday you leave SYSU, I am still allowed to send you e-mails and keep in touch with you.

Best wishes and cheer up!

Caren Class 6C

Yes, I was drowned in you assignments. The beginning was hard to me, and I would feel tired and a little bit scared of your e-mails. But now, I nearly regard reading your essays and posting comments as a part of my daily routine. I used to be confused by seeing you afford so many controversial materials in you web site, but just after your second class when you asked us to do comments in a rational and neutral attitude I got my answer. E-mail you sent yesterday made me upset and hard to believe it. As you're changing us gradually and making yourself be heard more and more, why you chose to leave? Now I know your reason, and I just feel that it's a pity you will leave and it's my honor to be one of your last students in SYSU.

Best regards.

Oray Class 6C

Dear teacher,

Although I know nothing about why our dear teacher has changed his mind a lot about the requirements, what I want to say is: you are actually a good teacher, even the best one that I have met with. I usually think for myself if I have met you much earlier, maybe my English has already been improved greatly, and maybe now I have become an extremely successful girl. And now I begin to see why every of your children has been so successful during their lives and career. One of the most important reason should be they all have a very fantastic father who can teach them a lot.

So I am very proud of having been one of your students, and I promise you that I will keep working hard throughout my life and trying my every effort to learn more, create my own career, and become an outstanding girl who is able to help others a lot.

And thanks again for your approval and recommendation for my certificate of appreciation.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Evelyn Class 6C

I gotta say your pedagogy works on me and I love it. No exaggeration and compliment. Why can we teachable and reachable just continue this once-in-a-lifetime experience of English?

But I know that it's all late for those complains that ruined all these.

I really appreciated your effort. U R GREAT! After all, having fun and feeling respected is beyond all.

Tiffany Class 3C

I would like to say that I learn a lot from you and benefit from all the resources you offer.

You are a good teacher and you care about every student.

Thank you very much for you greatest effort in English!

Best wishes.

Levin Class 4C

Professor Martin,

I know I should not send e-mail to you arbitrarily, but I have something to say necessarily. I think you maybe felt disappointed about some persons, or SYSU, or even education and policy in China in recent time, but please don't feel disappointed to us, we support you, at least me I feel my spoken English improved much in this semester, which is your contributions. Thank you, you are supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.

Finally, I want to say that, this e-mail was checked by WORD, whose purpose is also not to get high marks.

Your sincerely

Amy Class 12C

I think, Martin is a earnest and responsible teacher. Sometimes, several students complain that there are lots of homework and assignments, even some students are afraid of his English class. In my opinion, we grow up in China and we never receive such strict and systemic English lessons before. Facing with Martin's special teaching, we often feel very difficult at the beginning. But I believe, we can accept Martin's teaching style by degrees and at the end of this term we can get great progresses.

Rebecca Class 8C

Dear sir,

I feel sad when I see your new letter ,for visiting your web site has become one part of my daily life. I can feel the efforts you have made to improve our English.

At first, I am writing to tell you that I want you can send me private letter if I have not post successfully,for I can't know whether I have finished my homework or not if I have not get the inform.

But now, it seems unnecessary for it has nothing to do with our course. Even that, I will insist visit the web site.

At last, thank you for all the things you have done for us!

BEST WHISHES!

your,

Kevin Class 3C

Since our childhood we were asked to do a lot of work, some of which were not we wanted. However, in the college life, I have learned to study by myself. Meanwhile, I have my own plans and carry out step by step.

These homeworks are also part of my plan, I would be happy to finish it by myself and do a lot more to enhance it.

Anonymous by request Class 11C

Dear professor:

When I came in the classroom this afternoon, I found a little unhappy on your face, in a word, there is something different, I do not know whether it is just because you caught a bad cold. In fact, I wanted to write to you to tell you something, especially you sent us an email named 'clear?', in which, some friends and I found you were upset about the teaching situation, and we feel strange that you say so. We do not hope to see that, and we know that you must be misunderstood. From the email we guess your department leader may find you and tell you something frustrated. ...

