

ENGLink

SPRING | 2016 Issue

ENGLink is published by the Department of English,
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Contact for contributions or further information
about the articles: egadmin@polyu.edu.hk



Highlights

- ▶ **P.4 English Learning Column in Local Newspaper**
- ▶ **P.5 Communication Research Project Offers Insights into Cross-Cultural Interactions**
- ▶ **P.6 Sharing by Winner of The Outstanding Student, Faculty of Humanities, 2015 Award**

University Francophone Film Festival @ PolyU (1 – 10 March 2016)



Ms Servane Ganadia, Attaché for Education at the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau gives an opening remark on the first day of the Festival.

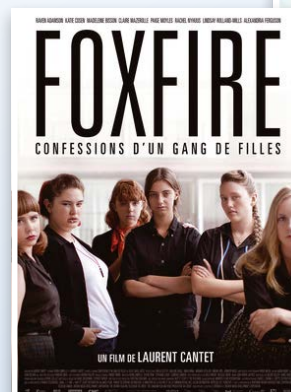
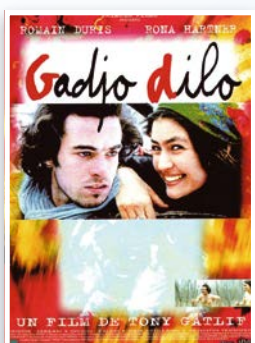
The Film Festival is presented by the Minor in European Studies of our Department, in partnership with the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau. Six movies which showcased various unique aspects of French culture were shown at PolyU during the period. Admission to all the movies were free for staff, students, as well as the general public.

The six movies were:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 1 March 2016 | Gadjo Dilo [Crazy Stranger] |
| 2 March 2016 | Brendan et le secret de Kells [Brendan and the Secret of Kells] |
| 3 March 2016 | Au bord du monde [On the edge of the world] |
| 8 March 2016 | Le Chat du rabbin [The Rabbi's Cat] |
| 9 March 2016 | Foxfire |
| 10 March 2016 | Pas son genre [Not my type] |

Organised in March annually, the Francophonie Festival in Hong Kong includes different activities regarding the French language and French-speaking cultures, which are open to everyone. In a large number of countries on earth, supported by the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, the international day of the Francophonie is celebrated on 20 March.

The University Francophone Film Festival is an event under the wide range of cultural and educational activities offered by the Francophonie Festival. Eleven French-speaking films were screened at six universities and colleges in Hong Kong and Macau during the month of March.



Departmental Seminars

1 (Mis)communication, Conflict and Compromise: Intercultural Encounters in the Internationalising University (1 February 2016)

In this talk, Head of the Department Professor Hans Ladegaard argued that negative outgroup stereotypes and prejudice is the major obstacle for successful integration between local and non-local students and staff in universities. Based on his ongoing study of international students' experience of sojourn in Hong Kong, Prof. Ladegaard concluded that *real* dialogue, which addresses taboos and painful issues and seeks compromises, and the courage to question our own and other people's ethnocentric discourses, should be the way forward if local and non-local students and staff are to integrate and work together in meaningful ways.



2 A Corpus-based Contrastive Study of Semantic Preference and Semantic Prosody across English and Chinese: Their roles for cross-linguistic equivalence (23 February 2016)

With research interests including corpus linguistics, phraseology, and contrastive studies of English and Chinese, Professor Wei Naixing from Beihang University, China discussed how the study addressed important features of semantic preference and prosody across English and Chinese and examined their roles in achieving equivalence between corresponding lexical items of the two languages. As the study also shows the relationship between syntax and semantic prosody is rather different between Chinese and English, it has practical implications for future semantic prosody studies, contrastive linguistics and translation studies.

