

ENGLink

Autumn | 2014 Issue

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Xian-PolyU English Immersion Summer Camp (19 July - 3 August)

The Department co-organised an English summer camp with the School of Highway, Chang'an University in Xi'an from 19 July to 3 August. Our students served as Student Tutors to help enhance the English-speaking proficiency for undergraduate students of highway engineering from Chang'an University. International volunteer instructors were recruited to give lectures to introduce socio-culturally interesting topics for discussion. Our students helped to prepare teaching materials, and led out in group discussions and storytelling activities.

Enrichment activities were added to the summer camp. In particular, Stage4Youth, a non-profit musical group from Hong Kong, was invited to conduct a Musical Production Workshop and train the Xi'an students to perform Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The involvement of Stage4Youth greatly enhanced our WIE programme this year and provided everyone involved with a unique experience, where we see the makings of a musical production from scratch to finish in just 16 days. Our students not only learned how to work with other professionals in related-fields, but also gained hands-on experience and a close-up view of the complexity of organising a large-scale event.

“One of the most impressive achievements in this English Immersion Summer Camp was the production of a fascinating musical with the Chang'an students that was co-organised with a youth musical group, Stage4Youth. Through this challenging process of producing a musical (that was open to the public!), the Chang'an students not only learned much about the value of teamwork and careful planning and coordination, they also have improved their English communicative skills in a quasi-authentic workplace setting.

There were different work-groups for the musical production, among them the singing team, the dancing team, the stage production team, the stage construction team, the audio and lighting team, and the marketing team. I had joined the stage construction team. We were responsible for making the props and the backdrops for the scenes. I took part in painting one of the backdrops, and I painted a great sphinx with pyramids in the distance in the desert landscape of Ancient Egypt. From brainstorming creative ideas to purchasing canvas and paints, from drafting to painting, to finally setting the scene on stage, I was very excited and pleased to see the effort the Chang'an students had put into the process of backdrop crafting. Although all the students were majoring in engineering and may not know much about painting, they had tried their very best to participate in the process and contributed all they could for the sake of this musical. The devotion and positive attitude of the Chang'an students were admirable. This two-week summer camp in Xi'an was truly a memorable experience for me.”

– Sharing by Ruth Cheng, Year 3 BAESP student



Students and instructors at the Camp make a successful performance.



International volunteer instructors and PolyU Student Facilitators at the closing ceremony of the 2014 summer camp.



Students busily involved in making the props and the backdrops for the show.



English Summer Camp for Primary School Children (21 - 25 July)

The Department supported a five-day English Summer Camp organised by the Hong Kong Federation Youth Groups which took place in PolyU during 21 – 25 July. Being the Education Partner of the camp, the Department provided advice on the teaching materials for the camp as well as recruited six students to act as volunteer teaching assistants for a group of 30 primary 3 to 6 students.

Our students were responsible for a one-hour lecture every morning with adapted teaching materials prepared by them 3 weeks in advance of the camp. They gave lectures on different interesting topics – ranging from English songs, to vocabulary building, to reading and writing skills, and to British and American accents and spellings.

The afternoons were packed with fun by having activities around the campus. In one afternoon, the children went around the campus looking for 'nouns' and this activity helped them acquire new vocabularies in a lively way and also familiarised themselves with PolyU. The children also spent one hour before the end of each day to prepare for their own performances that were to be showcased to their parents on the last day.

The camp completed with laughter and applause from the children and it also gave them a good experience that learning English can be lots of fun.

Orientation Events for the New Academic Year

The Department arranged two orientation activities to help students to make a smooth start for the 2014-15 academic year:

1 MA Programmes Orientation Day (30 August 2014)

All new MA students were invited to this afternoon activity and about 120 attended. Students of each programme first attended an individual introduction session by the corresponding Programme Leaders before joining the briefing session on the relevant administrative and academic matters. It was then followed by an overview on the research opportunities in the Department and a practical lecture on developing academic writing skills. The last session was a library orientation session which introduced the use of various resources available in the library to the students.

2 Programme Orientation for BA Students (4 September 2014)

New students of BA in English Studies for the Professions (BAESP) were given an introduction of the programme curriculum structure and study pathways during the orientation. After the selection of student representatives, there were brief introduction on different programmes including overseas exchange, service learning, and Work-Integrated-Education (WIE).



Dr Stephen Evans explains the research opportunities in the Department to the MA students.