Another situation of us is that, before a postgraduate student, some of us do not come from this university; they are from parochial college which education in China is not so good, you may know this, so there may be some difficulties in reading English passages and give a comment on those sensitive issues. When facing "too much" English passages, and have no idea how to finish on time, some will lodge a complaint and doubt what are you doing and why you want us to face the political sensitive issues? Although in fact, you do not mean so, just as they think, to the contrary, you teach us so much, we should thank you for your effort.

In a word, I do not want to see and feel sorry to this situation now, and I do not know how to do, maybe what I can do is to tell you something you should know, communication is important, misunderstanding makes both unhappy. Of course, I do not know whether I have misunderstood your feeling, if so, please forgive my guesswork. Ok, it is time for supper, to write this letter, I have spent an hour, I think it is a progress for me to type so long without spell in a paper before so, thank you again and hope you get better soon. ...

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Peter Class 12C

I think the reason why many students misunderstand or even hate you is that you are radical for Chinese students, and strict on the other hand. In fact, there are many teachers students believe to be radical, but most students like them because young people like the person whose ideas are different. And it's natural that at the same time many students dislike them, just like the case of you. So I think you don't have to worry about it, it's common. The difference between the radical Chinese teacher and you is that you are strict with students. This brings about anxiety, not angry. Many of us worry about whether they are able to follow your requirements (My class mates said: unless I do not do have to do other things, I can not follow his instructions) and whether you would let them fail (In fact, I was worried too, but I can understand you). The perceived anxieties

magnify students' angry. In any case, you have opened a window for us to understand how foreigners think about China, so many of us value what you have done. I don't know what I have written above is right or wrong, I just want to help you to understand why.
Have a good day!

Linda, Class 14C

Dear Prof. Wolff,

I feel upset after reading your last mail. I should say that you are a good and responsible teacher in my heart. You are, as you said, a teacher I have never met before. You open a window for me, through which I see more; give a platform for me to say more and share more. I appreciate what you have done to us very much.

I do not want to judge my peers. But as to myself, I would like to express my profound appreciation to you. It is my honor to have you as my teacher. And it would be SYSU's loss to lose you.

Thank you again. Look forward to seeing you in two weeks.

Best,

CONCLUSION

A Sun Yat-sen administrator (not in the English teaching department) disregards students' opinions and does not disguise his contempt for those he is supposed to serve:

“You mean you believe in their moody frustration in learning (yes, learning) English? -- I fully understand them, especially if they have no use of English (sic) in their life and work. But I would treat what they say with a grain of salt”

He claims to understand the students but it was the very student comments in this article to which he was responding. This is so typical of Chinese administrators attempting to guard their perceived turf. As pointed out elsewhere[1], this pervasive denial mode is one of the factors that impedes higher education in China and brings it so low.

The Holistic English Program is based upon student input. Students in 6 Provinces, at 1st tier, 2nd tier, 3rd tier, 4th tier, Business Institutes and Joint Ventures all contributed to development of the program.

Their concerns, complaints, criticisms, suggestions and praise all played a significant role in program development. 12 foreign teachers also listened to the students.

Holistic English is the only successful English acquisition program available in China at the University level.

Holistic English satisfies the “moody frustration in learning English? Especially if they have no use of English in their life and work.”

Holistic English brings excitement and satisfaction to those treated with a “grain of salt” by the Chinese educational system

Holistic English has proven its efficacy at every level of higher education in China. The success of Holistic English is because it is a program OF THE STUDENTS, BY THE STUDENTS AND FOR THE STUDENTS.

Some student comments:

Kevin Class 15C

March 27th, 2010 at 9:22 pm

I was surprised of the comment coming from the mouth of a university teacher. A teacher should treat the students' opinions seriously; no matter it's wrong or right. The point is to listen instead of to ignore. If the teacher doesn't believe his/her students, how can he/she educate them? I confess I didn't feel comfortable of the opinions made by Prof. Wolff at first, because they always points out the defects in China. However, sometimes criticism works better than appraisal in provoking the desire of thinking. I believe the purpose of HE is not only encourage us to learn English but also to think independently, which is what the current university education lack in most time

Bill Class 15C

March 28th, 2010 at 12:10 am

Frankly speaking, I'm not surprised at what the administrator said. In China, administrative arrogance is a very common phenomenon especially in the government. Administrative organizations in universities are no exceptions. Many administrators are lack of service awareness. They consider themselves as rulers and have the absolute power to govern students. They take it for grant that there is no obligation to care about the students' opinions. It is the bureaucracy that is slowing the progress of our universities and the entire society. ...

