



张思路：商学院与教育梦

Zhang Silu: Business School and the Drama Dream

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Birth of DreaMaker

The birth of DreaMaker is linked to a few key moments in Zhang Silu's life. First, he did his EMBA at CEIBS between 2007 and 2009; then his son, Zhang Jiajun, appeared in *After Shock*, a Feng Xiaogang film; and the final piece of the puzzle was when he met Ying Tong (then co-director of the movie and later his partner). Over the years Zhang had been in high-tech industries, he was a shareholder of multiple companies, but he had no links to business education until he met Ying. "CEIBS sharpened my business acumen. When Ying found me and talked about dreams of starting a new business, at first I was only going to provide him with some help in business planning and some networking; but as we talked more, I began to incorporate what I learnt at CEIBS into how I looked at the problem. Finally I decided to work with him to create an English-language drama training centre for children," says Zhang.

He was very clear about his long-term goal. He didn't want to create an incubator for child stars, "because the chance for a child to become a star is really slim, and we must focus on all the children, not just the handful that may become stars." He was also convinced that he shouldn't spend a lot of time trying to reinvent the wheel by developing new courses for the Centre. "That would require a whole long process of experimentation, of sketching, practicing, improving and theorising," he explains. He was determined to leverage existing domestic and foreign courses and, after consulting many channels, Helen O'Grady Drama Academy caught his eye. Founded in 1979, with its headquarters in England, the Academy has over 1,500 branches in 27 countries and regions, and has trained 6,000,000 kids over the years.

"Helen O'Grady Drama Academy satisfies customers' needs," notes Zhang. "This brand has a few key characteristics: first, it has history, which means value and credibility; second, it operates in so many countries, testament to its ability to work across cultures and boundaries. In the process of project planning, I used Porter's Five Forces Model which I learnt at CEIBS, carefully weighed the risks of potential competitors and

replacement products. From this analysis I insisted on being the sole agency for Helen O'Grady in China. That was the precondition of the talks then. If what I learnt at CEIBS hadn't helped me sort out my train of thought, I wouldn't have been able to think through that entire process."

In 2010, Zhang's entrepreneurial project in education officially started. He gave it a catchy name: DreaMaker.

“In DreaMaker classes, imagination is a big deal. It's not unusual for teachers to have students act out scenes as they imagine them.”

Letting Children Direct Their Own Lives

In DreaMaker classes, imagination is a big deal. It's not unusual for teachers to have students act out scenes as they imagine them. They picture themselves, for example, playing on the beach, the waves splashing their bodies, and their imagination is so vivid they can smell the saltiness of sea water. Then they must act out these scenes. "This is a kind of warm-up activity, and an exploration of nature through acting," explains Zhang. "Children are very happy in class, like they're playing house."

DreaMaker trains children aged 4 to 18. They're subdivided into pre-school workshops for 4 to 6 year olds, junior primary courses for those aged 7 to 9, senior primary courses for the ones between 10 and 12, and acting courses for those aged 13 to 18. Each lesson includes two drama classes and a stage art class. Stage art classes teach prop making, costume design, vocals, dancing, and chorus – usually to support plays being put on. Drama classes are made up of six parts. In addition to the basics, there's 1) speech which includes exercises for standard English pronunciation and

卓美诞生

卓美教育的诞生与张思路(EMBA 2007)生命中的一些机缘巧合有关。首先,2007-2009年他在中欧国际工商学院学习EMBA课程;其次,他的儿子张家骏参与了冯小刚导演的电影《唐山大地震》的拍摄,他也因此结识了后来的创业伙伴、当时的电影副导演英童。在此之前,张思路从事的是高科技行业,已是几家公司的股东,与教育行业并无交集。“中欧锤炼了我的商业感觉,当时英童找我聊创业理想,起初我只想为他做些商业策划、提供些人脉资源,但是在一次次讨论中,我开始运用从中欧学到的理论知识去思考这个问题,最终决定与他共同创办一家少儿英语戏剧培训中心。”

首先,他不愿去创办一个打造童星的机构,“因为成为童星的概率是微乎其微的,我们要将关注点放在大多数孩子身上。”而企业家的理性也让他不会去尝试自主研发课程,“因为教育课程从诞生、实践、改良到形成理论,是一个漫长的摸索过程”。那么就必须要借鉴国内外一些优秀的东西,经过多方考察,海伦·奥格雷迪国际戏剧学院(Helen O'Grady Drama Academy)进入了他的视野。这家教育机构成立于1979年,总部位于英国,在英、美、澳、加、日、新等27个国家和地区设有1500多家分支机构,迄今接受相关课程培训的孩子累计达600多万名。

