

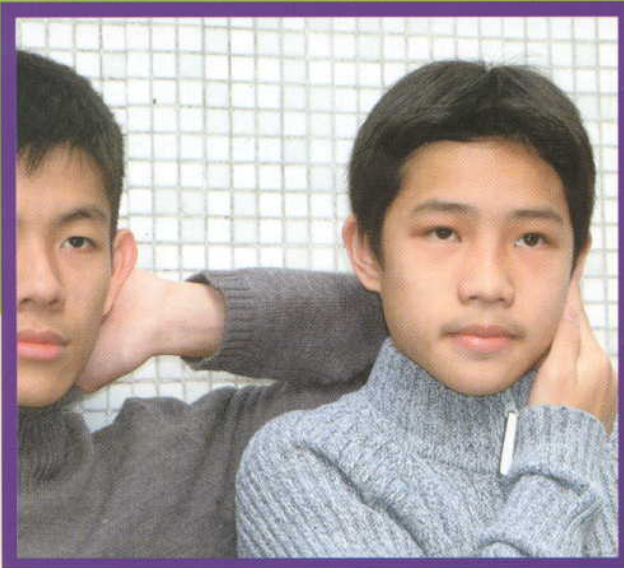
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THE ENGLISH NAVIGATOR



ENGLISH COLOURS YOUR LIFE!



Welcome to the second edition!

EDITORIAL



Welcome to the second edition of The English Navigator! This issue features some new and different ways to assist your language learning. We also aim to be providing you with some amusing pages, like our new comic strip. We chose the comic strip because we know that many students like reading them, however, you will find that 'The Adventures of Chris Wong' has a very important message. After looking at it, hopefully you will be able to see how important English can be for our future.

We also have included an interview with Iris Van Kerckhove. We chose to interview her because she is a prominent young Hong Kong citizen, and is proof of the motivated people that our fair city produces. With her own web-site about the Eurasian condition and features in our local newspapers and magazines, she will be a future force to be reckoned with.

Our section on web-sites has been put together in the hope of showing you interesting ways to improve your English. Since most of our students have access to the Internet, being able to find these web-sites should not be a problem. We sincerely hope you take the opportunity to do so.

Hong Kong can be a very cosmopolitan place to live in, yet finding people and places where English is widely spoken is becoming more and more difficult. We visited Discovery Bay and found it to be probably one of the best places to speak and practice your English.

Many thanks to the English Society members, who include Beatrice Yip (1F), Fiona Fok (1F), Wilson Hung (1F), Viktoria Kwong (2B), Naomi Lam (2F) and Antonio Hui (4C). They have worked diligently to assist in the production of this issue.

Like our cover page suggests, the better your English becomes, the more colourful your life will become! We sincerely hope you enjoy this edition of The English Navigator!

Editors-in-charge:

Barry Manuk (Native English Teacher) &

Frederick Cheung (Head of English Department)



An interview with... **Iris Van Kerckhove** www.EurasianNation.com

Iris Van Kerckhove is no ordinary Hong Kong teenager. She might be only sixteen years old, but it is plain to see that the sky is the limit for this Eurasian girl, and she has big ambitions for her two year old web-site—EurasianNation.com. The daughter of a Shanghainese mother and a Belgian father, she saw a lack of online resources and meeting opportunities for mixed-race people. Her web-site has sought to address this imbalance. The English Society interviewed Iris a few weeks ago to ask her about the English-language situation in Hong Kong.

What do you think of the English standard in Hong Kong?

I think it's gotten increasingly worse after the handover in 1997. It could be much better than it is right now, especially if you compare Hong Kong with Singapore.

Do you think debating is a good way to improve our English?

Yes, I think so, because you have to speak constantly and remember what you are going to say. It also helps your concentration.

Do you think not being able to speak Cantonese would be a big problem for someone living in Hong Kong?

Yes, probably, because the English standard isn't very high in Hong Kong. It would definitely be more comfortable if you knew how to speak Cantonese. However, I still think you can survive in Hong Kong if you don't know how to speak Cantonese. For example, there are many people in my school (Shatin College-an English Schools Foundation International School) who don't speak any Cantonese at all.

How many languages do you speak?

I can only actually speak English fluently. I can also manage in Mandarin and Cantonese. I'm also learning French and Dutch.

What's the major difference between Chinese and Western people?

Chinese are slightly more submissive. They don't always stand up for themselves because they either think they are inferior, or it would not be polite to do so.

How are the international schools different from the local schools?

The international schools try to promote creativity more and really require you to think. Local schools seem to focus more on rote memorization. But, I do believe it's getting better.

For the local Hong Kong students, what is the best way they can improve their Oral English?

I think they really have to find a chance to speak because the kids here really don't get much of a chance to speak to others in English. Also, watching English programmes and English language movies may help. Grammar practicing through reading can be of assistance, because you probably pick up the rules of grammar through the process of reading.

For learning English, should learners know the rules of English first?

Yes. One should start learning the rules from an early age. But, it is also important to get a general feel for the language as well.

Many thanks to Iris for taking time to speak with the English Society!





