

## A Life Story of a Language Learner from Kaohsiung

Shu Fen Yeh

### **Interview one – personal information, learning experience**

1 Susan: It's nice to interview you. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself?

2 Amy: My name is Amy Lee. Hum..I am from Kaohsiung, Taiwan. And the place where I

3 group up with beautiful landscape and scenery because ... hum... the place where I

4 group up

5 we has mountains. And you can go to the beach and you can see the beach easily. Kaohsiung

6 is located in the south of the Taiwan. It's the second largest city in Taiwan. Actually,

7 Kaohsiung is well known for its harbor. It's a lovely city. Hum... if you have chance,

8 opportunity, you should come and visit this city. There are some famous sighting spots. Such

9 as "Love River". It's pretty now. before, we call "Takao". It's a Japanese name. because

10 Taiwan was governed... or ruled .....by Japan during 19th centre. Qing Empire ceded Taiwan

11 to Japan in 1895. Japan ruled the island until... maybe ...1940 or 1945 something. ....sorry.

12 I am not sure the year. I will try to check it. // Anyway, we call "Harbor Capital" now. I am

13 interested in reading, writing, traveling, teaching, and listing to the music.

14 Susan: so. Love River is a famous place I should go if I go to your country.

15 Amy: yes. Of course, you should go to Love River. It's really pretty. Kaohsiung is a planned

16 city with wide streets. Not like PA. Actually, the capital city of Taiwan is Taipei. Its located

17 in north.

18 Susan: How about the weather over there?

19 Amy: it's hot compare to here ( US).. humid, humid, humid,..... year-round find weather.

20 Like summer in the whole year. Nice weather. But sometimes, there are some typhoons

21 during the summer time. That's not fun at all.

22 Susan: no snow?

23 Amy: no snow at all, no, we have green for whole year.

24 Susan: would you please tell me when your birthday is?

25 Amy: hum. ...sure. I was born in 1970. January, 8. I am 38 years old this year. Time fly. I am

26 old.

27 Susan: I don't think so. You are still young.

28 Amy: thanks. You too.

29 Susan: how many people are there in your family?

30 Amy: there are five people in my family. My father, mother, older sister, brother and Me.

31 Susan: would you like to talk about your job?

32 Amy: yes. I have been a teacher for many years. I think since 1995. Yeah. Before I came here,

33 I

34 taught Chinese and English two subjects in Junior high school.

35 Susan: so. Why would you like to be a teacher? To be a Chinese or English teacher.

36 Amy: Actually, it's a long story I think. Because. Hum. Actually,....before I passed the entre  
37 exam for college. I really doesn't have any, at the moment, I really didn't have any clear idea  
38 what I am going to do for my future. But the most ,career... popular career in my country.  
39 Probably is a teacher. And one of my assumptions is being a teacher I may have a longer  
40 vacation.

41 Because we have winter vacation for one month and summer vacation for two months. I don't  
42 know. That is the first . when I am going to pick up which college I am going to enter.. And  
43 then I  
44 went to Normal University in 1990 because the University train students to be a teacher and  
45 then  
46 naturally after students graduate from college and become a teacher.

47 Susan: Being a teacher means to have a stable job and also have a longer vacation.

48 Amy: It's very stable. In my country. Especially, when you went to Normal University which  
49 mean after your graduate at my time, you don' t need to worry about your job because after  
50 graduate, hum..../... our university will try to find the teaching position for you

51 Susan: Can you talk about some events regarding your learning or learning experience?

52 Amy: you mean learning experience. It's second or third language?

53 Susan: What do you mean? You mean you can speak three different kinds of languages?

54 Amy: yes. I can speak mandarin, Taiwanese, and English.

55 Susan: ok. How about let's start second language experience. So... First, when do you start to  
56 study L2? And what is your first memory of attending school?

57 Amy: hu... well.... Let me talk about my second language first. I think my second language is  
58 mandarin. My whole family speaking Taiwanese at home. So when I grow up, my first  
59 language

60 is Taiwanese. But Taiwanese doesn't have written system only spoken.

61 Susan: so when do you start to learn Mandarin?

62 Amy: actually, I don't know. I think I am unconscious to learn mandarin.

63 Susan: can you tell me more specific about the meaning of "unconsciousness"

64 Amy: Yeap. Which mean I don't know when I acquire it? But for sure I learn how to write in  
65 the

66 school.

67 Susan: you mean in elementary school?

68 Amy: yes. And unfortunately, it was very bad experience. It's kind of my trauma. Do you  
69 know?

70 I think I want to be a teacher is kind of hearing my trauma.. ( laughing)...ironic...

71 Susan: why? do you wanna talk about it ?

72 Amy: sure, but ... each time. when I talk about my learning experience, I have to complain a  
73 lot

74 and a lot..... if I talk too much, please stop me.... And because it really make me angry and  
75 mad  
76 at Taiwan education system. Especially, I am a teacher now.  
77 Susan: that's ok. I would like to know that.  
78 Amy: it was unforgettable experience in my life. The education system in Taiwan. During  
79 70's ...it's terrible. Anyway, there is a picture always showing up in my mind.-- A little girl  
80 stand in the front and hold a card showed " No Taiwanese in class". The teacher was making  
81 an  
82 announcement and didn't care about the girl's feeling. It's almost about 20 minutes. She felt  
83 alone  
84 and angry, but she didn't feel embarrassed, ashamed, or sacred to stand in front of the class.  
85 she  
86 thought she was right.  
87 Susan: what do you mean she was right?  
88 Amy: of course, you know. Speaking my L1 is not a mistake, not violate the rules but the  
89 stupid  
90 education police make me feel I am an idiot, outsider of that class, school. I remember the  
91 teacher... she .. said that " In this class, all of you guys just can speak Mandarin, because  
92 speaking Taiwanese is rude, the language is not beautiful, informal, not good for in the school.

93 so we have to learn how to write and speak in formal language in formal way.”

94 Susan: how do you feel at that time?

95 Amy: well only one word. “ unfair”. Actually, I couldn’t remember how confused I was at

96 that

97 time. Even I was angry, I had to follow the rule so as to study and survive in the school.

98 Susan: yes...why do you say you are confused at that moment? Why did you feel that it

99 unfair?

100 Amy: why not speaking Hakak instead of Mandarin. Why not speaking Taiwanese instead of

101 Mandarin. You know I was a child. I have no idea what is the meaning of power.

102 Susan: so you mean. There are 3 main kind of languages spoken in your country.

103 Amy: yes. there are three kinds of languages we speak in Taiwan. Mandarin , Taiwanese and

104 Hakka. Mandarin is kind of our official language so we have to learn and speak in schools.

105 however, Taiwanese I grow up with and it becomes my family talk

106 Susan: How do you feel not being able to speak Taiwanese in the classroom?

107 Amy: I speak Taiwanese with my parents and my brother, sister and even my neighbors. My

108 parents tell me stories in Taiwanese . They educate me at home in Taiwanese. We have a table

109 talk

110 in Taiwanese . I interacted and played games with my friends, brother, sister all in Taiwanese.

111 All my social activities alllllll in Taiwanese. But I have to speak mandarin in school. It’s

112 ridiculous

113 and confused me all the time. So now, you can tell me that..... how can I deal with not

114 speaking

115 my native language in the classroom? Of course, I speak mandarin and Taiwanese in

116 classroom.

117 I just cannot control it.. switch back and forth. Co-switching.

118 Susan: so. If you speak Taiwanese in the class, you have to stand in front of the class.

119 Amy: yes. Now you know that..... that girl is me...

120 Susan: can you tell me more about Taiwanese ? what it sounds like? or taught me how to

121 speak

122 one or two sentences? What's the differences between Taiwanese and Mandarin?

