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# Humanizing Education in an Age of Apathy and Greed

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Tea Break (10:40-11:00)			
11:00	<b>Keynote Speech ( 國 際 會 議 廳 )</b> 主持人：尚惠芳主任(義守大學應用英語學系) 演講者：Prof. Roberto E. Bahruth (Boise State University, USA) 12:00 講題：Humanizing Education in an Age of Apathy and Greed		
Lunch Break 12:00-13:30 (行政大樓 6F 研討室)			
	<b>Session 1: Socio-Culture</b> (國際會議廳) 主持人：卓惇慧副教務長 (Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages) • Ching-Yu Hsieh 謝菁玉 (National Cheng Kung University) Martina Ebi (Tübingen University, Germany) Teaching the Concept of "Gold" and "Silver" in English and German • Mao-Lin Jhou 周茂林 (Kainan University) Fang-Li Wang 王芳醴 (Hsiuping Institute of Technology) A Study of New Varieties of English in the Tourism Sector—An Indian English Case • Ching-Jen Chang 張慶仁 (I-Shou University) A Critical Reflection on the Liberation of Gender Ideology	<b>Session 2: Translation</b> (第一研討室) 主持人：廖招治教授 (National Chiayi University) • Gong-Way Lee 李恭蔚 (Chang Jung Christian University) 影視字幕與配音的翻譯：理論與實務探討 • Yen-Cheng Kuo 郭晏辰 Po-Ting Fang 方柏婷 (I-Shou University) Multimedia Application on Translation Studies: Reshaping Reading Experience through Multi-translating <i>Animal Farm</i> • Ying-Chia Wang 王穎嘉 Po-Ting Fang 方柏婷 (I-Shou University) Must be a Translator of Poetry a Poet? Translating Taiwan Modern Poem into English—take Xi Mu-rong's Poem as Example	<b>Session 3: Interpretation</b> (第二研討室) 主持人：莊永山主任 (Kun Shan University) • Sally Wu 吳宜錚 James Wu 吳信鋒 (Chang Jung Christian University) When Nervousness Gets You—A Case Study on More Efficient Interpretation Learning through Stress Management • Ching-Chung Guey 桂慶中 Ying-Ying Cheng 鄭鶯鶯 (I-Shou University) An Integrative Model of Teaching Interpretation
13:30			
14:30			
Tea Break (14:30-14:50)			
	<b>Session 4: Assessment</b> (國際會議廳) 主持人：陳佳吟主任 (Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages) • Hui-Chin Lin 林慧菁 (PhD, Texas A&M University) Shih-Chieh Chien 簡士捷 (PhD, University of Cambridge) An Exploration into Equitable Language Assessment • Chu-Hua Hsieh 謝竺樺 Yue-Yun Liu 劉玥妤 (I-Shou University) A Case Study of Application of Portfolio Assessment to English Reading	<b>Session 5: Language Learning</b> (第一研討室) 主持人：許世英教授 (National Kaohsiung Marine University) • Rouh-Jii Wu 吳若己 (National Kaohsiung Marine University) A case study on Project-based Language Learning • Ya-Huei Shiu 許雅惠 I-Lin Fu 傅儀琳 Yea-Ru Tsai 蔡雅茹 (I-Shou University) An Exploration of EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) • Mo Reddad 雷莫罕 (I-Shou University) A Learner-centered Instructional Model to Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)	<b>Session 6: Language Learning</b> (第二研討室) 主持人：張淑芬主任 (Tainan University of Technology) • Chao-Chih Liao 廖招治 (National Chiayi University) English Summer Camps by American and NCYU ESC Volunteers • Yea-Ru Tsai 蔡雅茹 Yu-Miao Yang 楊玉妙 I-Huwa Lai 賴怡華 (I-Shou University) Exploring the Effects of CMS-assisted Strategy Instruction on Reading Strategy Use of EFL Learners
14:50			
15:50			

## **Humanizing Education in an Age of Apathy and Greed**

**Roberto Bahruth**

Department of Bilingual Education, Boise State University, Idaho, USA

“If you’re not outraged, you’re not paying attention!” Bumper sticker of the 1990s.

