

# The IEP TIMES

Bringing the World to Eastern Mennonite University

March 23, 2006

Harrisonburg, VA 22802

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

**March 22: Immigrant Learning Tour**

**March 26: Foreign Film Series: *Run Lola Run***

**March 27: IEP Talent Show**

**April 2: Foreign Film Series: *The Three Kings***

**April 3: Guest Speaker**

**April 9: Foreign Film Series: *Yesterday***

**April 10: Anali's Baby Shower**

**April 14: Good Friday-No Classes**

**April 17: Sandy's Bridal Shower**

## Why I Am Studying English

Speaking English is necessary in Korea. That is the common opinion of all people. When I was in Korea, I worked at a bank that was like a financial post office. My job was being a computer operator. Sometimes I gave counsel to people about finances. One day when I was sitting at my desk, somebody came to my desk. The moment I saw the customer, I turned dead white because he was a foreigner who had blue eyes. I didn't know what to do.

He said to me, "Hello...Hi."

I didn't say anything at first. Then I just said, "I'm sorry."

Many of my colleagues and coworkers laughed loudly.

After leaving the office, I thought about my situation, and I thought about the Korean education system. In Korea most students begin studying English in elementary school and continue studying it for at least 10 years; but when they are adults, nobody can speak English. I couldn't understand why.

Above all, I still had a question: Why should I study more English? One reason is that nowadays many countries are requiring English. Also, the reason why I am continuing to study English is that I want to work with international people. For example, if I want to help people in poor countries in the Southeast, above all I will need to be able to communicate with them—probably in English. Only then can I find out what

they need. Also, only then will my heart learn what their situation is.

In any case, English is useful for me. Though learning English is not easy, if I have perfect English ability, I can help somebody.

Choi, Korea  
Intermediate

## How Do We Speak in Different Situations?

We have different situations in our life that change the way we speak. We speak differently in front of babies, children, older people, our friends, and people in authority.

If we talk to babies, we speak to them lovingly, sweetly, slowly, and peacefully so that the baby or babies feel comfortable. When we speak to children, we must speak to them correctly and not use bad words (children learn bad words fast). Sometimes when children are mischievous or do bad things, we can speak loudly so that they will know that they are doing something wrong.

Naturally, if we talk with a person who is older than we are, we speak to them with respect, and we look into their eyes to show respect.

Of course, if we speak with people who are almost the same age as we are, maybe we can speak with them the way we speak with our friends. However, if these younger people are persons of authority, the way we speak will change because when we speak to people in authority, we must show them respect. These people—like bosses, policemen, and judges—expect respect. Indeed, it doesn't matter if the person in authority is younger or older than we are, this person will expect us to be respectful from the beginning.

Carlos, Peru  
Intermediate

In my home language we have many different ways to speak with older people, people our same age, and people younger than we, as well as with people in an office.

We use a respectful word (*TAPAI*) to speak with older people. We can't say their name, either. For example, if we are talking with a grandma, we use just *Grandma* and with an aunt and uncle just *Aunt* and *Uncle*.

We use a little bit less respectful word (*TIMI*) with people our same age, with a best friend or a friend.

We don't use a respectful word (*TA*) to speak with younger people, for example with our younger sister and brother. Sometimes we can use this kind of word with our best friend because a best friend is very close to us. If we use this word to speak with older people, that is not okay. They will think that we don't respect them. Or other people talking with them are without respect, and maybe they will be angry.

Another thing about my home language is that official language is more formal, and we have to use formal language in an office, even with a best friend there. It is like using thesis outline words. Examples of these words are *Himal jee*, *Nancy madam*, *Himal sir*, etc. These words are the same as the English *Mr.*, *Miss*, and *Mrs*. Even in our school, if we are talking to a teacher, we can't use his or her name. However, for example, if I am talking about Anali with you, I can use the teacher's name—but not directly, person to person, to her. Also, when we speak with a stranger, we use a respectful word (*TAPAI*).

Thus in my home language we have to be more careful than here when we speak with people, but I don't think it is so hard. Everybody can do that who wants to learn our Nepali language.