123 Amy: sure no problem. Can you repeat after me? “ Chiba poi” ..... “ Chi bao le ma”

124 Susan: “ Chiba poi” ..... “ Chi bao le ma”

125 Amy: can you tell me what's difference?

126 Susan: I think sounds different, meaning maybe different?

127 Amy: hum.. I give you 50 points .. (laughing)

128 Susan: so what's differences? Can you tell me?

129 Amy: sounds different. Pronunciation different, but meaning is the same. Many Taiwanese

130 can

131 recognize where I come from as long as I speak “ Chiba poi” . I came from the South. I  
132 remember that one of my classmates said that “ you are too ‘localized’ . I asked her the  
133 reasons.  
134 And then she said “ because your behavior and your speaking and I don’t wanna be friend  
135 with  
136 you” I was so sad at that time. Just because of my spoke language.??  
137 Susan: why did say so?  
138 Amy: she think I am from a lower income family and in lower status in this society. Just  
139 because  
140 the way I speak. Shame on her. But it’s true. At the time, people judge your speaking because  
141 they want to create their own community. Anyway. I don’t care about that because the way I  
142 speak and the language I use create my own identity in this society.  
143 Susan: yes. I totally agree with you.  
144 Amy: its pity many of my classmates wont’ speak Taiwanese with their parents and shamed of  
145 their mother tough... But I am not... I really despise them. I love speak Taiwanese. It’s a  
146 beautiful  
147 language...hmm ... so after school, actually, I was complaining it with my father.  
148 Susan: Did you enjoy your school at the beginning?  
149 Amy: well...again.. I was a trouble maker in my school. Just like I mentioned. I was

150 punished

151 all the time just because I cannot control to speak Taiwanese. So I have to pay 25 cents for

152 each

153 ime. Do you know. 25 cents is my ice-cream money. As a child, ice- cream means anything. I

154 cannot deny that this bad learning experience led me to a negative attitude and beliefs toward

155 learning. actually,

156 Susan: how ? why?

157 Amy: I remember the class in my first grade. We have to learn National Phonetic Symbols (注

158 音

159 符號; bopomofo) and traditional characters... // ...All teachers will say “ go home to

160 write your

161 name or each vocabulary word for 20 times and hand in tomorrow” I hate this assignment.

162 There

163 one sound comes in my mind.... “What a boring and heavy burden like this” if students don’t

164 like or enjoy the tasks, assignment. They won’t be motivated to do that.

165 Susan:Yes, I agree with you. So what did you do? If you don’t like it?

166 Amy: hmm...yes. I always learned something by myself.

167 Susan: so what did you do in that class?

168 Amy: ha-ha. Making troubles, kidding.. but I remember that the conversation I spoken

169 between I

170 and my teacher. .. probably.... . sorry I cannot remember. Anyway. It's a funny dialogue. I

171 remember that ...hmm...she always asked us to recite or memorize what she taught.

172 Susan: and then ?

173 Amy: She taught us that remember one provide “ zi yue : gong yu shan ji shi bi xian li ji qi.”

174 Which mean a man... a craftsman, if he means to do good work, must first sharpen his tools) .

175 of

176 course, we had to repeat after her for several times. After repeating this stupid, odd

177 sentence.....

178 my teacher asked me one question “ When do you usually do your homework?” and I

179 responded

180 “ yi nian zhi ji zai wu...//... chun , yi ri zhi ji zai wu chen “ (Plan your year in spring and your

181 day at dawn). What a great expression from my inner voice!

182 Susan: so what do you try to say to your teacher?

183 Amy: I just want her know that repeating your words or reciting those provides is not

184 necessary

185 to deal with our daily conversation. It is not a really speech in our daily life? These provide

186 were

187 written 2, 3 thousand ago. Now is 21 century for it makes me feel that I am talking with

188 ancient

189 people.

190 Susan: What's your teacher's response?

191 Amy: stare at me for a few seconds. As you know, I am a trouble maker in that class. she get

192 used

193 to it.

194 Susan: how about your third language is English. ?

195 Amy: Well, compare to right now. I don't think I start my second language .. English

196 learning....very early because I didn't study English until when I was in junior high school.

197 kind of late .I think . Compare to current practice. When I was twelve years old. 1982. I

198 think...

199 Susan: when you were twelve years old. It was your first time to learn English. You started

200 from

201 learning alphabet, A. B. C. D?

202 Amy: yes, sure, before that, actually, hum hum... when I was in the elementary school...

203 Actually,

204 I was vey happy because I didn't have any pressure to learn anything and my parents didn't

205 force

206 me to learn many things. And I kind of grow up very naturally. And I remember .. except to go

207 to

208 school. And after school. I just spent my time play the piano and playing with my neighbors. I

209 have a very very happy childhood. In Taiwan. Many children are forced to learn drawing,

210 dancing,

211 art, music, math. But ...hmm... I love to play the piano. Which is a little different from others.

212 So

213 playing the piano is kind of game for fun. From my point of view. I just love music...that's

214 Susan : what kind of games did you play? You play with your friends Or you just handing out

215 with your friends?

216 Amy: oh. You know... And we play hide and seek. We play basketball. We play different

217 kinds of

218 balls. We ride bicycle and to everywhere

219 Susan: in your hometown?

220 Amy: yes, in my hometown.

221 Susan: did you go swim?

222 Amy: at the moment, actually, I didn't know how to swim until I was in the university. But

223 my

224 hometown is very close to the sea but I didn't know how to swim. But now I can swim. And

225 good at it.

226 Susan: so, you really have a enjoyable childhood and very happy. And I think children live in

227 the

228 city and they go to the cram schools to study after classes. And I think you are so lucky.

229 Amy: no. I think that is because hum/ I maybe a little bit older. Because compare to now.

230 students

231 even in country side, rural. I think they don't have much more freedom than I when I was a

232 kid. it

233 is changed. The society is changed. The whole world is changed. Because English becomes so

234 powerful language.

235 Susan: you said that you start to learn English at the age of twelve. When you go to the

236 school,

237 would you feel you are lag behind other students? those students may learn English before

238 twelve

239 Amy: yeap. A little bit late. But at my time, I think many students have the similar situation as

240 mind. Some, of course, some of my classmates went to cram school since they were in the

241 elementary school . but. I think. I was luck because most of students at my time. They didn't

242 go

243 to cram school to learn English until they went to university... no... junior high school. So I

244 have

245 very happy childhood.

246 Susan: so that's before the age 12. How about you go to the junior high school?

247 Amy: yeap yeap. Because I have a very happy childhood . when I went to the junior high. It's

248 such a big gap.

249 Susan; why do you said that is a big gap ?

250 Amy: hum.. maybe in the elementary school, although I spend much time on practicing piano

251 and

252 play with my ...play all the time, my grad is not kind of bad . I went to the honor class which

253 mean people. Students have higher grad, high IQ. I don't know how they definite that. They

254 just

255 train students to be a good tester. It's training and giving tests to train to be a .....”machine”

256 maybe that's why I want to do something. So I am here.

257 Susan: you are learning English in this kind of environment?

258 Amy: maybe. I am kind of lucky. I English teacher was success novice . probably, it was a

259 second

260 year or third year for her to teach English. So she is very young and very nice, and very

261 different

262 from other older teachers, experienced teacher . For she still has some.. she took

263 me...Because

264 she is very young, very beautiful, really really in our time, she just like a superstar, movie star  
265 in  
266 my school, she's pretty. She is very pretty I think. So because that. And I think she took not  
267 that  
268 strict so students like it. but for me.. I don't know. Because many teachers, they just use ...  
269 Teaching method. Methodology. So teach you vocabulary, grammar, and extra textbooks, to  
270 train  
271 you. Tests, exercises all the time.

272 Susan: did this teacher inspirit your learning ? .. what is your motivation or purposes to keep  
273 study English after graduate from junior high school.

274 Amy: Well. I think I still have to thank her because when she teaches, when she taught. She  
275 gave  
276 us some after activities. For example, listening to English songs. That's my first experience to  
277 learn English song. And I remember she played for us the first song was " yesterday once  
278 more"  
279 by carpenter. And we learn past tense from that song

280 Susan: now. Do you still remember that?

281 Amy: Well... because of this expiration. .. hum.. I began to learn English song. English from  
282 English song. That's because... I think. I love music and I like to play the music. I think

283 music is

284 very important in my life.

285 Susan: that's because of this song which gave you different thought or idea of English?

286 Amy: for me. This song opens other foreign culture. For me, at the moment, I began to learn

287 English and different culture from that. Also some very famous singer . Joan Baez, folk

288 singer ..

289 actually, my teachers seldom play for us because we don't have enough of time in the class.

290 we

291 need to prepare the enter examination.

292 Susan: Did you continue listening English song after school ?

293 Amy: yeap. Everything is just curious...curiosity... I just wanna learn more . I like the song...

294 I

295 just went to the recorder story . I was lucky at the moment we still had recode store in my

296 hometown. And I try to find the different kind of songs by myself. You can said. I learn a lot

297 by

298 myself. Not just in the school.