3 Specialized (economic) knowledge on blogs: engaging multiple audiences on the Web (25 February 2016)

As a researcher focusing on argumentative dialogue and language variation across genres, disciplines and cultures, Professor Marina Bondi from University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy, discussed the discourse of knowledge dissemination in the context of the 'evaluatively charged' nature of blogs' posts (and comments) at the seminar. The analysis is based on a small-scale study of a corpus of materials produced by Paul Krugman for different communicative contexts which highlights differences in reader engagement across different genres and media.



4 Metaphor and internet-based mental healthcare in Hong Kong (7 March 2016)

Internet-based mental healthcare innovations are cost effective alternatives or precursors to face-to-face therapy, notably in Chinese societies where mental illness still tends to be stigmatized. In this seminar, Dr Dennis Tay and Ms Jin Huang from the Department reported a case study of metaphor use by help-seekers and therapists on an online forum of a major Hong Kong-based psychotherapy practitioner. They discussed findings from the representational, functional, and interactional aspects in the context of Hong Kong society, language, and culture, as well as how metaphor use in internet-based healthcare compares with traditional face-to-face therapy. They also offered some tentative implications of (cognitive) linguistic analyses for the enhancement of these healthcare innovations.



5 “Lux populi. Reading luxury in popular culture” (21 March 2016)

Specializing in European Modernisms, intermedia studies as well as visuality and violence, Professor Isabel Capelo Gil from Catholic University of Portugal, Portugal discussed how the return of luxury redresses the imagination of desire, as an always deferred goal, tapping into the impossible capitalist promise of access through consumption. The seminar further looked into the strategies of critique that these same representational modes encode. The discussion focused particularly on the cases of Sofia Coppola’s film *Marie Antoinette*, Dolce and Gabbana advertising campaigns, and artist Joana Vasconcelos’ gigantic art pieces.

6 Translation, Renarration and Conflict (30 March 2016)

With research expertise in translation, Professor Mona Baker from University of Manchester, United Kingdom used concrete examples of framing strategies adopted and translations circulated by both political lobbies and activists in public narratives of terrorism and security. During the seminar, she attempted to demonstrate that far from being an innocent practice that functions as an appendix to original source texts, translation is imbricated in an ongoing process of (re)constructing the world and is itself a site of conflict, a space within which competing narratives are elaborated and contested.



English Learning Column in Local Newspaper

Dr Mable Chan is invited by a local Chinese newspaper Ming Pao (明報) to initiate a newspaper column called 周街學英文 (Learning English Everywhere). Dr Chan discusses with readers common English errors in our daily life. Examples are all authentic found in different contexts (e.g. schools, planes, restaurants, workplace) and genres of writing.

Examples of the common errors discussed are differences between 'interested in' and 'interested to'; 'on sale' and 'for sale'; 'complete' and 'be completed'; use of intransitive and unaccusative verbs, etc. One of the most popular entry is the one about the common misuse of 'Please kindly' to express politeness when making requests. In fact, we can simply use 'Please' to make requests and 'kindly' is used when one is annoyed or angry about something. Please see the following examples for reference:

- (✓) Kindly stop with the personal insults or I will start deleting comments and kicking people out.
- (✓) Kindly stop speaking in such a vulgar manner, all of you!

This column is very popular and you can browse this online via <http://news.mingpao.com>.



Academic Staff Shares Research Work at Research Forum (18 March 2016)

Dr Dennis Tay was invited to be a facilitator at the first Research Salon on "Blue Sky Research" organised by the Research Office (RO). The objective of the forum was for researchers of different disciplines (eg. engineering, business, science, and humanities) to brainstorm cutting-edge interdisciplinary ideas which could lead to highly original research.

The talk of Dr Tay was titled "Does talking cure in the 'talking cure'? Why language researchers and psychotherapists need to shake hands". He introduced the basics of language and linguistics research to the audience, talked about the intersections between language and psychology, and argued for how linguists and psychologists could collaborate to enhance mental healthcare. There was lively discussion afterwards by audience members who came from the different disciplines across PolyU.