Minor in European Studies Promotes French Culture via Movies

The Department will be offering The Minor in European Studies from semester 2 and it has selected four great French movies to be shown to all PolyU staff and students to let them have a better understanding of French culture. They were grouped under the theme of "Around France in 4 Movies" with the support from the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau and INSTITUT FRANÇAIS. The first one — The Artist — was shown on 16 September and the other three movies are:

- The Names of Love – 14 October
- Step Up to the Plate – 11 November
- The Princess of Montpensier – 2 December



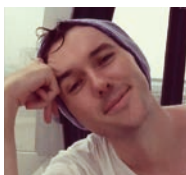
Prof. Huang Chu-Ren, Dean of Faculty of Humanities (right) and Dr Francisco Veloso of our Department (left) welcomed Dr Isabelle Saves (second from right) and Ms Mathilde Nicolas from the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau to open the series of movie events on 16 September.

Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme Encourages Outstanding Students in the World to Study for a PhD in Hong Kong

Established in 2009 by the Research Grants Council (RGC), the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme (HKPFS) aims at attracting the best and brightest students in the world to pursue their PhD programmes in Hong Kong's institutions. Awardees will receive an annual stipend of HK\$240,000 (approx. US\$30,000) and PolyU will also provide each PhD Fellow with a 3-year tuition scholarship and guaranteed hall accommodation in first year.

Students from around the world who are interested in conducting cutting-edge research in the areas of applied linguistics, English language studies, language studies in professional contexts, sociolinguistics, or systemic functional linguistics are welcome to apply for a place in the Department via the scheme. The application deadline for the 2015-16 admission is 1 December 2014.

Some recent awardees of our Department highly commended their experience:



“I have immensely enjoyed life and work in Hong Kong thus far; the city is one of the most vibrant and convenient places I have ever lived. Studying at PolyU is equally rewarding: first rate resources coupled with supportive work practices bode well for a comfortable working environment.”

– Jamie Mckeown, United Kingdom



“PolyU is the hub of many internationally prestigious conferences and other scholarly activities. This has given me the opportunity to meet and interact face-to-face with many of the world's finest scholars in linguistics and language studies, both boosting my confidence as a budding scholar and increasing my knowledge of linguistic science.”

– Isaac N. Mwinlaaru, Ghana

“In Hong Kong, there are many world-class universities and academic institutes and we have a wide range of opportunities to meet and work with internationally respected scholars and experts who are working at the cutting edge of their fields.”

– Tomoko Akashi, Japan

“Through participating in overseas conferences and visiting other prestigious universities around the world, my academic horizons have been broadened. These experiences have helped to develop my research abilities, as a starting point of my academic career.”

– Nancy Guo, China

Research Presents at the World Congress of the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA)

During 10 – 15 August, a group of our staff including Dr Mable Chan, Dr Victor Ho, Dr Amy Suen, Dr Dennis Tay, Ms Dora Wong and Mr Jack Pun went to Brisbane, Australia and presented their research at the 17th *World Congress of the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA)*, organised by the International Association of Applied Linguistics, Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, and The University of Queensland.

In this Triennial conference, our staff introduced their research projects in applied linguistics to the 1,600 academics from 80 countries, including areas in: discourse analysis, language in healthcare communication, business and professional communication, second language acquisition, language in the media, and public discourse.

Below is the list of papers:

Mable Chan: *'What Chinese professionals expect from a business English course: Quantitative and corpus data'*

Mable Chan: *'Processing Instruction and Teaching and Learning of tense'*

Victor Ho & Amy Suen: *'Upholding and promoting the city's core values by the HKSAR Government through discourse'*

Dennis Tay: *'Understanding and applying metaphor in psychotherapy and health communication. A three-phase approach'*

Dora Wong & Janet Ho: *'Community News Online: A Corpus Study of ESL Students and Professional News Writing in Hong Kong'*

Diana Slade & Jack Pun: *'Understanding the communication challenges in a bilingual emergency department: a linguistic perspective'* on behalf of the International Research Centre for Communication in Healthcare (IRCCH) and the healthcare research working group at PolyU

Jack Pun: *'The roles of images and language in learning school science in bilingual classroom'*

These presentations were well-received by the overseas audiences. A number of scholars showed their interests in our departmental research areas. The next AILA conference will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2017.