299 Susan: in your junior high school. Why would you have money to buy those records?

300 Amy: I have my packet money from my parents.

301 Susan: what is your packet money.

302 Amy: pocket money is 零用錢

303 Susan: how can you get the pocket money?

304 Amy: yes.

305 Susan: from your parents?

306 Amy: sometimes, my parents gave it to me and I save it. sometimes. For such a long time.

307 Susan: did you spend that ?

308 Amy: No.

309 Susan: you are really a good student.

310 Amy: yeah. You know. I have motivation. I save it because I want to buy records. At the time.

311 We

312 have a... my grandma's house we had traditional long play recorder. And finally, we have a

313 lot.

314 So sometimes we went back to my grandma's house to ...listen to music. 60s. English song.

315 Also I try to translate from English to Chinese by myself in my junior high school. Nobody

316 force

317 me to do it. I just do it by myself...hmm ... I also have one classmate, she also interested in

318 that.

319 So sometimes. We just translated and show each other. It's funny. It's fun. But it's very

320 interesting.

321 Susan: would you like to suggest other teachers that .. teaching English song is really a useful  
322 and effective way in the classroom.

323 Amy: I don't know. It depends individual. Because of my classmates. They got inspiration  
324 from  
325 that. But for myself. It's really really did. So. Since I was in junior high school, actually, I  
326 have  
327 a lot of imagine... imagination of American culture. Because most songs are from united  
328 states  
329 actually. At the moment. I don't know what is British singer and what is American singers...I  
330 don't know...

331 Susan: so. what is your imagination of United states ? culture of US ?

332 Amy: So just of music. I think why I came here. Maybe unconscious. When I was pretty  
333 young in  
334 my junior highs school. Maybe. It's kind of fate or unconsciousness of being influenced by  
335 the  
336 learning experience. I just came here to look and see. What's wrong? What's the content  
337 different  
338 what I heard and what I learned from. I ....

339 Susan: That's why you came to United states to learn English. Actually, your English is very

340 good.

341 Amy: Thanks you . I don't think so

342 Susan: Specially, speaking. So . how can you practice your speaking.

343 Amy: My speaking.

344 Susan: hum...hmm...

345 Amy: tell you the truth. I have a very very terrible period of learning experience in junior high

346 school. That. I told that there was a big gap between my childhood and learning in junior high

347 school. It's totally different so when I was 13 years old. I force myself isolated. Kind of

348 isolated

349 270. from outside world. I remember. It's totally different experience. When I was in my

350 childhood in

351 my elementary school. I just played outside. When I went to junior high school . when I was

352 13

353 years old. After I went back. I just lock myself... in my room. I seldom seldom interact with

354 my

355 family. Even I didn't have a friend very very few friends. And went back, I turn on the radio

356 and

357 turn on the record and play cassettes. And learning by myself. Reading, listening so I

358 didn't ...

359 well... I just isolated the world.

360 Susan: how come?

361 Amy: .. hmm... because...I just enjoy myself, play the piano, listen to music and release my  
362 pressure. ...hmm...So especially. My specially learning English ?? teacher didn't encourage  
363 to  
364 speak . we may have some listening texts but not that much because hum... the education  
365 system just teach students how to write and how to read. So from listening, I learn from  
366 English  
367 songs. I pick up the pitch and tone , intonation. But about the speaking. Well. Maybe. At the  
368 moment. I maybe sick because I don't have the. I didn't have people to talk to me so I talk to  
369 myself.

370 Susan: Talk to yourself?

371 Amy: ...hmm...Talk to myself, hum. I talk to myself in Chinese or seldom in English but you  
372 know but I try to remember the lyric of the English songs.

373 Susan: you talk to yourself to practice speaking.

374 Amy: you can said that and from English songs

375 Susan: so. Can you tell me some interesting experience when you really talk to really people,  
376 native speakers?

377 Amy: it's would be a ... it's would be a long time... Since I started to learn English. Because

378 when I was in high school. I cannot remember at all.

379 Susan: In your high school. Is there a native speaker in your school?

380 Amy: No.

381 Susan; Or you just go out to meet some native speakers?

382 Amy: No. actually. Maybe I did, I did, have met some foreigners because when I was in high

383 school I was in Kaohsiung city. I can't remember I met foreigners in that city. So even in high

384 school. Just as I said. The education system didn't have experience to speak at all.

385 Foreigners...hmm... Even teachers. My teacher .. oohh. In high schools. I have three English

386 teachers. Every year. Every year has one English teacher. At the first two English teachers. oh

387 my

388 goodness. I didn't think I learn anything from them.

389 Susan: why ?

390 Amy: I just learned from myself. Because they just give you lecture. And that's it. that is very

391 traditional way to learn language. I don't think I learn any language from them. they just used

392 translational one.

393 Susan: Grammar translation

394 Amy: Grammar translation. Ok. This is English tests. And then translate into Chinese and

395 introduce some grammar. That's it. I think I learn by myself. Almost every weekend. I went to

396 recorder story to find some interesting records. At the moment. I lived outside my home so I

397 have

398 more pocket money so I have more money. Almost of my all pocket money invest in record

399 story.

400 So I learn more and more knowledge about popular songs. English popular songs. And a lot.

401 Especially, I remember in my classroom. 3 or 4 classmates. We like English popular songs

402 and

403 sometimes we discussed and talked about the content of the songs. Sharing our feeling and

404 thoughts. You see...hmm... language is a tool to voice out feeling and thoughts.

405 Susan: can you give us some examples or some popular songs or some famous singers ?

406 Amy: when I was in high school. I began to do research about popular songs. Like. at the

407 moment

408 we had Rolling stone magazine in Chinese.

409 Susan; Rolling stone magazine ?

410 Amy: Rolling stone magazine is not in English version. At the moment. We have Rolling

411 stone

412 record company and release one magazine they called Rolling stone magazine and introduce

413 popular songs or “ 余光音樂” ... and I remember. So I absorbed record information

414 and

415 knowledge from magazine . and I even went to second hand book store to dig out some

416 information. About introduce the background of the song. And signer and bands, because at  
417 the  
418 moment I learn something about ,... just I talk about ... Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Pink Floyd,  
419 Led  
420 Zedpline. And a lots of bands and singers. Whatever. , Neil Young. John Mayer and Eric  
421 Clapton  
422 Susan: so you still keep listening music and do this research so far. I think that is music is  
423 kind of  
424 motivation make you keep learning English . .....

425 Amy: it's kind of.... Since I was junior high school. I had cultivated such kind of habit. Even  
426 when I was in...hmm... when I was in university I attend an extra curriculum activity. I  
427 manipulate a campus radio program. Broadcast. Program. I am a caption . I introduce some  
428 rock  
429 music for whole year.

430 Susan: Is that in your junior or senior? can you tell us more details about that.

431 Amy: When I was in junior.... Well. Sometimes I held some activities to introduce some  
432 bands  
433 and like ..hum..Eagle. I introduce band from their first album until the latest album. And  
434 introduce

435 their background. Their music characteristics and even the content of the song. Why they are

436 so

437 popular in the united states? And What their songs reflect of social context.

438 Susan: can you talk about your experience when you were in the college or university. Would

439 you

440 participate a lots of activities or join any club related to English?

441 Amy: No. not at all.

442 Susan: you give up learning English ?

443 Amy: No, No..actually. I have never gave up . you know . my first major. My first university.

444 My

445 major is Chinese literature and linguistic not english. And so It's kind of weird. Because my

446 major is Chinese. So I should attend some clubs realted to Chinese literature. But I attend one

447 but.

448 I was not interested in that. And I went to another club. They have such kind of activity which

449 is

450 much more fit into my hobby.

451 Susan: your music ? your music?

452 Amy: Yeap. my music.

453 Susan: what kind of club did you join that?

454 Amy: hum.. the broadcast.

455 Susan; you mentioned that

456 Amy: Yes, Also guitar, and one is social service.

457 Susan: social service ?

458 Amy: Yes, social service

459 Susan: so. You can play the piano and guitar?

460 Amy: I can play some. I think. My piano is better than guitar...yes, I think so.

461 Susan: because that you like the music and pop songs so you like guitar

462 Amy: Yeap. Actually, play the piano also can perform the songs. I just want to learn different

463 instruments. Also guitar is portable and much more convenience. because I need to practice

464 some English songs with my friends. when you play.. when you practice you have to .. It's

465 easy

466 for you to remember to lyrics

467 Susan: that why ?

468 Amy: that is because i can find my entertainment and my hobbies into my learning and my

469 second language learning. no.. English learning.