Academic Staff Facilitates Talk about Italian Food Culture (15 March 2016)

Our Minor in European Studies Programme Leader, Dr Francisco Veloso, was invited to be the facilitator for a talk organised by the Dean of Students Office (DSO). Entitled as *The Art of Pleasing the Plate from Italy to Hong Kong*, the talk is under the Insights and Inspiration Talk Series. Head Chef and Partner Mr Fabrizio Napolitano from an Italian Restaurant in Hong Kong shared his experience as a chef and the challenges he went through before deciding to settle his career in Hong Kong. Dr Veloso initiated interesting and fruitful exchanges between the Chef and the audience on the food culture between Hong Kong and Italy.

Dr Francisco Veloso (right) introduces the background of experienced Italian chef Mr Fabrizio Napolitano to the audience.



Recent Research Publications

Abbou, J., & Tse, A. (2014). Matérialité linguistique du genre en Cantonais. Comment découper la réalité? *Cahiers de Linguistiques*, 40(1), 199–217.

Bateman, J. A., Veloso, F. O. D., Wildfeuer, J., Cheung, F. H., & Guo, N. S. (2016). An open multilevel classification scheme for the visual layout of comics and graphic novels: Motivation and design. *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*. <http://doi.org/10.1093/llc/fqw024>

Chan, M. (2014). Communicative needs in the workplace and curriculum development of business English courses. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 77(4), 376–408.

Cheng, W., & Ching, T. (2016). 'Not a guarantee of future performance': The local grammar of disclaimers. *Applied Linguistics*. doi: 10.1093/applin/amw006

Evans, S. (2015). Testing the Dynamic Model: The evolution of the Hong Kong English lexicon (1858–2012). *Journal of English Linguistics*, 43(3), 175–200.

Ho, V. (2016). Discourse of persuasion: A preliminary study of the use of metadiscourse in policy documents. *Text & Talk* 36(1), 1–21.

Iwasaki, S., & F. H. Yap (guest editors). (2015). Special issue on "Stance-marking and Stance-taking in Asian Languages". *Journal of Pragmatics* 83(July issue): 1–9.

Ladegaard, H. J. (2015). Coping with trauma in domestic helper narratives: Linguistic, emotional and psychological perspectives. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 19(2), 189–221.

Lam, M. (2015). Interfacing field with tenor: Hasan's notion of personal distance, in Bowcher, W., & Liang, J. (eds.), *Society in Language, Language in Society: Essays in Honour of Ruqaiya Hasan*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Tay, D. (2016). Metaphor and psychological transference. *Metaphor & Symbol*, 31(1), 11–30.

Warren, M. (2016). Signalling intertextuality in business emails. *English for Specific Purposes* 42(1): 26–37.

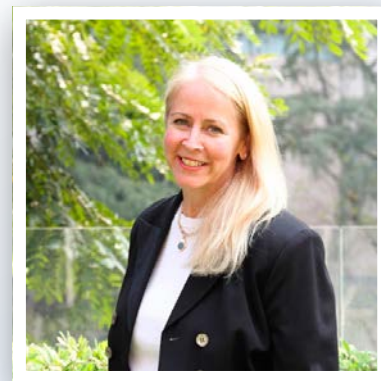
Communication Research Project Offers Insights into Cross-Cultural Interactions

Dr Gail Forey and Professor Winnie Cheng of the Department have partnered with Dr Jane Lockwood at City University of Hong Kong to study how communicating via the phone and computer across national boundaries impacts customer care, intercultural meanings, training, quality assurance, staff assessment and globalisation. For over 10 years they have studied what this emerging discourse looks like, with specific reference to call centre messages, online and SMS chat interactions and virtual team meetings.

