

SPRING VIEWS

Spring International Language Center

Littleton, Colorado

May 2020

Pandemic Brings Changes, Challenges to Students and Teachers

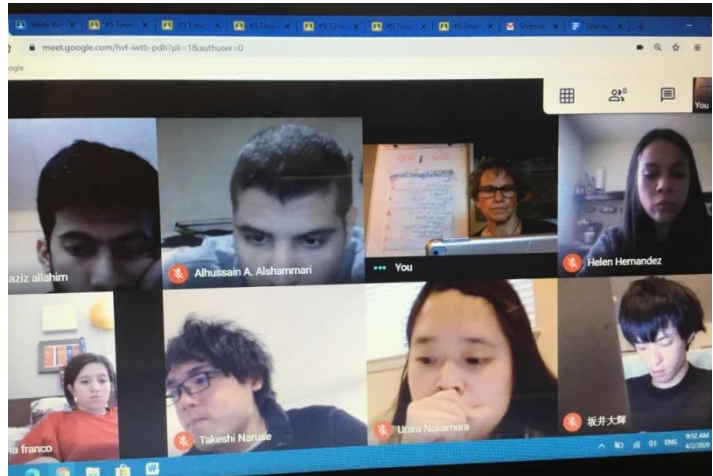
Spring International has never experienced a period quite like the Spring Term of 2020. Classes were held on line with instructors leading “face-to-face” lessons and students participating through lap-tops, tablets, or phones five hours a day. Being a scholarly community, it is not surprising that both students and teachers have learned many academic, as well as life lessons during this time. In the following paragraphs, the students from Carol Kok’s level 6 writing class are pleased to share insights gleaned from this unique experience.

Through this coronavirus experience, I have gained an understanding that education is critical for solving problems. The corona pandemic is a very difficult problem, but scientists learned about it, and that is the only way to find solutions. We have seen how science saved millions of people because of the policies pursued. These procedures were not known before. For example, in the past, when an infectious disease hit, many people died because they were ignorant of the disease and did not know the solutions. All problems, whether health-related, social, or economic can only be solved through education. Now we know the value of education, and we should be thankful for it. **Abdulaziz Allahim, Saudi Arabia**

I have learned that continuing to study from Japan is better than not studying at all. In March, many international students had to decide with their parents if they should stay in the U.S. or go back to their country. My family decided that I should go back to Japan, but I wanted to keep on learning English, so I went back to Japan, and I am studying at Spring on-line. If I had stopped learning English, I might have lost my English skills. That is what happened to my roommate. Two years ago, I had a roommate who was a Japanese student. He was a good student because his English skills were great. However, he visited my American host family after he had taken a winter vacation. While we were talking about something with my host family, sometimes he couldn’t understand. I was very surprised and very scared. After that I decided that even if I go back to Japan, I will keep on studying English. **Daiki Sakai, Japan**

Another lesson from Spring 2020 is that managing materials in a laptop is easier than in a notebook. Students get a mountain of papers when taking in-person classes. Sometimes it is difficult to manage this enormous amount of materials, but we can manage the materials easily with a laptop, and students never lose them. Additionally, students can use computer skills to organize the materials into class folders. Even though notebooks and papers are still used while learning on-line, managing materials in a laptop is more time efficient. These are valuable life skills that can benefit us not only as students, but also in our future careers. **Takeshi Naruse, Japan**

This term was also a great time for improving English skills through added time spent with my host family. Taking online classes has eliminated my commute time, so I could increase my conversation time with my host family and neighbors. It’s ironic that despite having to isolate because of the coronavirus, my host family and I talk with our neighbors more than ever. We take a chair outside on the front porch and start a conversation. When my English is wrong, such as grammar and pronunciation, they point out my mistakes and I practice my English. As you can see, I can improve my English and learn new words from them by talking with my host family. If you want to improve your English more, I recommend staying at home with a host family. **Urara Nakamura, Japan**



Although on-line learning provides a learning platform, I am gaining an awareness of the drawbacks of online learning. One of the drawbacks of online learning is reduced social interaction. Many miss the interactive atmosphere offered by a classroom where there is a relationship between the student, their friends, and teachers. As a result of the lack of social interaction, motivation begins to fail. The monotonous daily routine during online studying is a big negative for motivation. We spend 5 to 6 hours every day studying in front of the computer screen in our homes which have become our classrooms. As a result, some problems have caused mental and physical stress. Learning online is not the best choice, but for now it is the only one. **Alhussain Alshammari, Saudi Arabia** (Cont. p.2)

Pandemic...