More information: <http://www.aila2014.com>



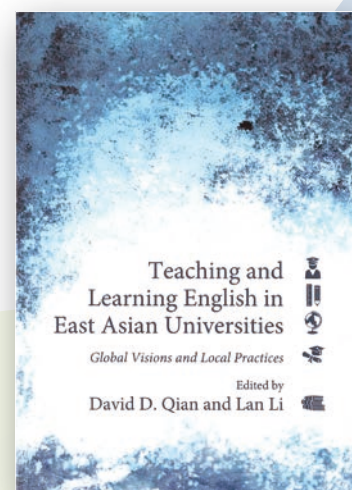
Recent Publications

1. Teaching and Learning English in East Asian Universities *Global Visions and Local Practices*

Edited by: Prof. David Qian, Department of English, PolyU
Dr Li Lan, Department of English, PolyU

The 25 chapters contained in this book were all written by scholars working in the field of applied linguistics and English language teaching in various East Asian contexts. East Asia is large and diverse in terms of socio-economic, linguistic, and ethnic parameters. Statistics alone cannot give a clear understanding of what goes on in rural and urban universities and what challenges English language teachers and learners face in those contexts. To understand this wide gamut of issues in English language teaching in East Asia is thus a very large undertaking.

The book addresses some of these issues, arranging its 25 chapters into five sections: namely, Assessing Language Performance; Teaching English Writing; Learner Autonomy; Corpus and Discourse Research; and Learning English in East Asian Contexts. Many of the chapters in this volume concern familiar topics such as linking assessment to teaching, learning and curriculum; conducting assessment validation research; examining meta-cognitive strategies; investigating teaching and learning English for academic purposes; and profiling prevailing word lists for language learners. Other chapters are on novel or lesser known topics such as non-verbal delivery in speaking assessment; the use of visualization as a reading strategy; learner strategies in a Facebook corpus; effects of discourse signaling cues and rate of speech; and an ontogenetic analysis of college English textbooks. Collectively, these chapters showcase English language learning, teaching, and assessing in a range of contexts using a variety of methods and techniques to deal with issues relevant to East Asian teachers, learners and researchers.



2. Approaches to Language, Culture, and Cognition *The Intersection of Cognitive Linguistics and Linguistic Anthropology*

Edited by: Dr Dennis Tay, Department of English, PolyU
Dr Masataka Yamaguchi, University of Queensland, Australia
Prof. Benjamin Blount, SocioEcological Informatics, US

The study of language, culture, and cognition has become increasingly fragmented into separate disciplines and paradigms. This volume aims to re-establish dialogue between cognitive linguists and linguistic anthropologists with 11 original papers on language, culture and cognition, and an editorial introduction. It demonstrates that cognitively-informed perspectives can contribute to a better understanding of social, cultural, and historical phenomena, and argues that cognitive theories are relevant to linguistic anthropology.



Summer WIE Placement Programmes

The Department organised WIE placement programmes in Australia and the Chinese Mainland for BAESP students during summer 2014. Through these offshore placement opportunities, students gained hands-on experience in working with people from different cultures in addition to gaining a better understanding of the workplace ethos.

Students appreciated the experiences through these placements, as reflected in some of their feedback below:

Southern Cross University Placement Programme (31 May - 28 June)

“I worked as a teaching assistant in Lismore South Public School through this programme. I had the opportunity to teach students from kindergarten to senior three, aged five to eleven years old. We built a close relationship and had an unforgettable time. The teaching style in Australia was different from Hong Kong and the learning atmosphere was genuinely fun and interactive. I gained a lot of teaching skills and experience, which is definitely indispensable for my future career.

Apart from teaching, I participated in a conventional school activity too – celebration of NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) week. It celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal peoples. I gained deeper insight into Australian culture through taking part in various activities such as painting Indigenous Australian arts, singing and dancing to the Indigenous Australian music.

At the same time, I was immersed in Australian culture through living in a homestay. I was lucky to have warm-hearted and caring host parents as my temporary family. I enjoyed the simple and leisurely Aussie lifestyle a lot. We made happy family memories and my homestay became my second home.

Both the people and environment are lovely down under. It was such a unique, fruitful, rewarding work and cultural experience for me.”

- Wisca Choy, Year 3 BAESP student



WIE Programme at the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology (USST) (29 May - 29 June)

“The best part of being a teaching assistant (TA) in this programme was that I got the chance to listen to the lectures of really great professors from the City University of New York, and I could obtain some knowledge in other disciplines from a different perspective. Though we were strictly required to be on time and to get materials ready, and sometimes were assigned to other jobs especially during the exam week, we were able to make use of the communication skills we had learnt to deal with real life issues with people from different backgrounds. Our workload was quite heavy and our schedule were quite packed; however the outcome was fruitful, and the staff at USST were friendly and gave us lots of guidance and support.

During this time, I made some really good friends who were interesting and made my experience in Shanghai even more memorable. We did the city hunt together and found Shanghai is truly a great and fantastic city. Also we went on trips together to explore beautiful sights around Shanghai. Neighboring cities such as Zhouzhuang and Hangzhou are also really beautiful. I had a great time indulging in the scenery and tasty local food there in Shanghai.”