I want to begin by recognizing that the ideas I will address here may not be recognizable to most, but they are critical to all. I am aware of a long history of people who were persecuted, murdered, dismissed, or ignored because their declarations were not convenient to the power structures of their day. Galileo was put in jail because his ideas were threatening to the status quo. His integrity required that he be an honest scientist despite the consequences and he would not be silent. I don’t claim to be a Galileo, but I would say that a world centered on capitalism and greed is a lower expression of our human potential than a world centered on honesty and humanity, accompanied by a profound respect for the environment.

I have found myself in this situation often in my career, where I am critical of what seems to be accepted as normal to many of my colleagues. I am also aware of the consistent pattern of these same colleagues finally appreciating the arguments I raise, usually years later, when the predictions I make become too obvious to ignore any longer. In 2000, I gave a keynote in Taipei where I argued for a paradigm shift in teaching languages, with an emphasis on the moral development of learners who leave our classrooms, with an appreciation for their environment and fellow human beings. In 2006, I returned to Taipei to emphasize directly the connections between education and the agenda of globalization destroying our shared environment. Later that same year, at Sun Yat-sen University, I argued even more directly about the politics of language teaching. All teaching is political, either for what is included or for what is omitted from the curriculum. In a gathering here at I Shou University, I spoke of our need to learn how to speak human.

Human beings are not born greedy or apathetic. These are learned behaviors, and as such, they can be unlearned. Most recently, I worked with English learners at Wenzao College and they actively engaged in humanizing activities, and displayed an ability to respond in profound ways to the critical pedagogical space we shared. Through a pedagogy of invitation, every student in the class spoke during the activities. They volunteered to read aloud their final papers in front of their classmates and one of their professors. The way in which they responded through what they wrote was impressive and deeply human. I am confident that the lessons we learned together will not be forgotten. When lessons become a meaningful part of our lives I

use a term to describe the phenomenon. It is a radical term I call learning!

Over the years, I have seen wonderful examples of openness to more critical issues that affect us all. I have also seen responses to environmental concerns taking place on Taiwan. Education is central to stopping the damaging cultural practices that are exacerbating global warming. This year we have all been made aware of the damage caused by typhoons, earthquakes and tidal waves around the world. If we are not paying attention, eventually Mother Nature will remind us of the wasteful and disrespectful ways globalization is destroying delicate balances.

I wish to argue here for a shift in the pathology of western societies away from the accumulation of an abstract wealth made of paper and possessions and toward a lifestyle reflecting balance and sustainability. As more and more societies become globalized, the sustainability of the "for profit" mentality increasingly reveals crisis and impending doom. From global warming to the recent failures of huge corporations affecting the global economy, it is difficult to ignore the interconnectedness of all disciplines from Tourism, to Communication, to Applied English, as well as to the other academic departments beyond this college. We need to consider not just what content a student encounters in our programs, but what type of human being is developing in our classes.

Harvard School of Business has produced a long list of M.B.A. graduates who became the leaders of many of the companies bankrupted under their management and now relying on government bailouts financed by taxpayers. Ethics courses are electives in the programs of many business schools, leading to graduates with content area knowledge, but without the moral foundation necessary to do the right thing. Alan Greenspan, architect of the American economy for two decades, said the only thing he hadn't thought of in his calculations was the capacity of CEOs to destroy their own companies for profit! The current global economic crisis is a blatant example of runaway greed, now impossible to ignore.