470 Susan: that's right. So you pretty much use English in your life. Have you ever been to any

471 country? Or try to speak up but nobody can understand you. Or

472 Amy: I think that....

473 Susan: or some interesting stories?

474 Amy: I remember you ask me my first time to speak with foreigner. It should be when I went

475 to

476 the university. In my university. There were many foreigners to learn Chinese on campus in

477 my

478 university. We have Chinese learning center. there is very easy to meet foreigners but I didn't

479 remember. Oh oh yes. I remember. I have more opportunities to talk with native speakers

480 even ...they are not native speaker. Anyway. They can speak ... I also have one language

481 exchange partner. She's .. she's...hmm... I think she's a Taiwanese American. She was born

482 in the

483 united states. And she went back to Taiwan to learn Chinese. And at the moment, when I was

484 a

485 junior, I had a language exchange. That's a formal experience for me to interact with native

486 speaker. I think she's a native speaker.

487 Susan: it's a experience or change for your have more opportunities to practice. Would you

488 feel

489 your English is improving a lot ?

490 Amy: well. I just feel interesting. I don't know if my English is improve or not. Actually ,

491 every

492 week we just have an hour . that's. not that much

493 Susan: you not only learn a lot language but culture ? right?

494 Amy: hum.. probably. An hour for one week is not enough but we still exchange some

495 information. I introduced Taiwanese culture or Chinese because my major is Chinese

496 literature

497 and linguistic so I ... Chinese knowledge to her because she interested too. She. Sometimes, I

498 will ask her about ... America stuffs because at the moment, she graduated from university

499 already.

500 Susan: what is your curious. Curiosity to ask question

501 Amy: mostly. Probably. Because I was a college students so I would ask something related

502 college life. Or their food ... something like that. Something very limited.

503 Susan: I think college life in united states. Did you still remember what did she tell you ?

504 Amy: hum.. I remember. Once we went to Taiwan University . national Taiwan university.

505 We.

506 We took a walk on campus. And we learn somebody. We heard somebody played violin or

507 guitar

508 on campus. She laugh.. and ask why. his skills wasn't that good.

509 Susan: laughing ?

510 Amy: Yes, and I ask why. she told me because in the united states almost all students can play

511 instruments. I think probably, you know.. Because she graduated from Stanford University.

512 That's

513 very very high level university. Probably she assumed in her background most students can

514 play

515 good instrument. It's impressive me a lot.

516 Susan: so your conversation partner would like Chinese food.

517 Amy: I think she like. she like stir-fired sticky rice. Dumpling. Seafood.

518 I brought her to eat stir-fried snake skin with Chinese celery leaves. She didn't touch it. she

519 said it

520 was terrible, she couldn't stand to eat snake. Ha... so funny. Ooo.. she also didn't like sticky

521 tofu,

522 chicken paw, chicken feet, duck paw. She said. How can you eat that. it's . How did you

523 imagine

524 that chickens get around and scratch for their food?. I said no.. it's tasty and a little bit spicy

525 and

526 yummy. Of course, we clean it before we cook. She said.. NONONO.. .

527 I really had a great time with her. She really taught me a lot things.

528 Susan: did you show her around in Taipei city?

529 Amy: not many. Except some places we ate. most of time , hum. I didn't think about that.

530 Because we usually met in the classroom and talk each other. I didn't have, I didn't have any  
531 memory that we went to the restaurant. Oh. We just went to restaurant on campus and it was  
532 and  
533 nice. And We had Chinese food and American food also. So I think she like it. she like.  
534 Susan: so after your graduate from college. Then. You got a teaching job and you mentioned  
535 about that you wanted to be a teacher that is because you have a longer vacation. During the  
536 vacation, what did you do?  
537 Amy: well, I usually flew away from school.  
538 Susan: ok. to where?  
539 Amy: ,Me? I. many places. The first time for me to go abroad is Hong Kong because I went  
540 there  
541 to visit one of my classmates in the university. She was a Hong Kong Cantonese. She was  
542 living  
543 in Hong Kong at the moment. So I went to Hong Kong to visit them . visit her. After that  
544 almost  
545 every winter vacation or summer vacation go to other countries ... ok, like... Hong Kong.  
546 Mainland China. It's a boring country.  
547 Susan: so have you even been to some countries and have an unforgettable experiences when  
548 you

549 try to speak in English.

550 Amy: yes. the unites states.

551 Susan: which states.

552 Amy: because it's tour. It's a group. We went to a lots of places. And we went to San

553 Francisco,

554 ohh. We went to Hawaii first. then we flew to San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Grade Canyon

555 and

556 Las Vegas

557 Susan: which city you prefer ?

558 Amy: oh. The first thing impressed me is Hawaii... it's the biggest island in Hawaii because I

559 felt

560 very very relax in Hawaii. So . at the moment, I just thought if want to have a honey moon. I

561 will go there. ..

562 Susan: How do you feel that ?

563 Amy: ...hmm...it's very pity that this dream never come true.

564 Susan: Oh-Oh. What do you think that? You cannot predict your future.

565 Amy: well.

566 Susan: by the way

567 Amy : nono.. it's the food. It's the first experience. After that. I went to different country. Or I

568 think my dream changed

569 Susan: change for what ?

570 Amy: because. Hum. After. I went to American I also went to European countries. It's about

571 10

572 years ago. and compare to the atmosphere. Probably I prefer European countries.

573 Susan: European countries ? which country?

574 Amy: maybe Ireland. Guinness

575 Susan: Beer ?

576 Amy: no no no . the people there . really really friendly weather, scenery is very beautiful

577 over

578 there. And they don't have many artifact stuffs. Everything is very very natural. That's why I

579 like that place.

580 Susan: while you are traveling, would you speak English or another language.

581 Amy: most countries I went actually people can speak English very well like, like .

582 Netherlands,

583 actually, people speak English well too. And in Germany and Luxembourg is a small

584 country

585 and their tourist enterprise was very flourish. Most people can speak English. And but. Only

586 place won't allow me to speak a lot English it was Spain and Portugal

587 Susan: because they...

588 Amy: well...because I went to Spain. At the moment. Hum. I think . many many

589 hum...Spanish,

590 Spanish people, they cannot speak English because English is not popular and the most

591 popular

592 is , their first language for them. it was a French. But since 2000. Things changed because

593 they

594 have European Unit. It changed the situation. More and more Spanish people try to speak

595 English. Because in Europe. It's very weird. They have very different language. When they

596 try to

597 communicate, English is the most popular language. Not French or German but English.

598 Maybe

599 next time. When I went go there, when I go to Spain. The situation will be changed. I may

600 have

601 more opportunities to speak English but I still practice my Spanish anyway.

602 Susan: so. What... why you wanna learn language ?

603 Amy: it's very interesting questions. Because sometimes I just curious ...hmm... when I

604 travel in

605 foreign countries . one of my hobby is to buy local dictionary. In local bookstore. So . because

606 I

607 think the basic communication , if you go to some foreign countries you know the basic

608 dialogue,

609 such as greeting “ good morning” “ how are you” “ thank you”,.....something like that... . it

610 will

611 be polite to the country, people over there. They will be very friendly, because you know

612 some

613 of their language. So basically, when I go to some countries. Their native language is not

614 English

615 before I go there...hmm... I will try to learn basic dialogue. Like for example, to Thailand, I

616 will

617 prepare some basic dialogue. To Germany to prepare for German . to France I learn some

618 French,

619 so . Because you have some basic language background , linguistics background. It's not too

620 difficult and it's very interesting. That's why. every times, when I prepare , I want to go some

621 foreign countries ...hmm... I have longer time to prepare this travel. Because I have try to .

622 not

623 only their language but also their culture. Maybe I have to study their history, literature, art, or

624 their geography. For me, traveling is not just for taking relax but one of procedure of learning.

625 Susan: Do you encourage Language learners to travel around the world.

626 Amy: It's Positive way. Apply what you learn into the really world. traveling can open your  
627 mind,  
628 the world, enhance your knowledge and improve your language. As you know .. .hmm...all.  
629 Really learning experience, life experience.

