

SEP Report for Ma'Anshan Team, Anhui Province, China 2009

As a team, we met at Nanjing. This was our first opportunity to get together, except by email. We were fortunate in our diversity since Jane Coates is a primary teacher from Leeds England; Sonia Jackson is a college teacher from London England and I was a secondary teacher in Durham District in Ontario, Canada. We met over the course of the week and I was very thankful of the expertise and professionalism of the team.

In Ma'Anshan, the setting was ideal for us at the Foreign Language School, just down the street from the hotel on the university campus where we stayed. We had good sized teaching rooms with air conditioning and connections to the internet and a projector. As well, the rooms were kept clean and were constantly checked by the custodial staff.

Although, the temperature was hot initially, we were comfortable in our teaching areas.

We were constantly supplied with water and there was tea available.

On site, there was no area to have duplication of materials but there was a photo copying shop on the way to the school that was very reasonable

We were truly blessed by an excellent group of teacher/students. We decided to interview them in pairs with two of us doing the interview and the third taking notes. The interviews followed a time when all of the teacher/students and the three of us had time to socialize and talk informally. The three of us felt that this format worked very well, lessening the stress of the teacher/students.

Since we had a number of primary teacher/students, we divided the group into three with one of the classes being primary teachers and the other two middle school teachers. This approach worked very well.

The classes stressed oral English as well as teaching strategies and techniques. Model lessons were demonstrated as well as our teacher/students having time to teach to their peers. We hope that we achieved the expectations as set out in the five points for this pilot program.

The last Friday was the closing ceremony as well as a party which we provided for our colleagues. There was a definite feeling of camaraderie that had developed over our three weeks that was demonstrated to us with many, many thanks and in some cases, feelings of deep emotion that the program was over.

Overall it was an excellent experience for us to work with our Chinese colleagues and to learn from each other.

There were several topics used that helped in our teaching experience.

These topics were part of helping to improve oral English skills as well as working together to develop appropriate teaching strategies and techniques.

Each of us had a different approach in our classes that made the classes very diverse and allowed the teacher/students to experience different methodologies. With the diversity, it is hoped that the teacher/students were exposed to a wide range of possibilities for their teaching.

David 2009