

“Learning from Mistakes”

By Martinus Madiono Ratu SVD 賴宏毅 修士

Learning a new language always takes time and dedication. When we enter a new area, we may integrate into the scope of the "foreign", where we can meet other people with different cultures, habits, life-style, and local thinking. At this point, we are transforming ourselves and trying to adapt to the local culture. Basically in the process of adaptation we often make a lot of mistakes in communication. This refers to my own experience in learning the Chinese language.

I've already been in Taiwan more than three months. During that period, I've made many mistakes when I try to speak with Taiwanese people particularly with the members of the formation community. The mistakes are associated with the Chinese spoken. Actually Mandarin Chinese language has four tones and a neutral tone. Many words have the same pronunciation, but different emphasis and it leads to different meaning. Once, I approached the OTP director and want to ask something. I started with the initial greeting; “excuse me” in Chinese. But because of different tone suppression, of “excuse me”, so it means to give him “a kiss”. My OTP director was very surprised and asked me: What ??? You ask me to kiss you. Immediately, all the people in the dining room started to laugh at me.

By making verbal mistakes, it helped me to understand more deeply about the Chinese language and culture. These errors also never discourage my step to explore the root of Chinese Language and the nature of Chinese culture. As Nelson Mandela has said: "if you talk to a man in a language he understands, it goes to his

head, but if you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart". Keep trying!!! No matter it is right or wrong, it will increase our ability to learn the language.



“Dreaming in Mandarin?”

By Marsel L. Keda 柯明達 修士

18 august 2012 was one of the great moments in my life. My new journey started on this day. Everything was new for me; new place, new community, new student, and new members. Walking around on the new street was a best way to get to know the place. With my “new bike”, even it was an old once, I enjoyed riding from TFC, Taishan Formation Community, to the Fu Jen University

At first I was lost. All the streets __ seemed the same. I was riding a bicycle with two friends. We were supposed to turn left to the out of TFC but we rode straight. We even did not recognize the place. We decided to turn back and look for the right street. There was another kind of “lost”. Pointing out the food in the restaurant, shop and shopping center was the only one way that we could do. I really felt that I was from another planet. What could I do, I asked myself. It was not __ love as the language that everybody can understand but it was a smile.

I remember one day I went to the barber shop to have a haircut. I used body language to explain what I wanted and to understand what they said. I could say, I was like a baby who had begun to learn how to stand and walk. From that time I have started to wait on my first dream in Mandarin. Is it possible? Maybe, it will never come.

Learning Mandarin is always interesting for me. One character with four tones and different meanings motivated me to know how nice mandarin is. 3 months I have been learning Mandarin, I am still waiting for one more great moment in my life; dreaming in Mandarin. I am still waiting for the time, not to sit down and “cry” about my mandarin but the moment when I say some mandarin word in my dreams. Is it coming soon? When it comes there will be one more new thing in my life, dreaming in mandarin.

Marsel Fr. James Huang (Direc.) Martin



Lukasz

Fr. Gergely

Malachy

OTP TAIWAN CHRISTMAS EDITION CHRISTMAS EDITION

KISS YOU or ASK YOU

By James Huang, Kuei-HsiungSVD (黃貴雄神父)
The Director of OTP in Taiwan

Learning Chinese is having a lot of fun. The pronunciation of “ask you 請問你” is similar to “kiss you 親吻你”. In the beginning, it is easy for the new students to mispronounce Chinese words or sentence and for people to make fun of them because of the mistakes they make. They must study ㄅㄆㄇ very hard so that they can improve their pronunciation gradually. In my opinion, I encourage our seminarians who are learning Chinese to open their mouths if they want to know some things or to get correct information. They have to use this sentence “May I ask you 請問你” all the time. Also, they should open their eyes to see how wonderful people and beautiful island (Taiwan is called FORMOSA) here. They should open their mouth to eat variety of Chinese and Taiwanese food even though the smell of the food is awful. However, they should open their heart to love and to learn Chinese language, custom, culture, and so on. Finally, if you ask me “請問你 ASK YOU”, I would like to answer you. If you say “kiss you 親吻你, I will say “Oh! No! No! No!”.