Jashoda, Nepal  
Intermediate

In today's life, many people change their speech when they are at home, when they speak to someone in a higher position at work, and also when they speak to older people and younger people. For example, if you have teenagers in your house, how do they behave toward someone older or younger than they are? Do they change their speech at home? Do you accept that in your house? Are you doing the same things?

There are the ways that we have to follow. First of all, how should we behave when we speak to someone older? Certainly we should not speak too loudly, not be mean, and not laugh at them. We should not say bad words or use foul language even when the older person is wrong. Instead, we should be polite and respectful to them. For example, there was a family in the Congo who was rich and had one son. This son

was very impolite. He didn't listen when his parents were talking to him. In fact, he was mean to his parents, and even at school he had a bad reputation with everybody. One day he insulted a consul officer from the Canadian Embassy. Later, when his father decided to send him to Canada, they couldn't get the visa easily because of his son's misbehavior toward the consul.

Secondly, how should we behave when we are talking to a boss or to someone in a higher position? We need to control ourselves when we speak to them; we have to respect their position and be formal with them. We want to be seen as a person of good manners toward them. For instance, cashiers who don't know how to treat their customers will be very bad examples of the store's policy of courtesy, and these kinds of people will likely get kicked out of work.

Thirdly, how should we behave at church? We really need to behave as serious people, as Christians. We should respect our brothers and sisters, the pastor, and everybody who works and attends there. We should treat everyone nicely in ways that are acceptable to everyone.

In addition, as we become older, we really need to know how to behave toward the youngest. First, we need to respect ourselves and then others. We should speak formally to them because we are role models for them.

In conclusion, we have to respect our elders and ourselves. This is the biggest thing that we can do in our lives if we want to be successful and honored in the future and also blessed by God.

David, Congo  
Intermediate

## My Favorite Holiday

My favorite holiday is Nowroz (in Persian it means New Day or New Year's Day). It is on March 21. The holiday is five days for employees and two weeks for students. When the New Year comes in Iran we have to go to visit our family and it is important which one is first because the oldest family is always most important. After we have gone to their home we have to go to our dead family members' graves. During the holiday we have to wear our best clothes and every older relative gives gifts to younger relatives. Most people go on a trip to enjoy their holiday and the capital city gets quiet. This is my favorite holiday because it always reminds me of the best days during my childhood.

Ali, Iran  
Low Intermediate

I am from Guatemala, My favorite holiday is Christmas. My family usually spends money buying different things, because we like to have new things at this time. During the day my mother cooks a lot of food for lunch or dinner. She cooks the traditional food (tamales) and makes punch to drink. This food is for dinner on the first day. I like this holiday because most people are happy. The day after the 24<sup>th</sup> of December, I like to go to the beach all day. And then I like to play with my friends, cousin and nephew. At night most people like to set off fireworks.

Osman, Guatemala  
Low Intermediate

My favorite holiday is New Year's Day because I celebrate it two times a year. One time is in Costa Rica when the last day of the year arrives. First we make a party or do something as the last action of the last day, and then we pass into the New Year. All people make a party and the most fun is the fireworks. In Taiwan New Year's Day is in February. It is the same celebration. Your older family members give you a red envelope, and in the envelope there is money.

Julio, Costa Rica  
Low Intermediate

One of my favorite holidays is Holy Week. I like those days a lot because all of the people in my town make those days very special. Each family celebrates those days in different ways. Some of them go to the beach with all of their family, and others just stay at home and enjoy a good time. During those days my family prays and goes to the church more often. Also they try not to eat chicken, pork and beef. They try to eat only vegetables and fruit. I like those days a lot because all of the people are more friendly and kind. people like to set off fireworks.

Jorge, Mexico  
Low Intermediate

## The Wedding Plans for My Brother

My youngest brother and his girlfriend are engaged to be married. After he opens a hospital, they will get married in the spring next year. They want to talk with me about their dream wedding, and I am only too glad to help them. They need a lot of time to plan for their wedding; however, I will talk with them about three things focusing on the wedding.