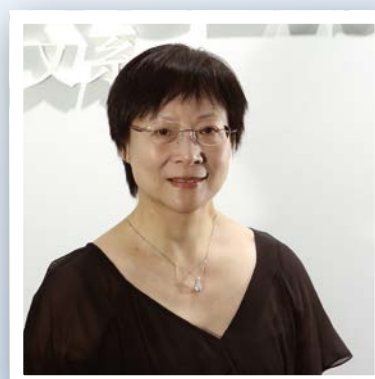
The research team started the project by looking into customer calls to a range of commercial enterprises. These calls are from places such as the UK, USA or Australia where customers seeking assistance would generally be linked to customer service representatives in the Philippines or India. The study analysed the language and causes of communication breakdown and the findings were shared with industry to enhance communication, intercultural meaning and training.

Another aspect of this research project is to examine the developing discourse features of virtual team meetings and online chats. The meetings of six project teams involving onshore and offshore colleagues working collaboratively were recorded, transcribed and analysed. Their findings suggested that onshore managers frequently used metaphorical language and idiomatic expressions, which increased the complexity of meaning.

The findings from the research have been published in nearly 30 academic articles and book chapters.



Dr Gail Forey



Prof. Winnie Cheng

Sharing by Amy Xu, BAESP Year 4 Students on Winning The Outstanding Student, Faculty of Humanities, 2015 Award

“ It is my great honour to be selected as the Outstanding Student of the Faculty of Humanities. This award is a testament to my growth and has encouraged me to continue to strive for excellence.

The core setting for my university life is the Department of English. It is an inclusive community where the professors are approachable and extremely friendly. My studies centred around English linguistics and communication. In my year three I went to University of California, Berkeley for academic exchange. I have taken courses in the field of humanities there including cognitive linguistics, film studies, and Spanish.

I really appreciate the Work-Integrated-Education (WIE) and Service-Learning (SL) programmes at PolyU. While I worked as a teaching assistant in Tsinghua University, Beijing for my WIE, my SL was an agricultural group project aimed at dealing with production waste for local farmers in Sichuan, mainland China. These programmes were wonderful platforms for us to apply what we had learnt in the classroom to the real world and to practice teamwork, public speaking and interpersonal skills.

During my study, I realised my interests in languages and I decided to continue my academic journey at the University of Oxford. I will pursue a Master's degree in Linguistics there in the coming September. I wish all PolyU students will find their own way during their university life and make the most of their days here.”



Amy receives the award from President Prof. Timothy W. Tong at the Presentation Ceremony on 15 March 2016.



During her exchange at University of California, Berkeley, Amy met students from different parts of the world and gained valuable intercultural experience.

Special Gathering for BDLCC Students (31 March 2016)

The Department organised a special gathering for students from the Broad Discipline of Language, Culture and Communication (BDLCC) to know them better and to give them more information about the curriculum and study pattern of the BA (Hons) in English Studies for the Professions (BAESP) programme that can help them to make a decision on their Major in June.

In addition to meeting our teachers, the 40 BDLCC students participated in the gathering also talked to some current BAESP students and heard about their experience in Student Exchange, WIE, Service Learning, and scholarships. A slide show was also screened during the gathering to give an overview of both the academic and non-academic aspects of our BAESP programme to the BDLCC students. The exciting part of the gathering was the online game and movie quiz as students got a chance to win attractive individual and groups prizes.



Programme leader of BAESP Prof. Winnie Cheng gives an overview of the programme at the gathering.

Mentorship Programme for 2015/16 Academic Year

The first activity of the programme was held on 22 January and two new mentors who are recent graduates from the BAESP programme were invited to give a short sharing on their career experience upon graduation. Howard Lo and Thomas Yau graduated in 2014 and they both are working in a tertiary institution. While Howard's job related to project and administration, Thomas' role is in the research support side. They shared the challenges and difficulties faced in their jobs as a fresh graduate and discussed how the knowledge and experience gained from the BAESP programme helped with different work situations. Mentors and mentees were given time to interact and know each other better after the sharing.