Recognizing respect and communication as critical elements of successful relationships is another lesson learned during this time. Living with your loved ones in quarantine can be quite difficult since everyone is sharing the same space, and no one can get out of the house. Consequently, it can become stressful, and hard to keep the peace. I have heard that some couples are even getting a divorce because they cannot stand each other anymore. No one said it would be easy, but it is not impossible either. In order to overcome these circumstances, what we need is respect for oneself and for those in our social environment combined with good communication skills. For instance, if you see that you are the one cleaning the house, and your loved one is watching TV, what would be more useful; screaming in their face that they need to collaborate with the chores, or sitting together, talking peacefully about what you're feeling, and planning a schedule of assigned chores? Unless you tell them, no one knows what you are feeling or thinking, so communication is the key here. Also, remember that in most cases, people will answer you with the same tone and intention that you gave them. Therefore, in stressful situations, breathe first, think before talking, and then say it with respect. **Helen Hernandez, Colombia**

In conclusion, this term I have started appreciating things that I had taken for granted. Especially the simplest things like receiving visitors in my apartment, going for a walk, or being able to have in-person classes seem valuable to me now. This situation and these changes have also helped me to appreciate all the work that my teachers do and the great learning that I receive from them. In addition, I have discovered the importance of socialization for my development as a person, and my relationship with the environment for my peace of mind. Actually, when this situation ends, I think that not only I, but everyone will have changed in some way. We will be more conscious of the many things that have been taken for granted. **María Franco, Venezuela**



Changes and Challenges

The biggest challenge that I am facing these days is controlling myself, so I won't go crazy. You will wonder how that is. I am here alone trying to study English while I have been tired of studying after I graduated from university in Saudi Arabia four years ago. Then when I came here, I was homesick for two months. After that, started to enjoy living here, and I made many friends. Actually, I like living here with these people. They made my life easy and beautiful. Suddenly COVID19 appeared and stuck us in our homes. I am a different person now. I am a positive man but that is going to make me crazy. I am not afraid of this virus, but I am afraid to transmit it to another person. Because of that I have locked myself at home. I hope everything goes back as before. **Faisal Alsulaiman, Saudi Arabia**

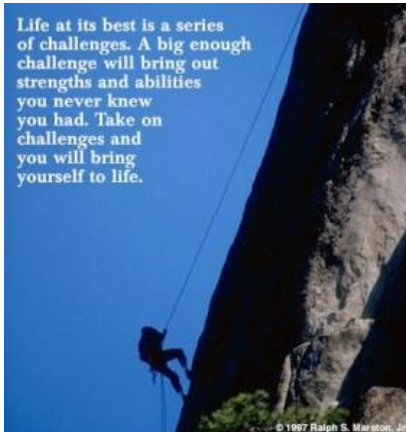
The biggest challenge I am facing today is to stay positive with our current situation. I came to the USA to learn English, to meet new people, and to discover a new culture. However, the COVID-19 changed my plans. Now we have online classes, and sometimes it is complicated to stay focused on the class and speak with only virtual people. In addition, my family is far away from me and I am worried about them. I would like to be with them, even if I know I could not do more. However, I think this catastrophe can teach us some lost values like sharing and helping each other. More than that, we realize we live in consumer society and a lot of our stuff is just a privilege. We do not need to have two cars, three TVs or change our smartphone every year. I hope most of us will realize the chance to be alive, and enjoy our family and simple things of life. **Laeticia Gilliéron, Switzerland**

I think the biggest challenge I face now is coronavirus because the epidemic has spread to the whole world, especially the United States now which has the most patients in the world. Every day I see news reports that the number of sick people keeps increasing. This is a terrible thing, and there are many people who have lost their jobs. Although the government has relayed subsidies, few people get subsidies. For me, the academic issue was the one that affected me the most. Since many schools now choose to go online or close school directly, I am more worried that my university start time will be delayed or even canceled, which may disrupt my entire plan. This is the last thing I want to happen. Furthermore, because of the epidemic, we need to stay at home and rarely go out. This is not a bad thing, but sometimes I find it boring to stay at home for a long time. So I think coronavirus is the biggest challenge I am facing now. **YingTong, Liu, China**