“海伦·奥格雷迪戏剧学院满足了消费者的需求。”张思路分析道,“这个品牌有几个特性:第一,它有历史,有历史传统的东西就有存在价值,不需要太多论证;第二,它在全球那么多国家推广,证明它是可以跨文化、跨地域的。在项目策划的过程中,我运用了中欧课堂上学到的‘波特五力模型’来思考问题,认真权衡了潜在竞争者和替代品等方面的风险,因此我坚持要取得海伦·奥格雷迪在中国的独家代理权,这是当时谈判的先决条件。如果不是中欧将我的思路梳理清晰,我自己肯定想不到这些。”

2010年,张思路在教育领域的创业项目正式启动,他给了它一个朗朗上口的名字——卓美教育。

让孩子做自己的人生导演

在空旷的教室里,由老师带领一群孩子进行场景想象,是卓美课堂上经常发生的情景。例如,让孩子们想象在沙滩上玩耍,海浪泼溅到身上,闻到海水腥咸的味道,孩子们要将这些细节表演出来。“这是一种热身运动,从表演的角度来说就是打开天性。”张思路解释道,“孩子们在课堂上非常开心,他们就像过家家一样。”



卓美的授课对象是4-18岁的孩子,因为各年龄段孩子的接受能力不同,又细分为4-6岁学前工作坊、7-9岁小学低年级课程、10-12岁小学高年级课程、13-18岁表演课程。每次课程包含两节戏剧课和一节舞台艺术课。戏剧课包括六个部分,除了热身运动之外,还有发音练习,即练习英文标准发音和演讲技巧;形体韵律,即通过肢体动作训练孩子的专注力、观察力和想象力;戏剧表演,即融合表演、英语听说和团队协作的综合能力训练;情景对话,即练习英文口语表达、想象力、创造力和沟通能力;以及幽默游戏。舞台艺术课包括道具制作、服装设计、声乐、舞蹈、合唱等,通常是要配合演出的剧目。

在期末时孩子们会有一个短剧汇演。在这场文艺汇演中,演员是不分AB角的,每个孩子的戏份都差不多,“这不是一场呈现结果的大戏,重要的是潜移默化的学习过程。”张思路表示,“长久以来,我们中国人喜欢将素质教育等同于艺术教育,其实不尽然。卓美的教育理念,是让孩子通过戏剧学习变得更加自信,拥有良好的沟通技巧、充沛的想象力和创造力。尽管我们也是一家英文教育机构,但我们的课程是让孩子们在未来更加懂得把握自己,做自己的人生导演。”

speech skills; 2) movement which involves training the children in areas such as being focused, observation skills, and imagination through physical actions; 3) improvisation which includes comprehensive exercises including acting, English listening and speaking as well as teamwork; 4) scene starter, which involves training of oral expression, imagination, creativity, and communicative ability; and 5) an overall course that pulls all these together.

At the end of the term there's a performance of short plays during which each child's role is equally important. "This is not a grand play presenting the final results, but a process of subtle learning, which is more important," explains Zhang. "For a long time, we Chinese have tended to interpret quality-oriented education as art education. In fact that's not necessarily the case. DreaMaker's philosophy on education is to make children more confident through the learning of drama, and they should have good communication skills, boundless imagination and ample creativity. We are an agency that teaches English, but our courses are designed to help children become the directors of their own lives by teaching them how to know and conduct themselves better in the future."

Businessman & Educator

It's clear that Zhang has his own firm beliefs in education through drama, and that his studies at CEIBS helped to shape his pragmatic business style. "The transformation of my career has everything to do with my studies at CEIBS. When I began planning DreaMaker, I was beginning my CEIBS EMBA. The lessons I learned in class helped me sort out my entrepreneurial experience, gave me systematic and theoretical training in business matters, and changed my way of thinking and planning from an entrepreneurial perspective," he says.

"Now I have two roles: I founded DreaMaker and, as a businessman, have been nurturing its development. I have to analyse the profit model for our products, and ensure that our company enjoys strong growth. At the same time, I'm an educator, and in the process of promoting our

school I earned a lot of respect. Because of DreaMaker, many children have grown from being timid kids to confident and graceful actors standing on the stage, and the transformation has been really moving."

So what's next for the company?

