

# The IEP TIMES

Bringing the World to Eastern Mennonite University

December 15, 2005

Harrisonburg, VA 22802

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

**December 9, 12 & 13 IEP Final Testing**

**December 15 IEP End-of-Semester Celebration**

**January 4: Placement Test for New Students**

**January 9: Spring Classes Begin**

## LILAC PROJECTS

During the fall semester, several IEP classes became partners in intercultural learning with various undergraduate classes at EMU. Each class worked on its own special project. IEP students became acquainted with important subjects studied in a variety of classes. At the same time IEP students were also challenged to stretch their language skills in order to interact with American students; they had to use or understand college-level academic language. IEP students also contributed international perspectives to their American partners. We think this learning experience was enriching for all involved. The IEP staff members want to continue these kinds of projects and to make as many improvements as we can to ensure that all EMU students come to value intercultural learning.

—Mike Medley, Director IEP

## Ethnomusicology

We are the Basic Listening and Speaking class. We are from different countries. Two are from Congo, two are from Mexico, and one is from Bolivia. Our LILAC project was about music from different countries and cultures. Studying music like this is called ethnomusicology. For this project, we worked with two other EMU students. Each person shared about a piece of music that they brought.

Amanda is from Mexico. Mexico has many different kinds of music, but Amanda likes pop music. She brought a piece of Christian music by Jackie Velázquez. The song she chose talks about the power of God and always says that God is your shepherd and never will leave you. It is in a style similar to Christian music in Mexico.

Mireille is from Congo. She brought Christian Congolese music. It is about Jesus and the title of the song was "I Love Jesus," and this song was sung in Lingala, a language in Congo. It is in a South African style and is a very popular song in Africa for anyone.

Jorge brought Ska music. Ska is different than American music. It is not the most popular kind of music in Mexico, where Jorge is from. It has its own kind of style and sound that is different than American music or other Mexican types of music.

Daniel is from Bolivia. Music in Bolivia is different in each part of Bolivia. Daniel brought a traditional piece of music from a place called Vallegrande. A lot of people like this music, but not all, because Bolivia is multicultural. The music from Vallegrande is folk music, but it uses different instruments than music from the United States, including charango, vandolina, accordion, and guitar. The music describes the daily life of people from Vallegrande.

David is from Congo and brought a Christian song with three languages: French, English, and Lingala. Christians in Congo listen to this song and it is very popular. It is not especially for young or old people, but for everyone who is in Christ. David likes this song because it helps him to be in worship of Christ.

Basic Listening and Speaking class

## Anthropology and Christian Mission

For this Lilac project, we teamed with David Kratz-Mathies' class, Anthropology and Christian Mission. We read a passage in the Bible, John 4:1-42. Then we wrote our interpretation of it, what it meant to us, what we understood. Later we looked at everyone's responses. One day we went to the library for a discussion with the EMU students. We made small groups and talked about our interpretations. Junko's group had a discussion about the Samaritan woman who talked with Jesus. We imagined if we were in her position. Jaf's group discussed about the place where the Samaritan people lived. We asked David about the

time of the passage. We had a good time listening to other groups and discussing our interpretations, asking questions and getting answers.

Junko, Japan  
Jaf, Kurdistan  
Nicolau, Angola  
Advanced Level

## International Film Series

The whole experience that I had with EMU students was really interesting for me in that Americans and I had totally different perspectives or points of views. For example, one of the International films we viewed, "Shower," was a common story for me in that we have bath-houses in my home country. I used to go there at least once a month in Japan. However, Americans who did not have any idea what the bath-house is like were curious about the public bath because they never had the experience of taking a bath with other people they do not know. Through the discussion, I could finally know how much knowledge they have about other cultures.

Junko, Japan  
Advanced Level

In the international film class I watched many movies of other countries. My favorite movie was "Children of Heaven." That was my first time to watch a middle Asian (Middle Eastern) movie. And it was really interesting. I think that it is a good opportunity to watch other cultures' movies with American students because I felt American people usually don't know other cultures much. So it is good for them to know our Asian culture and other cultures. When I was in the discussion group, I always thought how different Eastern and Western people are. American people are also interested in another culture, so I'm glad to share with them. But the discussion group was tough for me. I still can't talk well in English.

Mariko, Japan  
Intermediate Level

## Video Film Editing Project

I liked the video film editing project. The final effect was better than when I interviewed. The video-taping has some things insufficient. For example, I still need to improve my pronunciation; that's my big problem. If we do this project again we need to practice first, and give some background for my life. I think it will be better. It was a very good experience in

working on this project. It gave me more confidence in speaking English with native speakers.