Tina Class 2C

April 1st, 2010 at 11:20 pm

It should be said that the administrator mentioned in the article is not a particular example in our current education system. Many Chinese teachers have been used to the way that they stuff knowledge into the students' brain without any consideration of their acceptance and feelings. They hold a short term view in their teaching job and do not care the real effect of their backward teaching style at all. The result is, the students lose the pulse to learn more and think more, and our education is trapped in an embarrassing failure.

Holistic English Program is the oasis we are longing for. It makes a difference in our traditional way of English study. It gives us new access to the English world and provides us a platform to express our ideas and thoughts. I sincerely hope that more and more students can benefit from this program.

Matt Class2C

April 11th, 2010 at 3:30 pm

“Administrative Arrogance” is really very common in China. Some people, especially those in administrative department, always put down others’ enthusiasm acting as he already knows everything, and any try to change the reality is ridiculous. Actually, those people just lose belief in everything, and self-conceit out of imagination. What they always say are “impossible”, “take it as a grain of salt”, “I know it”. Hoo! Nonsense. Just pay no attention to them, and walk our own way seriously. Things will be better!

[1] Wolff (2009) CHINA EFL: A Market Driven Model: PetroChina Embraces Holistic English Program

<http://chinaholisticenglish.org>

Qiang/Wolff (2007) Chinese Business Institute Students Speak Out, *Frontiers in Higher Education*, Ch. 12, Nova Science Publications

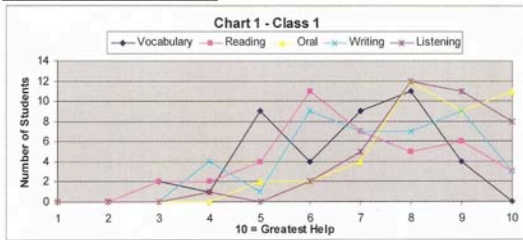
Wolff (2009) China EFL: Corporate Training and Holistic English are not Compatible,

<http://chinaholisticenglish.org>

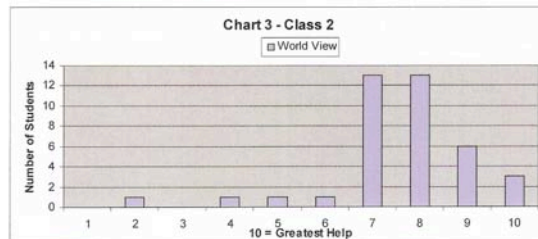
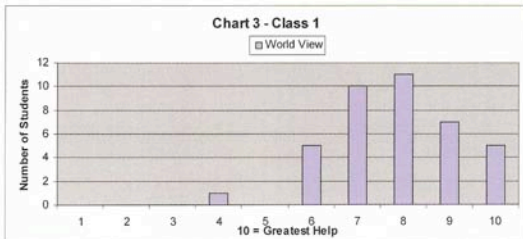
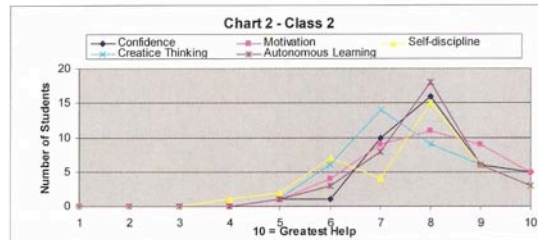
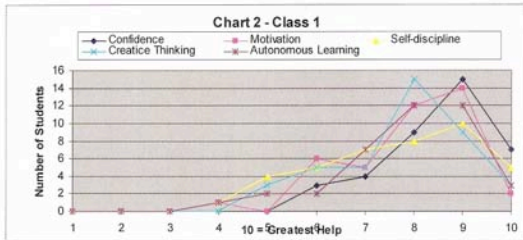
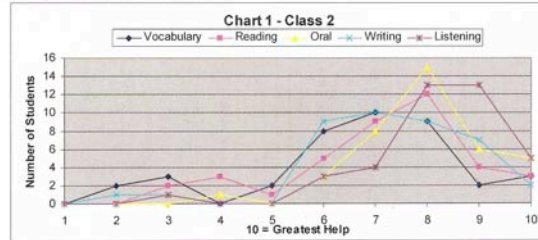
Qiang/Wolff (2007) China EFL: The Unqualified, Teaching (sic) the Unmotivated, in a Hostile Environment *Frontiers in Higher Education*, Ch. 12, Nova Science Publications