Apathy and greed have been among humans throughout time, but not among all humans. There have always been altruistic humans in every society - these are humans we admire and remember such as Lao Tzu, Mother Teresa, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. - and entire communities of subsistence cultures have existed without basing their reality upon the accumulation of possessions. In fact, these balanced societies are gift cultures and live in nature and not at odds with it. We only have to look to the eastern side of this island to see prime examples of the balanced lifestyles of ancient, subsistence cultures.

I want to show how the disciplines might be separated in Universities now, but should be united in the broader goal to graduate students who are neither apathetic, nor greedy. The necessary skills to address the problems we now face - due to

runaway greed of the powerful few coupled with the apathy of the masses - will need to include humanizing ethics, critical and creative thinking. These skills are not measured by standardized tests and they cannot be learned through memorization. Passive students remain passive once they are incorporated into the society surrounding our post secondary educational institutions. The many fine examples of altruistic human beings are throughout history and our students should not only learn of the ways they lived and expressed higher notions of humanity, but also the rich satisfaction they achieved by living moral lives. Presently, the distractions of accumulation do little to promote rewarding lifestyles. The United States of America has one of the highest indexes of unhappiness among the industrialize nations.

Historical acceleration has never been faster than in the age of the microchip. A tree that took a hundred years or more to grow can be chopped down in ten minutes. It is a pace that undermines the laws of nature. More and more parents are burying their children because of war, suicide, disease, malnutrition, and crime: all plagues of unhealthy societies and damaged cultures. The pace and stress of modern life leave little room for reflection or development of the ability to make connections. The bombardment of popular culture provides a wide and ever-renewing display of distractions that keep us from understanding the consequences of our actions, and our ability to think and act creatively. Add to this the stress and pace of academic programs filled with tests that require a defensive response of cramming to pass tests, and it should be increasingly evident that what is critical is what is being left out simply because it is difficult to teach and to measure. Cell phones, text messaging, email, Facebook and other amusing attractions amount to a web of distractions. The success of cram schools demonstrates how far we have strayed from true and meaningful education. The motivation of these schools is profit, not the wellbeing of the students and society. Universities should respond, not by imitating the cram schools, but by presenting the threat of a good example. Meaningful and useful educational experiences should engage students in pedagogical discussions promoting the development of skills they will need to address the problems we all now face as a result of the dance between the greedy and the apathetic.

Splitting morphemes or memorizing verb conjugations in these times is a major distraction equivalent to rearranging the chairs on the deck of the Titanic. Distraction is the tool of preference for dishonest people. Thieves use distraction to steal; politicians use it to keep us from learning the truth; and we have come to see how CEOs of major corporations use distractions to bankrupt their companies while extracting huge personal profits. The tests used to measure language proficiency do little to encourage the pedagogical shift necessary to nurture students who are aware, responsible and responsive to the serious problems they must now face. These

problems stem from a “duckling stuffing” approach to school, which has been the dominant paradigm for over one hundred years. The shift in pathology away from greed and apathy will require a major pedagogical shift towards critical education. It will require a shift away from the technicism of teaching that resembles factory work driven by standardized tests and skill, drill and kill grammar lessons. It will require an investment in the intellectualization of teaching as a transformative practice, if we are not to be guilty of reproducing the pathologies of greed and apathy. What I am proposing may seem idealistic, but I can assure you I have been doing this type of cultural work for over twenty-five years with great satisfaction and a clear conscience. Now let’s consider a few ways my argument relates to the three disciplines in this college. I would be open to discuss a wider range of creative approaches at the end of my talk.