First, they should estimate how much money they will spend on the wedding and discuss who will pay all this. In Korea this decision depends on individual situations and customs. When some wedding couples don't have enough for their wedding budget, their parents often help them. Even when some couples know that they will have a debt for many years after the wedding, they decide to spend a great deal anyway. For example, they choose the most expensive hotel for the wedding, buy costly jewels, and rent or buy the most luxurious kind of house. However, even though some couples are wealthy, they want to get married simply. For example, they invite only a few people, choose a small church for the wedding, and buy simple wedding rings. Thus wedding expenses can influence how a couple prepares for their wedding.

Second, I will suggest that they choose which style of wedding ceremony they want to have. Now most young Korean couples prefer to get married following the Western style rather than the traditional wedding customs. However, if my brother and his fiancée choose the latter, they will find that between the traditional Korean wedding ceremony and the Western wedding there are differences in the clothes, food, and wedding procedures. In a traditional wedding, the couple wears Korean traditional wedding clothes instead of a white wedding dress and a tuxedo. A bride's costume includes a *wonsam* or *hwalot* (a wedding dress) and a *jokduri* (a wedding veil), and she wears *yeonji konji* (a wedding makeup). Usually, a groom's costume, called a *samogwandae*, consists of a *samo* (a hat), a *dalryeongpo* (a jacket), a *hyungbae* (an embroidered picture in the middle of the chest), a *gakdae* (a belt), and a *mokhwa* (a pair of black cloth boots). The food for the *pyebaek* (the food when the bride bows to the parents-in-law) and the *ibage* (the food the bride's mother sends to the groom's home when the bride goes to the groom's home for the first time after the wedding) are still prepared and appreciated. This food represents the sharing of the family's cooking skills and family traditions.

Third, in Korea there is a ceremony before the wedding day that involves the *ham* (similar to a hope chest). The *ham* usually contains three items: the *honseo*, the marriage paper; some silk for making a *hanbok*, a traditional Korean dress; and a *chaedan*, a collection of red and blue fabrics used to make clothing. The blue fabrics are wrapped with red threads while the red fabrics are wrapped with blue threads. The two colors symbolize the bride and groom's happiness and harmony. A *Hamjinabi* (a man who is a friend of the groom) carries the *ham* to the bride's home. This ceremony indicates the sharing of

relationships with bride's friends and her family and the groom's friends.

Marriage is a great thing that affects a couple's whole life. The Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner" (Genesis 2:18). "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

Jenny, Korea  
Intermediate

## **An Ideal Spouse**

There are many kinds of marriages in this world, just like there are different types of husbands and wives. The types of traits I'd like in my spouse are to be fairly attractive, to have a similar background, and to be a good person inside. Thus, my ideal spouse will be someone who likes me for who I am, and someone that I am compatible with.

I think that appearance is important in a marriage because I want to be able to be physically attracted to my spouse. First of all, I like light colored eyes. I think it's natural to be attracted to the opposite appearance because people that look different than me are more appealing to me. I also care about cleanliness because I think it's important to care about our appearance. The clothes and the type of hairstyle a person has show what kind of person he is. The voice and how someone talks are also hints about what kind of personality he has. I prefer a man who has a deep or husky voice; it makes me think that he is composed and calm. Lastly, it is important for me that a man is in good shape because it tells me that he leads a healthy lifestyle. In society, we often judge by appearances because that is the first impression we have of a person. Thus, in my opinion, my future spouse needs to be able to have good hygiene and personal appearance skills.

Next, I would like my spouse to have a similar background to mine. For example, I would respect an educated husband. I think that education is an important thing for my spouse. In this respect, I would like to be able to talk to him on the same level, if not a higher one. I hope that my spouse would have been able to have had various experiences in his life. I would like him to share his experiences with me and vice versa. I think it would also be interesting to share the differences between us so that we can grow in our understanding of each other. I grew up in a peaceful family, and I believe it will be important for our families to get along with and help each other. Thus, I hope my future husband also has the same opinions and ideals about how a family should be. Otherwise, I

think it would be difficult to marry a man with a completely different background than mine.

However, his most important characteristic will be the substance of who he is. First of all, moral values are an influence on married life. It is important to talk about these values before I get married. I would like a man who is full of vitality. My future husband is supposed to be the leader in the family, so I hope he likes to go on trips and camping and also likes to work. I would like a man who has a sense of humor. I would love to keep laughing all my life, so I would try to make my spouse laugh, also. It's also important that he would like kids and nature. I have a strong maternal instinct, so I would like to have at least three children. Finally, I will say that I would want my spouse to be able to talk honestly and be faithful. These things show respect in a marriage and also help to build a secure relationship.