"In the years ahead I will develop DreaMaker step by step. First I will cultivate the Beijing market, and then enter other cities. I'm making other business plans as well. Now I'm planning to build a children's theme-experience-centre with a famous children's TV host. This is a very promising development project in commercial real estate, and DreaMaker's training centres can move in there." At this point, he pauses and adds with a laugh, "See? This shows you that I'm not an idealistic educator, but a practical businessman. Yet, at the back of my mind is the thought that if DreaMaker becomes more successful, more people will come to realise that drama is good for children, and the kids will thank DreaMaker when they grow up."

Read on for more.

TheLINK: DreaMaker's lessons are now all delivered in English. Are there any plans to teach the courses in Chinese?

Zhang: We're now teaching solely in English to ensure that Helen O'Grady Drama Academy's courses can be presented in their original form. But DreaMaker has made certain changes in the curriculum for Asian kids, particularly Chinese kids, making it less difficult without compromising the integrity of the course. In fact, many children have a good command of English, and language learning is just part of our courses. Our main objective is, after all, to enhance kids' overall qualities through learning drama. Of course, drama is a good way of learning English. It teaches through entertainment, and is vivid and lively. Many parents have this aim in mind when they send their children to our centre.

As for courses in Chinese, they have these courses in Taiwan and in the future, when demand is greater, we'll consider developing them. We won't simply translate English courses into Chinese, but will develop courses most suitable for Chinese kids, and we'll invite Chinese teachers for them. However, I feel we haven't reached that level of demand yet.

生意人or教育者

当张思路如数家珍地谈起卓美的教育理念时，他俨然是一位教育工作者了。或者说，他的身上兼具了生意人的精明和教育者的虔诚，他对于戏剧教育有着坚定的信念，而商学院的学习给予了他务实的风格和清晰的视野。“我事业的转型与中欧息息相关。在着手策划卓美时，我刚开始在中欧学习，中欧帮助我梳理了创业经验，给了我系统化、理论化的商业训练，改变了我的思维方式和对创业模式的构想。”

“现在我对自己的定位是双重的：我从一个生意人的角度去创造和发展卓美，我要分析产品的盈利模式，确保公司发展；然而我也是个教育者，在推广的过程中收获了很多尊重。因为卓美，很多孩子从胆怯拘谨到落落大方地站上舞台，其间的改变令人感动。”

“未来我想一步一个脚印地将卓美发展好，将北京的市场做透，再向其他城市拓展。我也在勾画别的商业蓝图，现在正与一位著名少儿节目主持人策划筹建儿童主题体验中心，这是商业地产中很有前景的发展项目，而卓美的培训中心也可以入驻那里。”谈到这里，张思路笑道，“你看，这就表明我不是一个理想化的教育工作者，还是一个生意人。但如果卓美做得好的话，就会有更多人知道，戏剧确实能够为孩子带来益处，我想那些孩子长大后也会感谢卓美的。”

《TheLINK》：目前卓美教育的所有课程均采用英文授课，既然是以素质教育为出发点，那么未来是否会考虑突破语言的藩篱，以中文来教授课程呢？

目前我们采取全英文授课，是为了确保海伦·奥格雷迪国际戏剧学院的课程能够原汁原味被推广出来，但卓美为亚洲孩子，尤其是中国孩子在教程上进行了一些调整，减少了语言上的障碍。其实，现在很多孩子的英文都很棒，语言只是学习的一部分，我们的目的还是通过戏剧来拓宽孩子各方面的素质。戏剧是学习英语的好方式，它寓教于乐、形象生动，很多家长也是怀着这个目的送孩子过来的。

至于中文教程，目前中国台湾地区是有的，未来一旦需求被激发出来，我们也会考虑开发中文课程。我们不会简单地将英文教材翻译成中文，而是会研发出最适合中国孩子的课程，并请中国老师来教。但我感觉目前整个市场的需求还没有那么强烈。

《TheLINK》：卓美的戏剧教育理念应该说是“舶来品”，而近些年来，中国的主流教育界有“国学复兴”的势头，如提倡学生们去背诵《论语》《弟子规》等国学经典，您个人如何看待这股风潮，它是否会对卓美的发展有不利影响？

国学中有很多经典的内容，它们能够陶冶性情、培养品格，是值得传承的。学习中国国学与学习西方戏剧是不同的教育方法，但目的是相同的，都是希望从内在引导孩子朝好的方向发展，从某种意义上来说是殊途同归。因此我认为国学教育与卓美的戏剧教育并不冲突，只是家长针对孩子的发展做出的不同选择。从事教育培训行业这些年，我也看到了一些做得很好的国学培训机构，我认为国学对于孩子的发展很有积极意义。