A Different Atmosphere

DISCOVERY BAY



By Louis Ng

A mere 25 minutes ferry trip away from Central, Discovery Bay is a low-density residential community in an accessible resort-style living environment. On the scenic coast of Lantau Island, the largest outlying island in Hong Kong, exists a unique paradise for everyone living there. It is also a multi-cultural community with more than half of the residents being expatriates from over 35 countries. Away from the hustle and bustle, people were smiling and enjoying spending time with their friends and family. It was my first impression of this place. I felt as if I had been to another Western country. I couldn't believe that Discovery Bay was a part of Hong Kong.

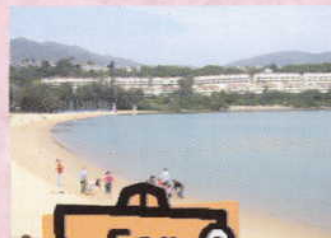


A short walk from the ferry pier, there was an extensive shopping centre called DB Plaza, offering a large variety of shops and restaurants which provide Chinese, Western, Indian, Korean and Thai cuisine, together with fast-food outlets. Directly outside the shopping plaza were landscaped areas, outdoor seating and a beautiful fountain. Various community and festive events are organized throughout the year as social gatherings or to celebrate particular festivals. On the day of my visit, a flea market was being held there. This is usually conducted every 6-8 weeks so that people sell or buy second-hand things.



English is mainly used among the residents in Discovery Bay. I have interviewed some of the people living there. They were all very hospitable and friendly. "Living in Discovery Bay is relaxing and comfortable," an English man told me. "There are many trees, a spectacular sea view and the bonus of a refreshing green mountain view which are perfect for us". "We could hardly find a place similar to our home country in other parts of Hong Kong," a Swiss couple said. Residents there find it easy using English to communicate with others. They generally think that they have no difficulties in speaking English with local people. However, some had bad experiences with taxi-drivers or waiters in Chinese restaurants.

One thing that was surprising was that you cannot find any private cars in Discovery Bay. People there like to walk or take buses to other places. Some use their own golf cars which don't cause much air pollution. On a sunny day, Tai Pak Beach, located next to the shopping plaza, will be a popular place to go. Lying on the smooth and soft white sand and playing different kinds of water sports is a terrific way to spend those long summer days!



After this trip, I have realized that Discovery Bay is really a special place in Hong Kong. It is beautiful, natural, peaceful and tranquil. Hong Kong needs some more places like this where people can enjoy their lives everyday.

Useful Web Sites

Everyone can easily get on to the Internet nowadays. With just a simple click, you can find any information you want. It's very convenient to learn English through the Internet! You can download some great English songs or play some interesting games online. If you think reading books is becoming quite boring, then why don't you try to use the computer and get on to the Internet? You'll have so much more fun!



A popular and famous TV Channel in the UK, the BBC, provides online English learning on its web page. You can improve your English with MUSIC! Experiencing the audio and video clips are really fantastic! You can also read the news about music. It certainly is an effective way to learn and improve your English.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/music/index.shtml>

SlangSite.com is a dictionary of slang, web-speak, made up words, and colloquialisms. Just click on a letter to browse their listings, or submit your own words to their site. This site will help you improve your oral English. It's very common to use slang in English conversation.

<http://www.slangsite.com/>



Open Mind Word Expert (OMWE) is a system that aims to tap people's ability to disambiguate words and to give computers the benefit of people's knowledge. Any Web user can visit the OMWE site and contribute some knowledge about the meanings of given words in given sentences. As a result, OMWE creates large sense-tagged corpora that can be used to build automatic WSD systems. Many English words have more than one meaning. You will be able to learn from and teach computers about word meanings in this site.

<http://teach-computers.org/word-expert.html>

Eurasian nation is a very interesting web site that was originally conceived by two sisters—Iris Van Kerkhove and her sister, Carmen. It aims to provide up-to-date information and articles dealing with Eurasian issues, as well as being a useful meeting place for other mixed-race people to interact. You can find more information about one of the founders* Iris* in this edition of The English Navigator. For our students, it is a useful insight into a world which they might not be aware of.

<http://EurasianNation.com>



Most conversations that happen between foreign native speakers of English will contain many idioms. If you were to hear an English conversation that contained many idioms, you might not be able to understand anything that is being said. "What are idioms?" I hear you ask. Well, idioms may sound vague or unclear, and sometimes they are only known to the people who are using them. Confused? Look no further! Just simply look up the web-site, and remember that "One in the hand is worth two in the bush!"

<http://www.idiomsite.com>



THE ADVENTURES OF CHRIS WONG

M Say double-beef patty

... cheese and pickles on a sesame seed bun!

And get a regular french-fries! ABSOLUTELY FREE! ONLY AT McDONALD'S!

1. Ngoi! Winnie! There are too many advertisements in English - lah!

2. But Chris, the English advertisements can help us improve our English!

EVERY TIME A Good TIME!

英国文化協會... 留學英國講座...

3. Why I need English-lah? I don't need it. Lay Gong fai wah!

4. Ngoi! Winnie! I no see you in long time! What job have you got?

即日推出8個海景分層豪宅...

長江三 \$ 5698起

救心丸 日本90年 強心... 霸王

美加西 7/8元

5. WINNIE 好野! I am a successful manager at a 5-star hotel right here in Hong Kong. Studying English really helped me to get this good job!

6. You were right! It is so hard to find a good job! I should have studied English like you lah!