630 Susan: where did you usually go when you were traveling each country.

631 Amy: Hmm...well... I strongly recommend museums. I have never missed visiting museums  
632 because all exhibitions are authentic material. I joined the tour group to practice my listening  
633 and  
634 learn as much as I could from the guiders' clear explanations of each piece of art. Also I read  
635 the  
636 guidebooks, signs, illustration of works to review my vocabulary words and gain new  
637 knowledge.

638 Traveling became my second way to contact English and explore my knowledge.

639 Susan: what do you mean really life experience?

640 Amy: It's authentic!!!!

641 Susan: can you give me some examples?

642 Amy: sure. Really experience. Signs on the street, advertisement, newspaper, magazines,  
643 everything is written in target language. Speaking to real person, during the traveling, I had to

644 speak and think ways to handle problems I had....my mind... vocabulary, sentences, words,  
645 voices... in my head. It's challenge but I learn a lot.

646 Susan: what kind of problems you met during your traveling?

647 Amy: Well...that's a lot...for example; I lost my ways in Vancouver, downtown. I remember  
648 that  
649 at that time I was only 23 years old. I try to show my map and ask direction to pedestrians  
650 who  
651 looked friendly, nice and of course... handsome ... my brain just like computer, all data come  
652 up  
653 suddenly and quick. Conversation in traveling, direction category. It's Funny.

654 Susan: and then?

655 Amy: Finally, I found a younger, tall, handsome guy who just came across from me. So I  
656 encourage myself to ask direction...I said, " Excuse me!!!. I was wondering if you could tell  
657 me  
658 how to get to Vancouver Museum ...on Robison street from here?". ...And then guy said  
659 " pardon  
660 me". Do you say...I was so so so nervous because I thought he couldn't understand what I  
661 say...hmm... So... I repeated the question again and very slowly with little  
662 confidence....and...

663 well.

664 Susan: so the guy understood your question yet?

665 Amy: yes, but he clarify my question first.... “ are you looking for Vancouver Museum? ” I

666 feel

667 so embarrassed and said “yes”. I think the problem was that the guy spoken so fast so that I

668 couldn't get his point...

669 Susan: then what did you say?

670 Amy: “ sorry, could you repeat it again” “ sorry, I was not still clear the place how I can go”

671 so

672 just “ sorry”.....Anyway..... I try my best to talk with him. Even though I felt so

673 embarrassed, I

674 felt I gain a kind sense of achievement. And finally, I can use English to find the way where I

675 want to go. So if you are shy at this monent, how can you find the way you want to go? I try

676 to

677 find my way.

678 Susan: no wonder you need such a long time vacation.

679 Amy: yea, that's why because I have to apply what I learn in that context, the traveling

680 context.

681 So for me, learning language is one of ways to learn culture of the country. It's very very

682 meaningful. Not just only to learn communicate . it's not only way, it's not only a tool to  
683 communicate it also a ... to know other culture. Also I can tell my stories to my students as  
684 well.

685 They love my stories...really...

686 Susan: so , now you are in IUP right, can you talk about your feeling of learning language in  
687 iup?

688 actually, you are a ph.d student. Right?

689 Amy: yeap

690 Susan: language probably is not a big problem for you so far. But you still have to learn  
691 language

692 right ? how do you feel about the learning environment in United states?

693 Amy: I think you have to define what is the context. Probably, that is because , ph.d program  
694 and

695 they focus on research and study , so . for me. Actually, I don't have much more opportunities  
696 to

697 interact with people...hmm.... Not only native speakers even some other people. In case. We  
698 have

699 class. We have class discussion. Otherwise, I don't think this place is a really really offer. For  
700 me.

701 A good learning environment. That's because... ..

702 Susan: academic ?

703 Amy: Well, you can say that...that's because academic. They assumes you have enough

704 langue

705 background so most of time we do research . but if you want to learn, it's still have

706 opportunities

707 to learn. You have to try to find opportunities by yourself. Maybe because here for me. It's

708 very

709 simple. I just study I don't work. Maybe that's why So far. I don't have much more

710 opportunities

711 or chances for me to speak. But for read and for write. For writing that's ok. Listening it

712 depends,

713 I have to watch TV. But I seldom to watch.

714 Susan: Well, can you tell me some quotes you like the best or your motto.

715 Amy: my motto is

716 Susan:... Well... hmm....

717 Amy: " Dreams come true", "carpe diem, seize the day " but I have to think about my

718 favorite quote... now...

719 Susan: anyway, thanks for your useful information. We finish our interview now.

720 **Interview -2: Family-culture-education (Taiwan vs. U.S.)**

721 Susan: Good morning, thank you for coming. It's delighted once again to interview with you.

722 Amy: you are welcome. It's my pleasure to participate your interview...hmm...I hope you  
723 can get enough information today.

724 Susan: thank you. last time, you mentioned about your family. I know your parents work hard  
725 for this family. So, here I would like to have more information about your parents. How  
726 would you describe you parents?

727 Amy: Well...hmm...actually...sorry... I didn't mention a lot about my father last time...

728 Hmm... probably, I don't like to ... I don't want to...

729 Susan: why? Can you tell me that? or...

730 Amy: ...hmm... he passed away already...hmm...in 1995...hmm... It's about 13 years ago.

731 He died from lung cancer at the hospital. My grandfather died from lung cancer, too.

732 Susan: I am sorry to hear that.

733 Amy: that's ok. I am ok now...hmm... My father was a great man and I miss him so much....

734 Hmm.... When I saw his photo, it really recalls some pictures and memory in my mind. His  
735 voice...hmm... his face... the life experience we shared... some memories...

736 Susan: hmm.... I miss my father as well, he is in China now.

737 Amy: for business?

738 Susan: Yeap. He comes home twice per year. So sometimes I go china to visit him. He is a

739 good man as well. Anyway...How would you describe your father?

740 Amy: My father was a businessman... Hmm....he was born in 1943 in Tainan County, in

741 Taiwan. In southern Taiwan.... My grandpa and grandma all passed away.... We have our

742 own family business ...which is selling materials for construction industry.... He was the

743 youngest children in the family and ...he liked to talk about his childhood to me... some

744 stories... how he ran a small business ....sell products. My grandfather and grandmother were

745 farmers. They planted lots of mango trees also.... My father moved to Kaohsiung when he

746 served in army...it's probably around 1963.

747 Susan: Can you tell us about your father's personality?

748 Amy: well, he is open-minded, tolerated, and interesting... he is a vegetarian with a kind

749 heart.... He always helped people. I used to be a vegetarian because of him.... He always said

750 that I am too dependent...and.... I should learn how to be independent and deal with

751 problems by yourself... not always ask for help all the time....but actually, I just heavily rely

752 on him only.. not everything. Maybe he just hopes ...I can be a successful and useful person

753 to contribute my talent or ability to this society.

754 Susan: I think your father did have a great impact on your life. Right ?

755 Amy: Yes.

756 Susan: What do you think you inherited from him?

757 Amy: Well...he really influences me a lot in my whole life. I remember he told me that... " in

758 your whole life, you work hard, make money but from now... but don't forget who you are  
759 and what you want in your life." ...hmm....I forgot when he told me that.... but I remember  
760 that I went and told my father that...hmm.... when I grow up... I want to help all people. I  
761 want to be a teacher to help many students.... I think it was a turning point in my life...  
762 because I remember that moment so well...we were at the park just before he passed away.

763 Susan: How about your mother?

764 Amy: well, she is a superwoman...actually.... That's what I can tell you...well...just  
765 kidding....she is the person shaped my personality ...hmm... I really really like my mom. She  
766 is tough, brave, straightforward...and... she is just amazing and unbelievable...he...no, she is  
767 thin, short small... but I am big, tall... my appearance is different from her..... My older sister  
768 like her, I look like my father... She is the person taught me the meaning of 'sharing'... She  
769 always tells me that ...you should share our food, happiness, with people. It's kind of love.  
770 We should be nice to each other and to be a person with a kind heart.

771 Susan: what does your mom do?

772 Amy: she is a housewife and businesswoman. She takes a good care of us. She usually wakes  
773 up at 6 and prepares our breakfast... I forgot to tell you. She also takes care of my dog... His  
774 name is "happy Leg" ...because he likes to jump all the time. Poor mom..... Wash him, feed  
775 him, walk him...