- Lucia Huang, Year 3 BAESP student



Tsinghua University Placement Programme (26 June - 19 July)

“I miss everything about the Tsinghua English Summer Camp: the beautiful campus, the varied food, the international volunteers and Tsinghua students, and many more. To be honest, there are a lot of stories to share and here I would like to talk about the farewell party.

The presence of ‘governor’ of ‘Province A’ (one of the Tsinghua camp organizers) appeared at the party. She made a short speech and presented us certificates and gifts from Tsinghua University. Then it was almost time for the surprise. One of our students, Roger, made a short and heartfelt thank-you speech. And our students presented each of us a handmade scratch book full of blessings and photos of everyone. That was the most touching moment that I ever had during the English summer camp.

How excited I was when I flipped through the book brimming with unforgettable memories! This meaningful album is a token of friendship with my students, a testimonial to my efforts and an encouragement for me to keep working hard.”

– Amy Xu, Year 3 BAESP student



New Executive Committee for Alumni Association

The Department of English Alumni Association (DEAA) held an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on 21 August during which the new executive committee was officially passed and formed. Below is the list of the members:

Position	Executive Committee Member	Graduated Programme & Year
President	Dr Amy Suen	BALSB 2006 / PhD 2013
Vice President	Mr Andy Fung	BALSP 2009
Internal Secretary	Mr Mic Liu	BAESP 2014
External Secretary	Mr Perphy Woo	BAEBPC 2008
Treasurer	Mr Terry Tam	BAEBPC 2008
Executive Member	Mr Felix Cheung	BAEBPC 2012 / MAEP 2014
Executive Member	Mr Max Chan	BAEBPC 2012
Executive Member	Miss Susie Sui	MAEP 2009

Old and new executive committee members of the DEAA: (back row from right) Mr Terry Tam, Mr Perphy Woo, Mr Mic Liu, Dr Amy Suen, Ms Venus Wong, Dr Jenny Wan, Miss Susie Sui, and Ms So Yam Yan; (front row from right) Mr Max Chan, Mr Felix Cheung, Mr Andy Fung, Mr Raymond Fung, and Mr Thomas Tong.

In the year plan of 2014-15, the new executive committee will be organising an alumni dinner as well as two alumni talks. The speaker for one of the talks will be the External Secretary Mr Perphy Woo who is the Co-founder and CEO of UPXET, Inc. The coming year is going to be an exciting one for the Department’s alumni and please contact the Federation of PolyU Alumni Associations to join DEAA if you have yet to be a member!

We would also like to thank the previous seven executive committee members (Chairperson Ms Venus Wong, Secretary Dr Jenny Wan, Treasurer Mr Raymond Fung, and Committee Members Ms Flora Yau, Ms So Yam Yan, Mr Thomas Tong, and Mr Dickson Lam) for serving the DEAA in the past eight 8 years. Their unflinching support is indispensable to the smooth continuation of the Association.



Internship at L'Oréal Group (ongoing for 6 months) — Sharing by Suki Koon, BAESP student

"Journey begins at the end of your comfort zone."

This quote completely captures my wonderful experience as a Marketing Intern at L'Oréal. During the past few months, I am happily bound to the renowned USA apothecary, Kiehl's.

During this internship, I have the pleasure to participate in numerous projects such as creating leaflets for the new launch products and updating Kiehl's App for staff training every month. I also have the chance to lead the in-store visual changing projects by creating new Educational Signage for all the products which could enhance and strengthen the product key functions. Other works such as creating show cards, magazine write-ups, advertisement copy writing and renovating sampling strategies are doubtless a unique and valuable working and learning experience to me.

The most exciting project of my internship is to take the lead in creating and executing the Gift With Purchase scheme for our customers for the coming Chinese New Year in February 2015.



Through this project, I learnt how to develop a new idea from briefing the designer on which products I want to have, sourcing the gift boxes, getting quotations from various suppliers, and thinking about which samples among our wide range of products we would give to our valued customers.

Working in the Kiehl's Marketing Team also requires me to work closely with the Visual Merchandising, Demand Planning, and the Finance Team. I am really happy for the opportunity to be a team member of a large company and to have received enormous support and guidance on a wide range of assignments. These experiences also inspired me with many eye-opening career insights. I am truly grateful for such a wonderful internship opportunity.



Exchange at Home 2014

33 BEASP students joined a gathering *Exchange at Home 2014* hosted by the Department on 25 September. Students coming back from their exchange programmes shared a lot of their experiences with their fellow classmates. That was particularly helpful for the students who have been nominated for exchange during spring 2015 but also for Year 2 students interested in applying for exchange. It was also a great occasion for students to meet each other and exchange ideas and opportunities available for them.