Appendix A

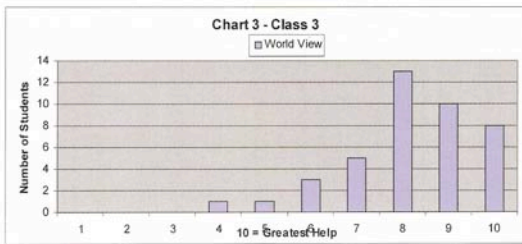
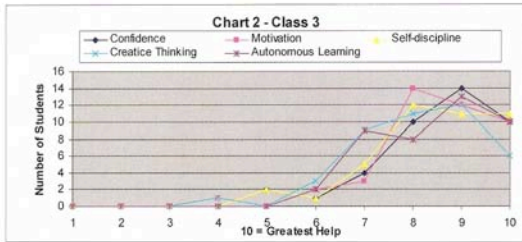
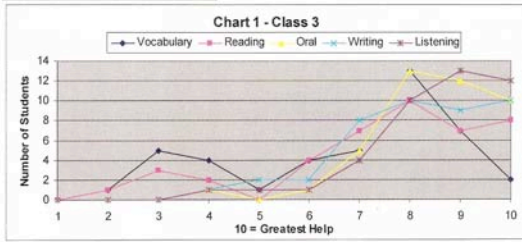
CLASS #1 LINGNAN COLLEGE