776 Susan: Is your mom running your family business as well?

777 Amy: yes, of course. She works from Monday to Friday. On weekend, she likes traveling just  
778 like me. She has a whole bunch of friends. She is kind of social. Likes to be with people.  
779 Singing Kalakos with friends.... Making noise..... have fun.....she has a good voice but me.  
780 Sometimes, I play the piano and she sings. How wonderful time it is !!!.

781 Susan: how about your brother and sister?

782 Amy: they all married. My brother runs a business as well. My sister works in court house.  
783 Both of them have two children. ... so I have three nieces and one nephew. I am getting  
784 old..... so terrible. My family kind of worry about me since I am still single. I grow up in a  
785 very very traditional Buddhism family...

786 Susan: hmm...Can you tell me what is the concept of traditional Chinese family? I mean in  
787 your family?

788 Amy:...hmm... my father and my mother always told me that I have to remember the concept  
789 of xiào , xiàoshùn , which mean.... I have to respect my parents, or the elder, and obey what  
790 they said or principles of family...bala..bala...I can not offend or make them angry. .... I  
791 remember that when I was 7... I said something wrong to my grandpa, probably I didn't  
792 respecthim or did something wrong... I cannot remember.... Guess what.... I was beaten by  
793 my father... actually... I was a little sacred of my father even though I heavily replied on him.

794 Susan: What do your parents want to be?

795 Amy: My father and my mother wish me to be a musician. But they didn't tell me until I was

796 20 year old....So... they actually try to motivate and encourage me, my brother, and my sister  
797 to study piano.... So when I was a child, I always played the piano with my brother and  
798 sister...hmm... after practice for one or two hours, we played games or had fun together....  
799 However, I only learned it about 6 years..... because of heavy load in junior high school so I  
800 have to give up learning . I didn't have enough time to practice the piano at that time.

801 Susan: so...how can your parents motivate and encourage you to learn the piano?

802 Amy: Modeling.... My father played the harmonica to me and sometimes we all sign together  
803 and have a pleasure time... So... I think music is a good tool to smooth my angry... it's  
804 peaceful. .. my mom always played some music for us ...and I think she just tried to..hmm...  
805 let's immerse the environment with harmonic music. ..Explore our sense of music and  
806 rhythm. .well...just like what I did in my class in Taiwan....

807 Susan: can you tell me when did you start to learn the piano?

808 Amy: it's about ...when I was 10 years old.

809 Susan: so that's the reason why you like music so much?

810 Amy: yes, I think so. I also like classic music...not only pop music or rock music.. kind of  
811 variety..... I can compose some music as well.

812 Susan: Wow, that's terrific,

813 Amy: No, only easy one.

814 Susan: last time, you mentioned about music you like when you were junior high.

815 Amy: Yeap. It was a wonderful time for me.

816 Susan: how about classic music you also mentioned last time ? ...Do you have some

817 musicians you like?

818 Amy: Yes, my mom and I do like Bach. Because Bach's interest in composing church music. I

819 like soft music and church music so much. ... hum.... His music is soft and peaceful so like

820 his music... Another one is Mozart. He is great composer and his one of piece works is

821 Marriage of Figaro...i love it so much.... I think this is his most famous and successful

822 works..... Handel's Water Music and Vivaldi's Four Seasons ....

823 Susan: yes, I have listened to his CD. Have you ever performed some music before?

824 Amy: Yeap. .. I have ever played Canon in C. maybe when I was 14 years old. For a school

825 competition.

826 Susan: how was that ?

827 Amy: the outcome, .. .terrible...it was not important because I gained the experience of

828 performing my favorite music.

829 Susan: what do you mean.. "Terrible" ?

830 Amy: well. I forgot the music just like I forgot vocabulary all the time. I just can not

831 remember it....Maybe I am so nervous at that moment...so I say... well...it terrible...a little

832 bit. frustrated.

833 Susan: What did you do when you forgot the music?

834 Amy: ... hmm...let see... I just echo one sentence “ I can do it” and then 2 minutes later. I

835 remember everything... it’s amazing...well... actually, it was embarrassed to sit in front of

836 the keyboard and everyone was silently to wait for your music. ...

837 Susan: ...well... that’s just experience and don’t think too much. .hmm...Can you tell me

838 about your favorite teachers in schools?

839 Amy: I cannot remember the course name, but I think it’s about art. My teacher play a VCD

840 “ Leonardo da Vinci” and introduced his oil painting. ... hmm...the VCD was in English so

841 many students were fall asleep ... my teacher noticed that ... he was mad... so slashed the

842 door, turned off the VCD player, and then turned on the light. He said.....You should study

843 hard to enrich your life, mind and heart, because the wealth of the mind is the only true

844 wealth”.... everyone just keep silently...so far, I still remember what he told us....and so I

845 believe only knowledge can change and enrich my life.

846 Susan: Did he influence you a lot?

847 Amy: yes, he did influenced me a lot. His voice always stays in my head ‘ swimming for

848 many years” so I am here... study ph.d .... Knowledge is POWER...

849 Susan: last time you mentioned about that you didn’t keep studying English after high school.

850 Did you continue your English learning after your graduate from University?

851 Amy: Well...after graduate from college. I stopped studying English for many years. The

852 reason was that my degree is Chinese literature. during those years, the only contact I had

853 with English was through music. so I almost didn't study English for nearly four years. So I  
854 had forgotten many vocabulary words, grammar I have learned in high school. I have to start  
855 it again.

856 Susan: well...except your degree. Well...Do you give me another reason why you give up  
857 your English learning?

858 Amy: because i didn't need it. in Taiwan, I didn't have many opportunities to speak English.  
859 If you want to learn or speak English you should go to cram schools, hire tutors, or find a  
860 conversation partners. .. But it's hard to find a foreigner .... I feel so strange about that... why  
861 many Taiwanese so nice to foreigners...I think maybe... "The rarer it is, the more it is  
862 worth."

863 Susan:...Hmm .... Do you mean... Taiwanese are nice to foreigners?

864 Amy: you can say that. ..It's kind of normal.... because many parents hope their children to  
865 learn English with foreigners not local teachers...cause they have a perfect pronunciation, so  
866 they are nice to them...Many parents don't have ability to judge teachers' qualification of  
867 teaching English...

868 Susan: what is your philosophy of your life?

869 Amy: hmm.... Let me think about it.....well.... responsible for your life...doing the best at  
870 this moment and puts yourself in the best place for the next moment.... try hard to do  
871 anything you want and don't be hesitating, complaining or making excuse....just make your

872 dream come true. Otherwise, you may regret some other days.

873 Susan: yeap. I also try hard to do anything...but how can you make sure the decision you  
874 made is correct or proper ?

875 Amy: well...hmm. ... that is . because.. each time when you state what you want or believe,  
876 you are the first to hear it.... I will know it... amazing ... don't be afraid to take some risks or  
877 underestimate what you are capable of....and “ do not put a ceiling on yourself”

878 Susan: ..hmm...I agree....so “Don't be afraid to take some risks” is your philosophy. How  
879 about your teaching philosophy?

880 Amy: I think the same as my personal philosophy. But teaching need more passion, patient,  
881 love. Also, I believe that teaching is a humanitarian activity and teachers should involve in  
882 personal growth of each student.

883 Susan: I agree since you have mentioned about the education system in Taiwan is training you  
884 like a tester or machine. Right?

885 Amy: yes. I did mention about that.....

886 Susan: So...now... you are a teacher in junior high school. Did you do the same thing to your  
887 students?

888 Amy: No, of course, not.... Actually, I try to change something.. I know it's risk to apply  
889 some NEW teaching methods in school.

890 Susan: Why?

891 Amy: why? ...hmm...because of examination system...hmm... I think it's quite hard to  
892 change or make a big progress or step in my school. The system already controls and develops  
893 a teaching style for each teacher..... " cramming knowledge" so students always passive and  
894 wait for receiving knowledge.. they even don't know how to THINK... or reflect.. so sad..

895 Susan: so what can you make a little difference or progressive..

896 Amy: I jus try my best to decontextualize some teaching methods which I learned in the US to  
897 my teaching and fix into my context. It's hard.... But at least I have done one activity which  
898 my colleagues all admire.

