Cool English New Content Launch and Reading King Award Presentation

(Courtesy of Shen, Yin-Chen at the Di at Division of Junior High, Elementary School and Preschool Education)

To provide quality English education resources to primary and secondary school students to help them break through the limitations of time and space when learning English, and to construct a learner-centered learning process, and provide students in rural areas with rich English learning resources, the K-12 Education Administration has commissioned National Taiwan Normal University to build an Online English Learning Platform "Cool English." Since the platform was officially launched on June 25, 2015, more than 120,000 people have registered and the number of users has reached 680,000. The team has continued developing interesting and challenging diverse English online courses, and held a presentation on new content on April 30, 107 and

invited the winners of the "Reading King 2018" contest to the event to receive the award.

"Cool English" contains various sections, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary/grammar, games, basic learning, and the section for the Comprehensive Assessment Program for Junior High School Students, with the aim to develop students' comprehensive English skills through diverse content. To encourage teachers and students at national primary and secondary schools to use this learning platform, the K-12 Education Administration organized the "Reading King" contest this February and presented the award at today's press conference. The student participants had to read the teaching material "Pleasant Book House" which was launched in the 2017 on the platform, and complete the quiz sets for each book. At the end, students with a perfect score and those who answered 100% of the questions were drawn randomly; 25 students were drawn for the "Reading King" award this year for the primary school group and secondary school group, as well as in general and remote areas, respectively, and a total of 100 students brought home the award.

The "Pleasant Book House" is the largest online English picture book section on the current domestic online learning platform, with the basic area and advanced area in both primary and secondary education curricula. For the primary school curriculum, the team translated the content of picture books into Chinese sentence by sentence, while the team added Chinese notes to over 1,200 words at the level of junior high school education for the secondary education curriculum. All the online picture books have been remade into page-turning audio e-books to allow students to learn the pronunciation of vocabulary at the same time. Each picture book is accompanied by multiple types of reading quiz questions so that students can test themselves to achieve the best learning results.

Furthermore, the press conference on "Cool English Online Learning Platform" presented four highlight courses, including "VOA Movie English" in the listening area,

"Playing Songs to Learn English" and "English Village" in the game area, and "Grammar debugging system" in the grammar area.

The "VOA Movie English" section based on "English @ the Movies" of Voice of America is designed for the junior education curriculum. This section guides and teaches students the phrases and slang in popular cinema movies. Each video is a two-minute, easy-to-understand clip with lively and interesting content. The team handpicked videos and post-edited Chinese-English subtitles and matching quiz questions to allow students to practice listening while learning movie conversations. At the same time, students can review their learning effectiveness through tests.

The "Playing Songs to Learn English" section is designed for the primary and secondary education curricula, respectively, with popular Western pop songs for junior high school students and children's songs suitable for elementary school students. In the process of listening to music, students must fill in the blanks of the lyrics in a timely manner to let the song continue. The words for the fill-in blanks for the junior high school students will not exceed the limit of the 1,200 words, and not exceed the limit 300 words for primary school students. Through this activity, students can practice English typing while listening to English; meanwhile, they are trained to understand the flow of the lyrics and be familiarized with the vocabulary. With music videos playing, it gets even more interesting; hence, since this section was launched, it has been popular with students.

"English Village" is an integrated all-around English learning game system. It aims to create multiple themed scenarios in a three-dimensional virtual environment to allow students to learn English in different scenarios any time. After entering a scenario, students can just move the mouse to an object, the English word of the object will appear with the English pronunciation of the word. In addition, students can record their own pronunciation and the system will use the speech recognition function to offer feedback on the pronunciation. In the scenarios, virtual characters are also designed to

talk to students through speech recognition technology. The game also assigns tasks to students; for example, students must recite a designated number of English words and collect designated objects before performing the next task, which is fun and challenging.

The "Online grammar debugging system" is developed by Professor Zhang Junsheng and his team from the Department of Computer Science at the National Tsing Hua University using artificial intelligence (AI) deep learning technology. AI applications have incorporated into various fields and become a trend nowadays, offering students education resources like online tutoring, breakthrough time and space, as well as financial constraints. The "Online grammar debugging system" addresses the dilemma, in which there no experts to help revise students' English essays. With this system, students can enter their finished English essays in the system anytime and anywhere, and it will detect any grammatical mistakes and correct them automatically, which is of great help to students' English writing practice.

The "Cool English" website provides nationwide primary and secondary students with year-round learning services, through which many children manage to enhance their English proficiency after school. Student Hsieh, from the Si-Jie Primary School at the Jiaosi Township, Yilan County, said: "This platform enhances your English skills in an interactive manner. You don't have to go to cram school; instead, you can learn and practice English at home, allowing those who don't like learning English to fall in love with it!" "I feel that English is not as difficult as before for me after using this platform, and my English ability has also increased significantly. Last year, I obtained a great result at an English written test, thanks to Cool English for launching many practice lessons and holding contests and activities. We are more motivated to learn English in a relaxing, happy, and stress-free way" said student Hsieh, from the Song Lin Primary School in the Xigang District, Tainan City. Student You from the Jian-shan Junior High School in New Taipei City Then noted: "I think Cool English is really great! The

animated videos in the listening area are very appealing to me. With the quizzes after watching the videos, I think the practice will improve our English ability. As for participating in this Reading King contest, although it took a long time to finish reading all the picture books, I got it done happily. The learning resources on Cool English are really abundant and interesting! "

The "Cool English - Online English Learning Platform" provides national primary and secondary school teachers and students with rich and diverse learning resources. The platform will continue to publicize the content of the online courses and features to accommodate more teachers and students through district explanation meetings, seed teacher workshops, and relevant events or contests to facilitate the promotion of the platform. Information with regard to any new event and activity will be posted on the "Cool English - Online English Learning Platform" (http://www.coolenglish.edu.tw/) and its Facebook fan page (https://www.facebook.com/coolenglsih/). Nationwide teachers and students are truly welcome to explore the fun of learning English online!