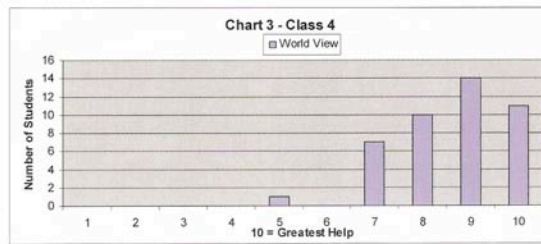
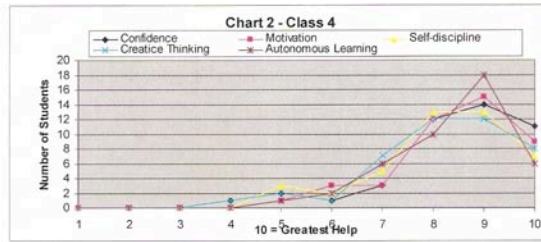
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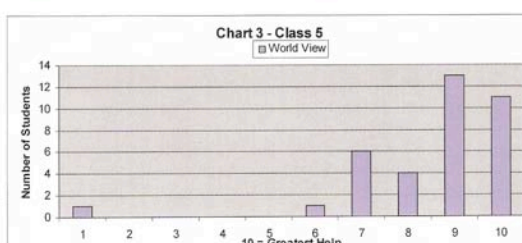
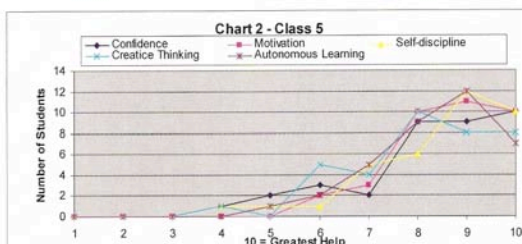
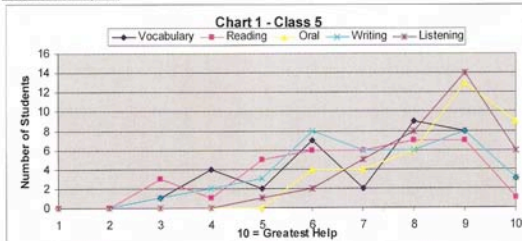
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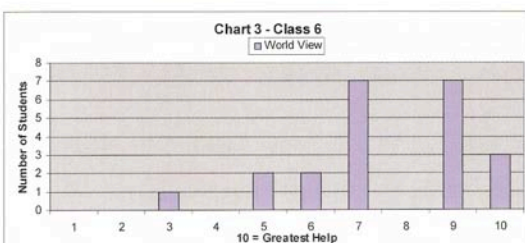
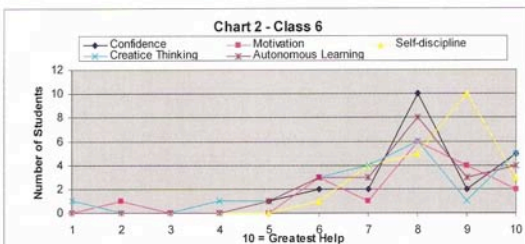
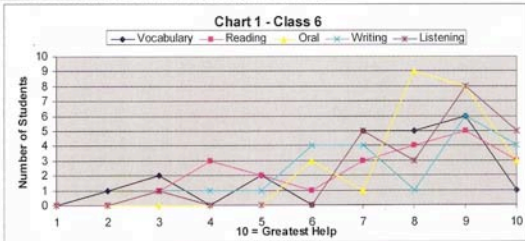
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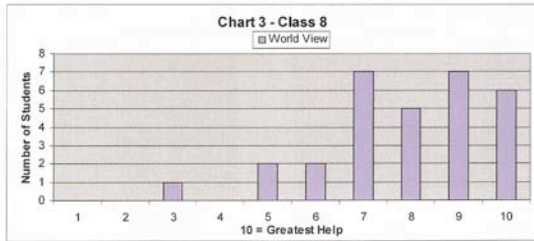
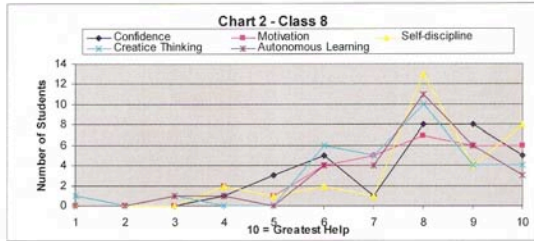
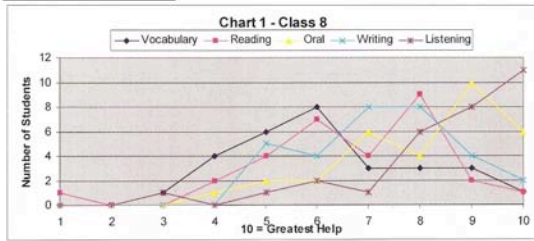
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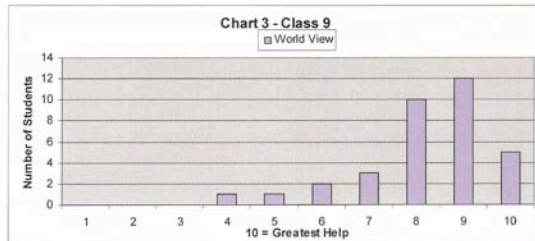
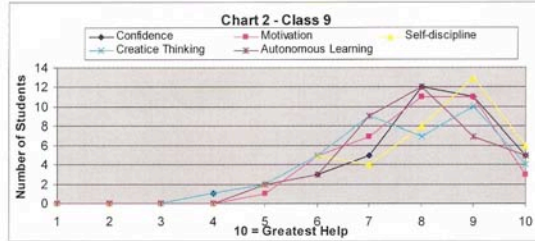
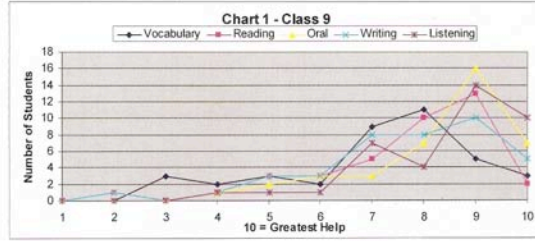
CLASS 6 Research Center Hong Kong and Macau