《TheLINK》：既懂外语又懂戏剧的人才是非常稀少的，卓美在吸纳人才方面有什么高招？

在中国的主流教育界，真正缺乏的还是优秀的教师。就我们这个领域而言，寻找到既懂外语、又懂管理和戏剧的人才确实很难，这也是卓美起步几年发展得比较艰辛的原因。好在我们的海外合作伙伴在教师方面给予了大力支持，他们有海外培训总监对课程和教师进行整体培训和指导。目前我们最需要的其实是对产品进行准确定位并发现目标客户的市场营销人员。

做少儿戏剧教育跨界幅度很大，行业门槛很高，但我认为这是件好事，使得我们培养出的人才更加专注于行业。明年我打算在北京开第十家培训中心，因为通过这些年的积累，我们在人才方面更加自信一些了。我相信随着时间的推移，会有越来越多的人加入卓美，吸纳人才的问题将迎刃而解。

《TheLINK》：卓美在2012年获得了著名导演冯小刚的投资，您觉得卓美赢得大导演青睐的主要原因是什么？

冯小刚导演很睿智，他丰富的人生经历和对于戏剧的深刻了解，让他非常认可卓美的教育理念和发展前景。他曾经说过，每个人都需要在不同的人生阶段扮演好自己的角色。那么在孩童时代学一点戏剧表演是大有裨益的。2012年，当我向他介绍卓美的教育理念和成功案例时，他当即表示决定投资；不仅如此，他还送自己的小女儿来卓美学习，他的太太徐帆也经常将我们介绍给她的朋友。

《TheLINK》：卓美教育未来有怎样的发展愿景？

目前我们打算先将北京市场做好，将一座城市纳入整体的市场规划，构造一个立体的布局，这样既能降低市场成本，也有利于精耕细作。但专注于北京市场并不妨碍我考察和发现潜在的新市场。例如，上海市场也很广阔，一旦市场规划合理，人才准备充分，我们就会着手进军上海市场。



TheLINK: DreaMaker's philosophy of drama education, as I see it, is an "import". But in recent years, mainstream Chinese education has seen a trend towards neo-national-studies, such as the encouragement of the recitation of *Di Zi Gui* and *Lun Yu*, among other traditional Chinese classics, by children. What's your opinion of this trend, and will it have an adverse effect on DreaMaker's development?

There's a lot in national studies that's good for the cultivation of admirable qualities, and is worth passing on to future generations. Learning traditional Chinese classics and learning Western drama are different approaches in education, but their aims are the same: to guide children in their growth towards being better persons. So they have the same aim in mind, though they may take different paths. I think national studies education and DreaMaker's drama education do not contradict one another. It's only a matter of choice on the part of parents. Over the years that I've been in the education business, I've seen some national studies training agencies that have done it quite well. I think national studies are positive for children's development.

TheLINK: There are really only a few teachers who know foreign languages and how to act at the same time. What measures have DreaMaker taken to attract such talents?

In mainstream Chinese education, truly outstanding teachers are still scarce. For our industry, it's really difficult to find talents that know foreign languages, and also have mastery over management and drama. That's been one of the challenges for DreaMaker over the past few years. Luckily, our foreign partner gave us staunch support in this, providing comprehensive training and guidance for courses and teachers. At present what we need most is marketing

personnel that can position our products in precise locations and reach our target customers.

At the same time, my experience has grown over the years and now I'm more confident in talent cultivation. Next year we're opening our tenth training centre in Beijing. I believe that as time goes by, more and more people will join DreaMaker and the talent shortage problem will be solved.

TheLINK: In 2012, DreaMaker received an investment from famous director Feng Xiaogang. What do you think motivated him to do this?

Feng is a wise man, with rich life experience and a profound understanding of drama that led him to approve of DreaMaker's philosophy on education and believe in its viability. He once said that everyone needs to play his own part well in different stages of life, so it's good for kids to learn something about acting and drama. In 2012, when I explained DreaMaker's philosophy on education and gave him a few examples of our successful cases, he immediately decided to invest. More than that, he sent his own young daughter here to study at DreaMaker, and his wife Xu Fan often recommends us to her friends.

TheLINK: What's ahead for DreaMaker?

Now we're planning to dig deep into the Beijing market. We're going to incorporate the city into our overall market plan, constructing a comprehensive framework, which both lowers market costs and is beneficial to our overall operations. Yet a focus on the Beijing market does not mean we won't consider other potential markets. For example, the Shanghai market is just as promising as Beijing, and if we have a reasonable market plan, and if there are enough talents, we'll get ready to enter Shanghai.