Cindy, China  
Intermediate Level

When I came to the program for learning English in the IEP House (Intensive English Program) at Eastern Mennonite University, it was a very interesting change in my educational experience because it is in a foreign country with different people and cultures. I love that, and I spent some conversations with my partners from different countries. They are like me because we don't have the time and opportunity for meeting students on the campus. I always ask myself some questions in this learning process.

But really the experience was complete in the LILAC video project. The far distance has disappeared between the EMU students and us. When I met and made a friendship with my video partners, I felt really comfortable. Both Jered and Jamil, very young students, helped me to improve my vocabulary and showed their friendship to me. The video project, in my experience, was not only important for improving the vocabulary and making a different and creative activity; but it also was important to "break the ice" between the English native speakers and us. I was very happy with this work and now I e-mail with my new friends. For me this is the greatest success in this project!

Alejandra, Costa Rica  
Intermediate Level

When I was interviewed with video recording, I was a little nervous because I didn't have many chances to do that before except during a mission trip and a marriage ceremony. Even though I felt some fear for the video interview, it was fun for me to have the chance. My personality is introverted, so I don't like to show myself to the public. That's the reason that I was a little shy to be interviewed in the video recording. With the interview it was a good chance for me to practice English conversation and meet a good American friend in the interview. As I watched the video tapes recorded by my classmates, and mine, I thought that video recording was not so strange like TV broadcasting but would be familiar to me. I was glad to know that we can make a video tape without difficulty when we want to make it for my family or my friends.

The most helpful thing was that I could see my strengths and weaknesses through the video tape. Another realization from the video recording was that I

was not familiar with artificial action for the film production. Video recording was not comfortable and was the most difficult work for me by repeating a same action. In the project I found that there was some difference in our viewpoints. There was too much time spent on setting up the video, and talking chances were limited. I think that this project would be a better activity in the future if the above mentioned would be considered and improved.

Sharon, Korea  
Intermediate Level

I was really interested in doing the project well. I enjoyed when I talked in front of cameras, although I was nervous when I saw the interview. This video is a new experience for me, so I am satisfied and excited. It's a good idea to do this project because we have opportunities for practicing English and we can learn new vocabulary. Also this video provided us knowledge about how to do an interview. When I first met for the interview, I didn't know that I will be recorded in that one, so I didn't prepare very well. I was able to talk for a few minutes in English; perhaps I will be better the next time. If we make small talk my English will be better. But in general, this video helped us very much. I made good use of the time.

Ximena, Colombia  
Intermediate Level

Before I talked in the interviews I had not thought about what I would talk about. I thought if I would speak fluently, the listener would feel it was unnatural. And I prefer to try to talk my best rather than to memorize what I say. It is because I like to be natural and also it is now the limit of my best language. If I used the verb of present tense in the past story, this is my now language level. So, I could recognize it. Even now I can't use *whatever* or *whenever* like difficult words in my conversation. I'm sure that I saw some goals in my conversation after this project, like that I want to use more difficult words, or express my feeling (like not only sad or happy), or make more longer conversations with friends. However, my most interesting topic is nuance. I mean sometimes my Japanese teacher said that this idiom and this idiom mean the same. I don't like this. For example, some Japanese teachers say "had better, may do well to" and "may as well" are the same. For example: (a) You may as well leave at once. (b) You will do well to leave at once. (c) You had better leave at once. However, in fact, (c) is like an authoritative sentence and the sentence which we can choose sometimes to say or not, but "I" recommend to leave softly is (a). (b) is the sentence "I" recommend naturally. So, I should have

many things not to know like these things. And I really like the Japanese language, so I want to be able to express myself as perfectly in English as in Japanese. I already recognize it is really hard to acquire this. Maybe it takes such a long time. So I think it is the English goal of my life. However I need to notice it, I must study more, and I have to be speaking more easily.

Kazunori, Japan  
Intermediate Level

## Conservation Biology

During my presentation of Mayombe National Forest I felt proud of myself in such a way that I could clearly express my thoughts and knowledge about Mayombe National Forest with the students of EMU. It really helped me a lot because through my project I ended up learning things that I didn't have a chance to learn before when I was in Angola, but when I was speaking formally to the students, I learned a lot.

Furthermore, LILAC Project is a very good and interesting project because, it helps us to learn a lot of things, like new culture as well as the broad study about species and animals. When I was in Africa, I didn't have a chance to learn about this particular issue but through this project, I was able and willing to see how the environment is, how animals live in the forest and so on.