899 Susan: can you specify it?

900 Amy: I know you will ask it.... As you know, I love music and English song so much.

901 Susan: yes. You are really good at many things.. genius.

902 Amy: ohhh.. not at all..

903 Susan: so.. what kind of activity did you apply in the class?

904 Amy: play English songs as my teacher did before.... But my main purpose is trying to create  
905 more chances to talk and think....

906 Susan: What do you mean talk and think?

907 Amy: Well, my students don't like to express their ideas in class which is totally different  
908 from the US.

909 Susan: so you play music and let them talk?

910 Amy: Yes. Since I want to generate some topics they like. I try to use some popular songs to  
911 create their interests so...they finally speak in class.

912 Susan: How can you design the class?

913 Amy: well. First... I did a survey about the music they like and play those music during lunch  
914 time. For example, Monday I play pop music, Tuesday I play rock music, Wednesday is  
915 classic music...Thursday and Friday are English songs... I found out that they all possessed a  
916 positive attitude toward learning. ... just let them learning with lower affective filter.., sorry for  
917 those terminology. ,,

918 Susan: that's ok.. so how much time you spend for each day ?

919 Amy: it's about 30 minutes..

920 Susan: I think that is a great idea.

921 Amy: actually, I am kind of copy the way how my teacher taught me before. Since I gained  
922 many benefits from listening English songs

923 Susan: hmm. I can tell..

924 Amy: well...actually, I apply many theories I learned in the US into my class or my school.

925 Susan: for example.

926 Amy: I did extensive reading, service learning in my writing class, .

927 Susan: no. I think you already did a good job for your teaching.

928 Amy: nonono.. I should try harder...

929 Susan: can you tell me more specific about your English learning. what strategies do you use?

930 Speaking, listen, writing or reading ?

931 Amy: about listening.... I listen some radio program such as ICRT or some radio language

932 courses which broadcast in the morning, or in the evening. ..Many of my friends recording the

933 program but I didn't .... I think it is ineffective.... If I recorded it, I wouldn't think or listen,

934 because I think I can listen any time and never actually do it. so.... Kind of waste my money

935 and times...

936 Susan: What is about ICRT...?

937 Amy: ICRT.. is the radio station. Always plays Pop, rock, jazz music and English news from

938 Taipei. So many students listen to the English news from ICRT to improve their

939 English. ...they try to teach people useful expression and vocabulary from the news so

940 students can catch the whole picture easily.... Not like BBC or CNN so difficult to understand

941 or learn especially for L2 learners...I mean beginner ...

942 Susan: it's great resource and place I think you can learn English, .. and also listen to English

943 songs.. Do you think telling students some stories or your learning experience are kind of

944 motivating and leading some ways for students to learn.

945 Amy: yes. I totally agree though... I dream to be like my teacher because she told me many

946 interesting stories which she had experienced in foreign countries.... I remember she said

947 that she went shopping at the mall but she misunderstood the price of discount. She thought

948 10% off but in Chinese I-Chuer ( I means one, I Chuer means 90 % in chinese) so she  
949 misunderstood the meaning of the sign and thought all items are 90% off . ... so funny.....  
950 So ...of course....she bought a lot of stuffs and was not able to pay at that moment. I thought  
951 it was interesting. Since it's culture thing and how you interpret the meaning. ..  
952 Susan: Wow,, that's interesting. Do you have another one?  
953 Amy: hmm.....another story she told me was that....Oh....she was so surprised in the  
954 US... beucase.... many people said "hi or good morning" to her or greet each other. Do you  
955 know that.... In Taiwan, we even don't look at each other if we are not friends. Ya..We are shy.  
956 Conservative...hmm.... If you try to greet with people, they may ask you " Do I know  
957 you?"... so after I came back Taiwan.... Actually...I stop smiling or saying any single word  
958 to the person who come across to me.... and pretend we don't see each other. ...how  
959 ridiculous.  
960 Susan: well, I think that the different culture in different context. How do you think?  
961 Amy: Yes. I agree. I cannot kiss good-bye or hug people in Taiwan. Otherwise, I may be in  
962 trouble.....  
963 Susan: really??  
964 Amy: Yeap...  
965 Susan: Can you tell me some stories or experiences of speaking English?  
966 Amy:...hmm....I have ever tried to take a map and ask about direction on the street in

967 Canada....maybe in 1999....hmm...

968 660. Susan: something happened?

969 661. Amy: hmm... I lost my way in Vancouver, downtown on Roberson Street.... I was

970 looking for the Vancouver's Art Gallery for 30 minutes but I couldn't .....so I showed my map

971 and asked for the direction to a young boy.....I said " Excuse me!!!. I was wondering if you

972 could tell me how to get to the Vancouver Art Gallery from here?" ...The boy didn't

973 understand my meaning .... And he said...." pardon me? Can you repeat the question

974 again?" ..... so I repeated the question again ... few seconds later, the boy clarify my question

975 and he said,... " you mean, you are looking for Vancouver Art Gallery?" I said , " YES" right

976 away.. .. I felt so embarrassed...

977 Susan: why did you feel so embarrassed ?

978 Amy: because he couldn't understand my English. But actually, I speak one perfect sentence.

979 Susan: do you know why?

980 Amy: I don't know why. Maybe my speaking is terrible...

981 Susan: No. I don't think so. You are great.. perhaps... the boy spoke too fast so you were

982 nervous at that time.

983 Amy: well, it was true.. the boy spoke so fast so I couldn't understand his meaning....

984 so I kept repeating, "sorry" or " sorry, could you repeat it again ?" to clarify his meaning.

985 Susan: that's interesting. Can you tell me what are differences between Taiwanese students

986 and American students?

987 Amy: Taiwanese students are pity because they need to climb up the school ladder to reach a

988 GOOD university... in class, students actually have no voice in the class or less chance

989 interact with classmates ..kind of teacher-center...and...all of time for tests or reviewing.... So

990 I think students should change the way... they think...because they are too passive and

991 dependent...however, American students are much more active, independent, and love to

992 express their ideas, thoughts, or thinking in class. but Taiwanese students just don't like to

993 speak and keep silently in class.

994 Susan: So you use English songs in class. have you ever played music..no..movie?

995 Amy: yeap...movies ...yes, I did... Because students can learn different cultures, and

996 improve their English at the same time. .. I tried one class, of course, they all liked it but only

997 once per semester. Because my principal wouldn't allow it. I have to lecture and teach

998 students....

999 Susan: but you play English songs in class?

1000 Amy: yes, I did. But only during lunch time...actually, I argue with my principal about it..

1001 Susan: what did you say to your principal?

1002 Amy: I just try to persuade him to let students have more opportunities to learn different

1003 culture.

1004 Susan: can you tell me what do you think the differences of learning in Taiwan and the US. ?

1005 Amy: I think the first thing I would like to say is ....the way how I learn. In Taiwan, education  
1006 just like “ banking” system... just cram knowledge. So...the way how I think and view this  
1007 world all from my teachers and textbooks. However, in the US. I learn how to express my  
1008 opinions in class because everyone is speaking. At the beginning, I always so quite in the  
1009 class until my teachers asked me questions. For sure, I was shy at that time but I get used to  
1010 this learning environment. I am not afraid of speaking and love to contribute my knowledge in  
1011 the class.

1012 Susan: that’s a great improving. Don’t you think so?

1013 Amy: yes, for me .. it’s kind of big step in my life..

1014 Susan: so did you find out what’s difference you made after you graduated from MA program.

1015 Amy: Yes.. I remember that I told my mom to change some food she ate.

1016 Susan: can you explain that a little bit about ?

1017 Amy: ..hmm.... I remember that I bought some milk, cereal, coffee apple juice, and orange  
1018 juice home...and I made some spaghetti for lunch. She didn’t like it but I said milk cereal are  
1019 good for your health, you should try it. My mom didn’t want to say anything for 3 minutes.

1020 And then she said.. “ I like soymilk ( dou jian) , deep fried breadsticks, congee(zhou), and  
1021 white rice ... I don’t like cereal or milk. ...

1022 Susan: so you try to persuade her to accept some western food ?

1023 Amy: no persuade,, hope she can try...just like what I told to my principal..

1024 Susan: Did she get mad at you?

1025 Amy: hmm... a little bit... My mom told me that you are changing a lot and I can understand  
1026 the way you behave. I respect it and accept it. ...but you also should respect and accept my  
1027 style as well ? shamed on me... I felt so sad about what I did..