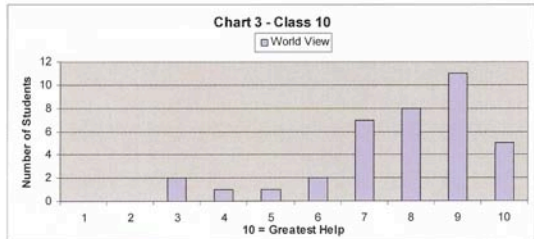
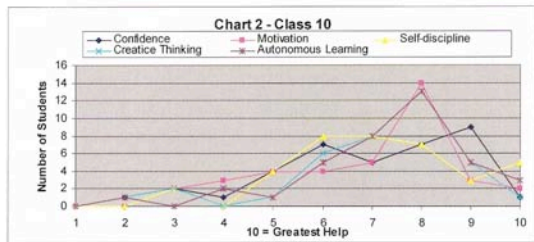
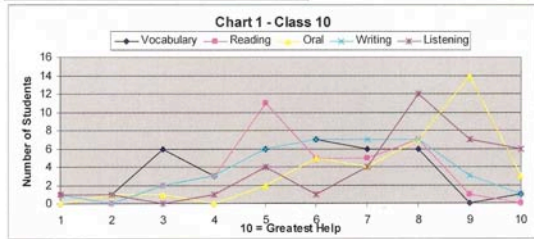
CLASS #8 Chinese Studies



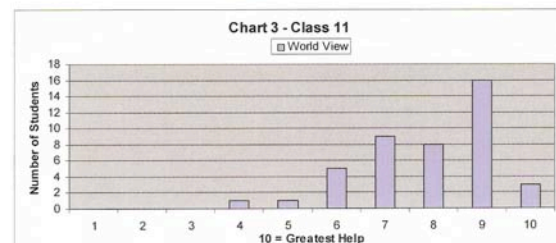
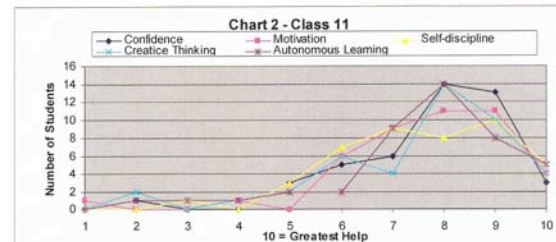
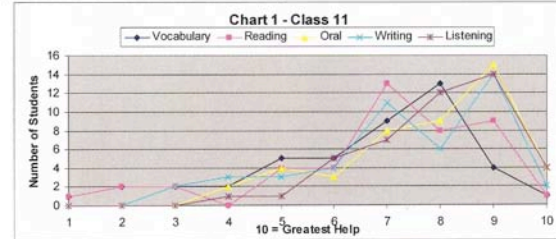
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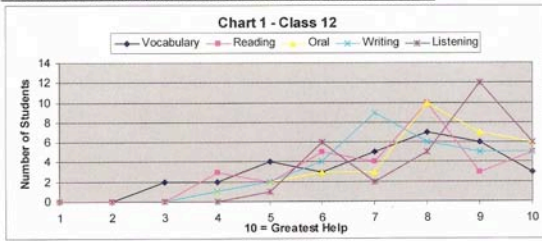
CLASS #10 SCHOOL OF CHINESE STUDIES