I wish you have wonderful learning experiences in Taiwan.



The Journey Of OTP In Taiwan

By Lukasz Chronik SVD (Poland)

何路加修士

On April 1st 2011 I received word from my Prefect that Polish Province that my request to carry out my OTP in Taiwan had been accepted. This was the first step on my journey to Taiwan. The first step of my OTP Program I did in Epworth, US, where I went to learn English. In Epworth I spent one year with students from different countries. My time at Epworth was my first real experience meeting students from Asian Countries. Sometimes I felt like I was in Taiwan already!

Once my English course was completed I left the US and arrived in Taiwan. When I left Taipei airport, it was around 2 o'clock in the morning but the weather was so hot. However it wasn't until the next day that I really experienced really hot weather. It was approaching the end of summer yet the weather was much hotter and more humid than anything I had ever experienced in Poland.

Another thing which surprised me then as it continues to now, is the number of motorcycles in Taiwan. Motorcycles and Scooters are ubiquitous here. Sometimes I wonder if the motorcyclists really know the rules of the road because sometimes they move into the path of oncoming traffic. The third thing which has taken me by surprise is how difficult the Chinese language has been. When classes started 2 months ago I began to realize that it was going to be a long road. Now I have lived over 3, 1/2 months in Taiwan. I genuinely like everything here.



With God's Blessing I will try to do my best.

Taiwan Culture or Cultures?

By Malachy Gallagher SVD (Ireland)

馬樂凱修士

I can scarcely believe that I have reached this point in my formation and I feel blessed to have been given this opportunity to come to Taiwan. It is a beautiful Island, even if it does rain more here than in Ireland and I never thought I would hear myself say that about anywhere.

I can't fail to notice the number of students who are learning Mandarin at Fu Jen language centre, many of whom depend on scholarships or on their own savings which makes me appreciate the investment the society is making in me and their ongoing support all the more. We really owe our benefactors so much, without their generous contributions our mission would be impossible.

One of the things that has struck me most about Taiwan so far, is the marked generation gap which exists here, the youth here can hold very different perspectives from even the middle-aged members of Taiwanese society, on a wide range of issues. It will be interesting to see how this situation progresses and the implications it will have for our mission in the future. I think it is impossible to speak about Taiwanese culture in the singular - there is so much variety on this little island.

It has been great to learn not only about Taiwanese and Chinese culture/s but also to learn about the various cultures that are represented in the province among our own confreres. I feel that living in such an international community is one of the most positive and enriching aspects of being here.

From "Honeymoon" To "School"

BY Fr. Gergely SVD (Hungary)

福文海神父

The first two weeks in Taiwan I could call a "honeymoon". We took a long trip around Taiwan to visit the Confreres and the places where they are working. The warm welcome and the great help we received, to speed up our adjustment to the new situation and culture, was nothing short of amazing. Thank you ever so much.

Since September I have been dedicated to my language studies. My communication with the local people is limited because of the language barriers, but still there is something we share, our honest will to get into contact. There is something encouraging and captivating in these people, I came to recognize that they are just as shy as myself. This lack of self confidence and limited language ability turned out to be the best way to approach my new community members and in a wider view my new fellow citizens. Their simplicity and generosity allows me to feel at home.

There is another "school" to which I attend these months, namely the one how to learn to love these people and this mission. First of all through the language, the traditions, the food, even my experiments in cooking Chinese meals. I am also convinced that the first step in any missions is prayer. Once I read about "wasting prayers" that means to pray all around the streets and houses, fields and mountains wherever I go to ask our Lord to pour out grace and mercy and fill the hearts in Taiwan with faith, hope and love. I also put a huge map of Taiwan on my wall. This is my "mission-map" which helps me to be aware that in spite of my being literally swallowed by homework and tests I am still a missionary by praying for the whole country.

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