1028 Susan: don't push you so hard.

1029 Amy: Well. I know I should respect each other and don't try to change someone.

1030 Susan: Can you tell me something experiences of language learning and usage after you  
1031 arriving in the US?

1032 Amy: well.... There is one example, I think many Taiwanese students are familiar with the  
1033 idiom "raining cats and dogs". I remember when I said that idiom to my American friends;  
1034 they told me that we seldom use this idiom now. Sometimes, we do , but most of times we  
1035 don't. We just simply use "heavily rain" .... I was so surprised.... Because I think finally I can  
1036 use idiom in my conversation and I understood dominate culture. ...but I was wrong again..

1037 Susan: it's just the way people don't use frequently not mean you are wrong.

1038 Amy: Yes, you are right.

1039 Susan:well... do you have another example?

1040 Amy: ..hmm.. let me think about it... hmm.... I remember one day I met someone in the  
1041 campus. He was walking across from me and he said "how are you?". Of course, I directly  
1042 response " I am fine thank you ,and you?".... but he didn't even look at me and walk away

1043 without any single word. I was mad at him.

1044 Susan: why?

1045 Amy: because he didn't know how to interact with people?

1046 Susan: what do you mean?

1047 Amy: because he was supposed to say "I am fine, thank you." too... that's the basic

1048 conversation I learned from the first lesson in my junior high school. I was a little bit

1049 disappointed. I felt a sense of discrimination and uncomfortable at that moment.

1050 Susan: So.. now do you know the person..no.. reason yet?

1051 Amy: Yes, language, culture, and context....

1052 Susan: Wow....your answer is pretty straightforward. Did this kind of situation happen

1053 before?

1054 Amy: .. yes.. I think just like the problem I met when I was learning mandarin. The patterns

1055 were not related to our daily communication or fit into our social context.

1056 Susan: I think so...Well, I am interested in some stories which happened between you and

1057 your conversation partner? Did she feel culture shocked after she arrived in Taiwan ?

1058 Amy: I think ... maybe chopsticks....she had hard time using chopsticks ...It will be an

1059 awkward experience for foreigners to use chopsticks. I told her that it is not difficult and you

1060 just needed to practice few days. Practice makes it perfect..

1061 Susan: just only few days ?

1062 Amy: yes. Not too difficult.

1063 Susan: how about your friend in the US?

1064 Amy: Yes, they also always ask me to teach them how to use chopsticks but I just demonstrate

1065 how to use it because I didn't know how to teach them orally.. so I just said... the key is that

1066 the bottom chopstick remains still while the upper chopstick moves to grasp the food....and

1067 then... "Practice makes perfect" again.. so funny...

1068 Susan: but it's hard for them to learn it if you don't explain how?

1069 Amy: so I need to learn how to explain it.

1070 Susan: Yeah.. sometimes... you just need to practice and do it...

1071 Amy: Yes, I also encourage my foreigner friends to learn it because it's one part of our culture.

1072 If you want to learn our language; of course, you have to learn our culture as well.....

1073 Susan: yes, I agree. So did you explain the reason of using chopsticks?

1074 Amy: ..Yes. .I said, Chinese people, under cultivation of Confucianism.... We consider knife

1075 and fork bearing sort of violence, like cold weapons. So ... we use chopsticks to reflect

1076 gentleness.

1077 Susan: well...thanks of the lesson. You are really knowledgeable.

1078 Amy: Not at all... don't forget ..I am a Chinese teacher.

1079 Susan: ohh...I need to know which year you enrolled in your MA program?

1080 Amy: here. Iup. ... in 2002... In TESOL program.

1081 Susan: Last time I asked about some quotes you like. do you still remember?

1082 Amy: Yes, “carpe diem, seize the day “ and make your life extraordinary. This is quote from

1083 my movie Dead Poet Society. ... “For the first time in my life, I know what I want to do! And

1084 for the first time, I'm going to DO IT!”....

1085 Susan: ok. Thank you so much for your information and helping. if I need a further

1086 information, can I give you a ring and ask for another interview. But so far, I think I have

1087 enough information. Thank you so much.

1088 Amy: you are welcome.

1089 **Interview 3- transcription: More information**

1090 Susan: I still need some information about your childhood and your family ?

1091 Amy: hmmm. Let talk about my family first. I mentioned about my father was a business man

1092 but actually, before we had our own business. My father and mother were working as

1093 constructive workers. My family was not rich at all. In 1968 just two year before I was born.

1094 My mom finally had chance to open a small grocery story in Kaohsiung.

1095 Susan: how about your father?

1096 Amy: my father is working for the same job but at that time he had more sense of construction

1097 industry. So he invented almost money into this area.

1098 Susan: you mentioned about your father told you some stories in Taiwanese, could you give

1099 me one example?

1100 Amy: all stories related to our tradition. Such as.. some folk stories because It's part of our  
1101 tradition. For example, the legend of Sun-Moon Lake or Little frog in the well.

1102 Susan: which one do you like?

1103 Amy: the little frog.

1104 Susan: why?

1105 Amy: because this story always reminded me not to be a frog in my life.

1106 Susan: so when did your father tell you those stories?

1107 Amy: you mean.. time? or day? or year?

1108 Susan: Time, please.

1109 Amy:... ok...before our bedtime.. reading before we sleep...

1110 Susan: oh I see, thanks. Can you also mention about the names of your school, such as  
1111 elementary school, junior high school,

1112 Amy: oh that' are Rwei Fong Primary School, Rwei Fong elementary school, same Rwei Fong  
1113 junior high school...

1114 Susan: ..hmm..What is your senior high school?

1115 Amy: .... Jui-Hsiang Senior High School, normal national university.

1116 Susan: well, do you still remember the girl who said you were too localized?

1117 Amy: yes.. of course,

1118 Susan: Do you remember her name?

1119 Amy: ohhh. That's a long time ago, I may not be able to remember her Chinese name, but we all  
1120 called her Doll.. since she always wears nice dresses and looked like a princess.

1121 Susan: what is your conversation partner's name?

1122 Amy: her name is Jessica.

1123 Susan: you mentioned about your father played the harmonica to you. Do you know his  
1124 favorite song is?

1125 Amy: Yes, he always played Green Island. It's about one famous island in Taiwan. I have  
1126 never been there and I hope someday I can go there.. it's in eastern Taiwan.

1127 Susan: do you still remember your English teacher in junior high school?

1128 Amy: hu-hmm

1129 Susan: Do you still remember her name?

1130 Amy: I don't know exactly the whole name but we called her Miss, Chen. And she studied in  
1131 the US as well . but.. I forgot which state lo....

1132 Susan: here is one thing I need to clarify that.

1133 Amy: ok.. no problem.

1134 Susan: you mentioned about how you isolated yourself in junior high school. Did you try to  
1135 find a way out?

1136 Amy: ...hmm...I only talked to myself... So my parents were worried about me for this  
1137 circumstance. They told me that " as long as you try your best, don't worry about the grade.

1138 We have to learn through process. You don't necessary to be knowledgeable person but you  
1139 still can help people with your kind heart.".... I was struggling during this period of time. ...  
1140 until I met Miss, Cheng... I mentioned that already. ..

1141 Susan: after you graduated from university, which school did you teach?

1142 Amy: well. I went back to the junior high school I attend. I applied this school because the  
1143 school is close to my home.

1144 Susan: you mentioned about that you played and taught English songs in class.

1145 Amy: yes.

1146 Susan: hmm....Did all your students like this activity?

1147 Amy: It's hard to say. But most students like it... I think that's depending upon personality.  
1148 Some are shy so they don't like to sing in public. Others enjoy signing so much. They even go  
1149 to KTV to sing Karaoke...one of my students told me that he sang Your Song by Elton John  
1150 and his parents were proud of him. He said that their parents didn't know what he was singing  
1151 about but they're still happy and ask him to sing another song.

1152 Susan: that's a great motivation to them.

1153 Maybe this boy will like to sign English songs and learn English from them, just like the way  
1154 you learn English.

1155 Amy: I think so.

1156 Susan: well, thanks for your time and I think I have enough data to write your life story. If I

1157 need some further information, I will call you. Thanks.

1158 Amy: you are welcome.