Forestation and deforestation were also two of the most important things that I have learned, because I studied about forestation and deforestation in 4th grade. Now, here in America, I had a chance to brush up a little bit about this topic. So it is something valuable for me, because all these learning processes are playing a huge part in my student life.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that this project helped me to be capable to stand in front of people and explain clearly about issues, and this was the good experience that I had got through this LILAC Project.

Nicolau Capita, Angola  
Advanced

Biology sounded a little different for me to present on when I heard about this LILAC project. First, the students who are taking the biology class presented for my class about the environmental problems in the United States. A couple of weeks later, our presentations were presented. I worked hard for this project. I was always in front of my laptop, watching the screen every night for two weeks, trying to make a better power point. Because I knew I would be watched by American students, I felt I was

accountable for part of this project. I practiced a lot which encouraged me. This experience was important for all of us - to have the opportunity to be in front of people for our speech. I think it was a good exercise for my future.

Junko, Japan  
Advanced Level

## "Black Friday" Shopping Day

The day after Thanksgiving Day was considered the best shopping day to find bargains. The people woke up at 4:00 o'clock in the morning for "crashing" the doors in the stores. What is that?! In my country, this time is popular to go to buy some gifts for the family and friends too, but the "collective hysteria" in the minds of millions of Americans for shopping all on Friday at the same time was crazy. On Friday I took a long nap, thinking it is crazy to go to some restaurant or store on this day.

Alejandra, Costa Rica  
Intermediate Level

## Christmas

When December is coming in El Salvador the people arrange small beautiful trees in front of the house with many lights and artificial snowmen. They also cut a small tree and shape it like a deer and it feels like Christmas. That is similar to the U.S. However, in my country we don't have the beauty of here. For instance, in my country snow does not exist, but we have other things which I miss. In my town the people are happy and they visit each other and eat a lot of food. On December 31st they dance and listen to loud music. When it is twelve o'clock there are firecrackers. This past year I worked from 6:00 to 9:00 at night and I felt terrible and just wanted to be in my country with my friends for the celebration at the end of the year.

Vanessa, El Salvador  
Intermediate Level

## Life at IEP

My IEP time was very interesting during this semester. I got to know people who are international friends. The first time I was reserved because at that time I was so shy. IEP teachers were good. They were kind and had passion. On the other hand, I was sad about my study because I had to take care of my brother while I was studying in IEP. My parents gave

me the responsibility for my brother. Sometimes people around me asked, "Choi, why don't you try to spend time for yourself? If I were you, sometimes I would live for myself." But I knew that I was responsible for my brother. When I was my brother's age, I received a lot of love from my parents. But my brother didn't receive like that because now he is studying here in the U.S., and my parents are not here. And he has the right to education like other students, so I want to help my brother. I remember that I was glad that I went to the Washington trip in IEP. I learned a lot of history about the U.S. At that time above all I was impressed by the museums. And that was also an opportunity for me to make other friends. In any case, though I couldn't study hard this semester, I was glad because I did make new friends, and my conversation partner, whose name is Carey, was a good teacher because she has passion about teaching people. I hope to meet with her next semester.

Choi, Korea  
Intermediate Level

I would like to thank you all, teachers and director, for giving me the opportunity to join the IEP as a student. I am so glad to become part of this education center. During the last and present semester I have been studying in ESL classes here, and I have realized that my comprehension skills have grown more than I expected. Now I feel confident in writing, reading, listening and speaking as an intermediate level student. I believe, and I can say, that if I have the desire and energy to learn the language, I can do it. With good enthusiasm and God's help, I will be able to speak, write, and read this language very soon. Thanks once more to IEP staff for giving me the chance to join this education center.

Jaime, Guatemala  
Intermediate Level

- ▲ Improve your English skills!
- ▲ Enhance your education!
- ▲ Press forward in your career!

Please contact IEP at (540) 432-4059, email [iep@emu.edu](mailto:iep@emu.edu) or see our website at [www.emu.edu/iep](http://www.emu.edu/iep) for more information

The writings in this edition of the *IEP Times* were produced by the students who are studying in the IEP during the Fall Semester, 2005. Thank you to the students and the teachers – Barbara Roberts, Anali Kratz Mathies, Sandy Longenecker, Caleb Yoder and Christi Kramer - for their contributions, and to Maria Esther Showalter for the layout of this edition. The director of IEP is Dr. Michael Medley.