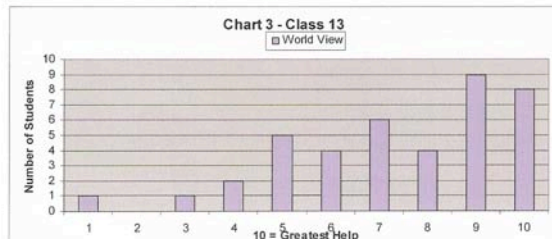
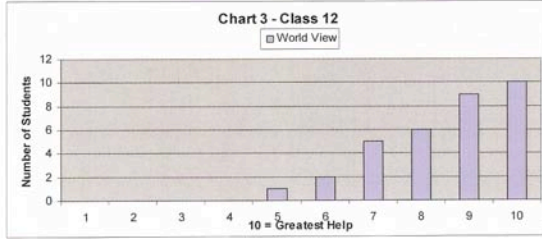
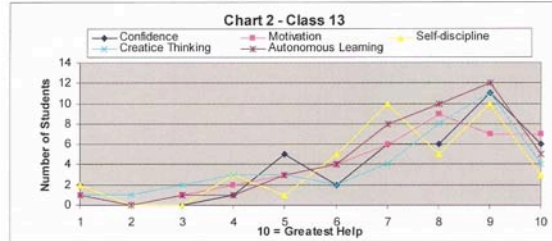
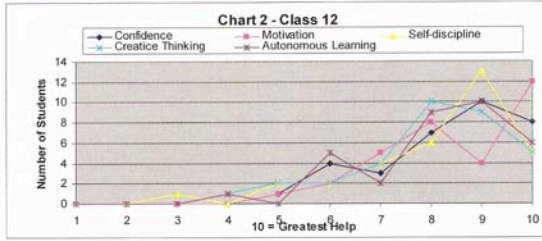
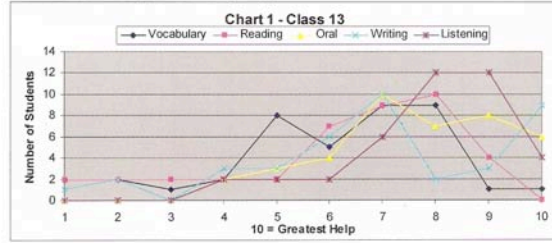
CLASS #11 SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



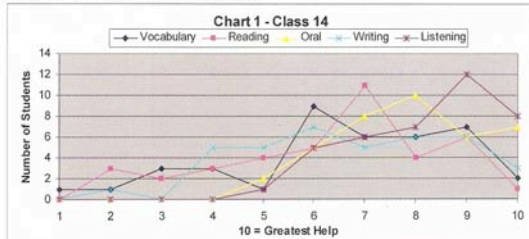
CLASS #12 SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT



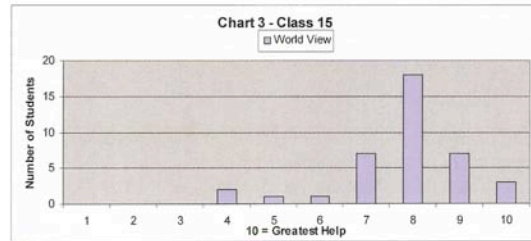
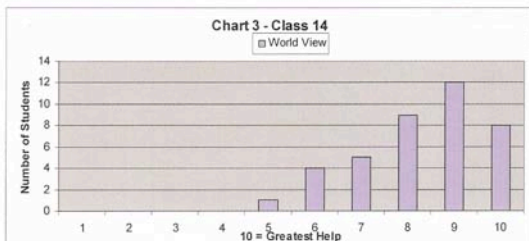
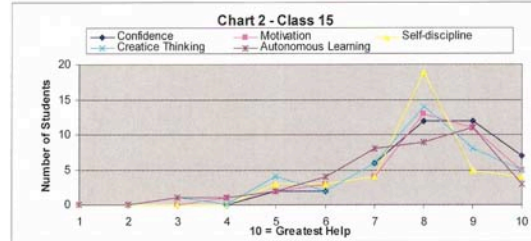
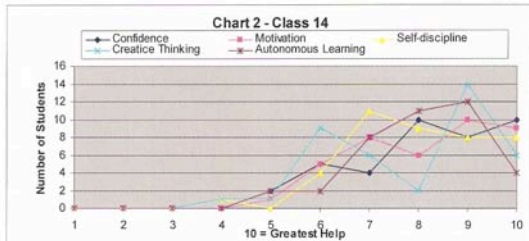
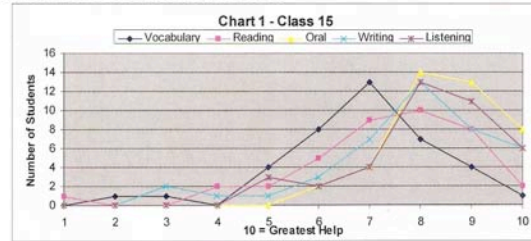
CLASS #13 Sociology and Anthropology



CLASS #14 Sociology and Anthropology



CLASS #15 SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY



CLASS #16 PHILOSOPHY, TOURISM, ASIA-PACIFIC