The biggest challenge I am facing today is preparing for university admission. Sometimes I get tired which is very common because we are humans. When I get tired, I always imagine myself to be over there where my goal is. However, I would tell every child, and also to myself, that when you have a difficult time even though your journey is a long distance, you can definitely get some rest during the distance, but don't you dare to give up. **Aunnop Kaewphanna, Thailand**

In actuality, everyone suffers from problems and must deal with them with reason in order to solve them properly. Also, every person has a weakness. This is an instinct since we were born into this world. An example now is the whole world facing a dangerous virus called COVID-19. We must take care and caution in order to overcome this disease. We must never compromise and come up with the utmost necessity for the sake of our safety. The relief is close. We must be optimistic and not believe the rumors circulating over the Internet that lead to fears in our hearts. **Mohammed Ahmed Aljasim, Saudi Arabia**

Changes and Challenges...



The changes and challenges in my life have helped me to grow. From a very young age I learned that life is always in constant change and you need adapt it. My challenge most important is know myself ,put on my new habits in me ,know my learning ability like learn English, improve my body and my mind. All this takes time however these months there is a virus in the world and although everything is very boring, and not can my family to visit me I am super busy all day because change my perspective this moment is perfect for instruct me and to keep me focused in my new language, create new habits and strengthen those that I have. The things that value most in this moment in my life are my personality because I am very curious and spontaneous these feature have made me make mistake ,learn and I got up ,Also I value mucho to my daughter because she teach me to be a better human and I try hard more for correct me and I give her my best examples. I think that the more time passes I teach my daughter that despite the distance and difficulties may everybody have, there are opportunities that are waiting for you to see them. In my opinion everyone changed but few people accept the challenges of their life. I just

hope to enjoy every change and challenge that life gives me because I want to continue learning.

Maria Romano, Mexico

In 2020, there are many people who have a big change in their lives because the coronavirus has affected people and businesses all around the world. We can't go back to normal. We don't believe what is happening. For example, most important, sports are very popular in Colorado. Many people like to go out for exercise: hiking, biking, walking, but now they must stay at home. It's very difficult because people have to change to exercise at home. They cannot feel the fresh air and the bright sunshine. We don't know about the coronavirus because everything feels new. So we just stay at home to reduce the infection. Restaurants are closed, so we can't enjoy fresh food in the restaurant.

Finally, I thank all the medical staff for protecting our lives. We can be successful. The biggest change in my life is the difficulties I must face and solve. **Khalid Alfari, Saudi Arabia.**

Level One Writes: Faith and Hope for the Future

Important Things in My Life

I have many important things in my life. First is Islam because this is my religion. Next are my country Kuwait and my family. I am in the USA now. My family is far, so I miss them! Next year, I hope go to university in America. And I hope Corona virus is finished! **Dhari Alramadan, Kuwait**

A Different Birthday

My birthday this year was very different! I live in the U.S. now, and my family is far away. Also, the Corona virus is very difficult, so my birthday was not at home. In my country, my friends usually give me a party, but it's a surprise. They give me a cake and a gift. For example, maybe they will give me a new coffee cup. This year, I stayed home because of Corona virus. My host family gave me a card and a cake. They sang "Happy Birthday," and we ate cake together. I felt very happy. I said to my host family: Thank you! Next year, I hope my birthday is in Saudi Arabia with my family.

Faisal Buri, Saudi Arabia

Faith Is Important Value

I have many things value in my life, but one thing most important is faith. Besides that, I usually balance my life with a few values which I used to study when I lived and worked at Yakyo Company in Viet Nam. First, I always put good health first because it is a positive energy. I often develop my mindset and good habits. I also do not forget about my purpose in life and my passion because it helps me have a lot of life skills, and my image becomes much better each day. Next, I try to have good principles and self-discipline, so I will surely have a good job in the future in the U.S. I hope that, when I have a lot of money, I will help many poor people and my family. Finally, I believe in myself and my values because it always brings luck and motivation for me in life. I am proud of my Catholic faith and my values because it helps me think and act stronger, and I also gain better results in my life. **Thu Nguyen, Viet Nam**



Spring Views is published each term to highlight the emerging skills of its writers from level one, beginning, to level six, advanced. Edited by Connie Shoemaker

Celebrating Our 40th Year!



Let's Celebrate Our Hope of Being Together Again!

Spring

We are always beginning again.

*Something within us
or about us changes.*

*It is time
to be moving on.*

Change is seldom easy.

*A friendship, a favorite spot,
a familiar lifestyle slips away,
and nothing is the same.*

*May God grace
all our turning points
with patience and peace.*

Miriam Therese Winter