Tourism depends on safety; the personal safety that includes eating healthy food, walking around without worrying about thieves, and not fearing contamination of acid rain or the ravages of typhoons. It also depends upon offering cultural experiences that make places like Taiwan unique. I don’t come here to eat at McDonalds. I want Taiwanese food. I want stinky tofu and excellent tea, sashimi, nu ro mien, won duen and baotze. As Taiwan is increasingly globalized and Americanized, these typical foods will disappear. Voting with our dollars, we should eat at the local restaurants to finance their survival. Every time we spend a dollar is a political act. I travel all around the world and I love coming to Taiwan. I am sure I would have loved it even more thirty years ago. Students could ask their parents about the changes they have witnessed; those they approve of and disapprove of and why. Tapping into the funds of knowledge of older citizens would provide students with a richer appreciation of their culture and traditions. These types of humanizing activities also foster connections between generations that are dissolving through the technological divide. Students working in tourism should also learn ways to educate visitors about the environmental issues on Taiwan. Visitors should leave Taiwan with a deeper appreciation for the biological diversity and the need to protect it. The greed of unsanitary conditions on the pig farms in Mexico, owned by a corporation in the United States, has led to the H1N1 swine flu, which has had a devastating effect on tourism and travel. Ultimately, in a globalized world, everything is connected and mismanagement anywhere affects people everywhere.

Communication departments also have a responsibility to teach students the difference between truth and lies. John Dewey and Ernest Hemingway were famous for insisting that Americans need to develop healthy “crap detectors.” Chomsky has long criticized journalists in America for engaging in a process of “manufacturing consent.” Journalism provides the distraction necessary for the dance of greed and



apathy. Presently, communication is about spectacularizing corruption scandals, the lives and deaths of movie stars, and natural catastrophes. These do little more than to provide a never-ending stream of distractions. Critical journalism would be vigilant before it is too late. The news jumps from one scandal or catastrophe to the next, but never asks the more important questions about what the root causes of these events might be. Where were the journalists while the H1N1 debacle was brewing in Mexico? Nor do journalists point out that most corrupt and greedy individuals are highly educated in technical skills, but obviously bankrupt in human skills.

Applied English departments can provide the juxtapositions of American cultures and Taiwanese cultures as students learn English, so they will develop a clearer understanding of what might be useful to embrace from American culture, but also what and how to protect what is wonderful about their own cultures. Learning a second language should never promote the betrayal of the cultures of our mother tongues. Learning the ways in which language is used to deceive rather than to inform would also lead to critical literacy skills necessary for fluent participation in critical citizenship. The ways in which metaphors are used in the English language, upon careful consideration and through discussions, would reveal the political agendas behind them. Inhumane euphemisms such as “ethnic cleansing” and “collateral damage” can be used as examples of how language is used to hide the truth. Generative themes of language and culture can support interdepartmental projects in Applied English to develop highlights of Taiwanese culture and traditions for the purposes of tourism. Critical literacy activities would help students to see the mechanisms of distraction in contemporary communication, while developing the skills to pose deeper questions to the human conditions that promote greed and apathy, as well as the implications obvious to many by now.

The ultimate irony of natural disasters is that they most directly affect populations from balanced, subsistence cultures that did not cause them. Fishing villages, and recently mountain villages in Eastern Taiwan, provide stark examples. Yet, if current trends of greed and apathy continue, eventually it will affect us all. To address these issues pedagogically is political, but to ignore them is politics of the worst kind.

I wonder when we will be able to declare openly that schools are not about producing more humane citizens without being called conspiracy theorists. Those who are benefiting from the system have themselves become so dehumanized that they demonize those of us who would aspire to loftier goals in education. It took four hundred years for the Catholic Church to officially recognize the work of Galileo. It is my hope that the pedagogical shift toward a humanizing pedagogy can occur at the pace of the microchip rather than at the pace of the industrial revolution upon which

our present education system was designed. It will require of us a moral outrage against greed, and not the continuation of apathy as a mechanism of conformity. Do not go gentle into that goodnight!

I want to end with a poem that captures the essence of our age.

**Loaves and Fishes by David Whyte**

This is not the age of information.

This is *not*

the age of information.

Forget the news,

and the radio,

and the blurred screen.

This is the time

of loaves

and fishes.

People are hungry,

and one good word is bread

for a thousand.

I offer my signature informed by the wisdom of your culture.

San yo san bao

Er yo er bao.