Therefore, I would like my spouse to be fairly attractive (for getting to know him as a first step), have a similar background to mine, but most of all, for him to be a good person inside. I hope we are compatible, so we will be able to have a long lasting marriage.

Mari, Japan  
Intermediate

## **LILAC PROJECT- FAMILY**

As we have been staying in the U.S, the one thing that we really enjoy and are interested in is learning about new cultures. Meanwhile, we also have many similar sides in our lives and we sometimes pursue similar value of lives.

Although we have met EMU student just two times for LILAC which is a project to know about different cultures, we learned many things. There are two things we were surprised. The one thing was that Congolese family still has many children unlike Korean and American, so they have a big family and the oldest child takes care of his younger sibling. The other thing was that Americans usually take a little baby out with them. Whenever we saw a really tiny baby, we felt uncomfortable and were worried about the baby because Koreans don't take a little baby out. Koreans consider that a little baby has to stay at home to avoid infection or disease.

Well, we cannot judge other cultures. Culture is handed from our ancestors and we need to keep our culture and respect other cultures as well. We could not understand everything, but it was really good time to hear about other culture.

David ,Yeonjung, Hyo-Jin and Kay

I have to say that LILAC project is a big source of information, because you can learn a lot about others countries and culture.

We discussed about the age to marry in Korea, Nepal, U.S., and Mexico. Most people get married when they are in their 20's. Another topic was education. We learned that high school education is mandatory in Korea, U.S, Nepal and Mexico. It was interesting to learn that Japanese need to finish only elementary school.

Joshada, Mariko, Choi and Raul

LILAC project was a good experience for all of us. We shared about our culture, customs, and compared the experiences we had.

The most important part of this experience was the relationship we had between IEP and EMU students. Both parts were interested to know more about each other's culture and customs. We talked about family, religion, marriage, the impact to live in this country. We made many comparisons and conclusions too.

Talking about family was very interesting. We found out about some differences between cultures, for example, in Latin America relationship in family is very close. We love to live at home with mom and dad until we get married. After marriage we are still close to our family. Here in the US is different. When kids turn 18 they move out. They want to have their own life, sometimes they live close to college or work. American people like to live independently. That doesn't mean that they don't love their family. It is just part of their culture. Both cultures love their family. It is just that we grow up in different circumstances and customs.

We agreed that marriage is similar in both cultures. But the most interesting part of this project was to talk about the impact everyone had when we came to this country. We shared about some of the difficulties of facing a new language. It is very hard to communicate when you don't speak English. Also, time to adapt a new life because everything us new and different and learning new customs, cultures, getting to know different people. All of these can be a big cultural shock.

We talked about many things and learned a lot. Everybody had a good time. We got to know each other and shared part of our life.

Noel, Julio and Seiko

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

## The Final Word

I am happy to read more news about LILAC projects in this edition of the *IEP Times*. To remind readers who are not part of the IEP community, LILAC stands for Lively Intercultural Learning Across the Curriculum. This semester, IEP students are partners with students in the sociology class "The Family in Social Context." We can see from the articles here that IEP students have enjoyed sharing information about family life with American students from the sociology class. But we also see how IEP students have learned from each other through discussions about family issues. The cross-cultural enrichment has spread in several directions!

IEP students have also been participating in EMU's Foreign Film Series. This has been a very challenging project due to some of the difficult films shown this semester. So far, I'd say that the Brazilian film *Central Station* has been the favorite. In their online comments about the film, IEP students wrote, "This journey in the movie shows us hope, love, and family. At the middle of the journey they find themselves involved in a situation like a family. Some of these situations include when they where eating in the restaurant, then the hope of the boy after his mother died and his journey to find his dad. ... Dora's change of heart is encouraging. What if more and more people experienced this? How can we choose the right path? What could this mean for a country or society?"

I think IEP students are learning about the change of heart that is needed to make the human race into a human family as they engage in the slow and strenuous work of learning to communicate in another language and another culture. I admire their hard work and their caring hearts!

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