



HIGHLIGHTS

P2 New Online Taught Postgraduate Programme

P5 IRCAHC Organises Joint Talks on Health Communication and Wellbeing

P6 PhD Graduates Present at Research Showcases



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Congratulations to Our Graduates at the 27th PolyU Congregation (13 November 2021)

The 27th Congregation of the Faculty of Humanities (FH) was held at the Jockey Club Auditorium via a hybrid mode. We were delighted to celebrate this memorable milestone with our 176 graduates, where 115 received awards at the postgraduate level or above and 61 were awarded bachelor's degrees.

During the ceremony, special awards were presented to academic staff, graduates, and students to recognise their outstanding academic and non-academic achievements. Three of our academic staff members received the following FH awards:

Faculty Awards for Outstanding Achievement 2021 – Teaching (Individual)
Dr Margo Turnbull

Dean's Award for Research Excellence 2020/21
Professor Kathleen Ahrens
Professor Hu Guangwei



The Dean of FH, Prof. Li Ping (right), presents the Faculty Awards for Outstanding Achievement – Teaching (Individual) to Dr Margo Turnbull.

A graduate of our BA in English Studies for the Professions (BAESP) programme, Ms Vivian Lam Wai Yan, gave a valedictory speech on behalf of the graduates at one of the sessions. Ms Lam shared that PolyU is known for being a university of big dreams, and the four years of study allowed students to develop knowledge in their focus areas and make their dreams a reality. She also thanked all teaching staff for giving them different perspectives to see the world, stating “we will embrace the critical thinking and methodologies learnt from here when we practice our work”.

The Department would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all our graduates and to wish everyone a prosperous future!



BAESP graduate Ms Vivian Lam gives a valedictory speech at one of the presentation sessions.



Prof. Li Ping (right) presents the Dean's Award for Research Excellence to Prof. Kathleen Ahrens and Prof. Hu Guangwei.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

New Online Taught Postgraduate Programme – Master of Health Communication



Prof. Bernadette Watson is the Programme Leader of the MHC programme.

The Department will be offering a new taught postgraduate programme, the Master of Health Communication (MHC), starting in the September 2023 academic year. The programme will be delivered via a part-time online mode and is the first programme of its kind in FH.

The MHC programme will address the unique challenges facing healthcare and health policy from the viewpoint of effective communication dissemination, bringing together linguistics, psychology, health informatics, and advances in computer science to create a strong interdisciplinary focus on health and communication. The programme will allow students to gain thorough and in-depth knowledge of important aspects of health policy and governance and will show them how to communicate effectively with diverse healthcare stakeholders across different health contexts.

The MHC programme is unique because it concentrates on the diverse role communication plays in management, leadership, and interprofessional relations. Professor Bernadette Watson, Programme Leader of the MHC said, "Specifically developed for practitioners in Asia, the programme will provide students with the diverse practical knowledge and skills that are critical to healthcare management".

A completion of 30 credits, i.e., 10 subjects, is required for the Master's degree, with five of the subjects being compulsory, including Critical Thinking in Healthcare Issues of the 21st Century, Fundamentals of Organisational Communication in the Health Context, and Managing Effective Health Communication Across Modalities.

BA Alumnus Receives HK\$600K Funding from PolyU Maker Fund Programme for Start-Up Project

Mr Perphy Woo, an alumnus from our BA in English for Business and Professional Communication, has been awarded HK\$600K in funding and 2-year incubation support from the PolyU Maker Fund Programme 2021 for the design and technology solutions of allcareAI, a gerontech project.

The project is led by Mr Woo and his working partner and is committed to creating a future in which everyone can use clean toilets without barriers. Currently, inpatients rely heavily on medical staff to go to the toilet. allcareAI is developing a series of robotic toilets to empower inpatients' self-care abilities and to protect patient care workers from injury and infection.



Mr Perphy Woo receives the award (second left in the photo) with his partner at the Award Presentation in October 2021.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

PolyU Undergraduate Info Day (10 October 2021)

The PolyU Undergraduate Info Day was held via hybrid delivery on 10 October, with the event having been postponed from its original date of 9 October due to a typhoon. A broad range of activities were organised on a virtual event platform and included virtual exhibitions, admissions seminars, programme talks, student sharing, consultation sessions, and video showcases.

The Department organised two programme talks for the BA (Hons) in English and Applied Linguistics (BAEAL) programme. During the talks, two current students discussed their study experiences while a fresh graduate talked about how the skills and knowledge she acquired from the programme equipped her for the career she wanted to pursue. In addition, an online Student Assignment Showcase was arranged by the Department. During the Showcase, four Year 3 and Year 4 students each shared an assignment from one of the subjects they took to show attendees how they applied the knowledge they learnt into real-life situations.

The Academic Registry has placed video recordings and other materials from the event onto the PolyU UG Admissions Info Platform to allow prospective students to revisit the Info Day activities and related admission/programme information.

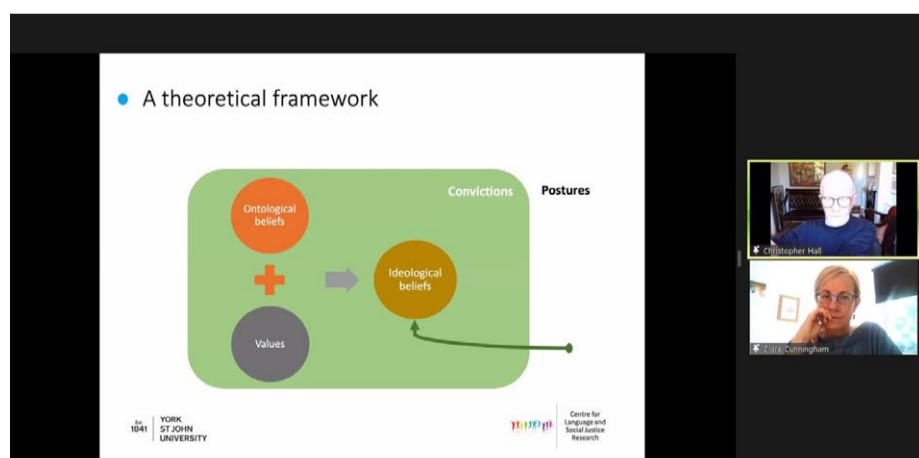


Via hybrid mode, BAEAL Associate Programme Leader Dr Phoenix Lam introduces the programme to both virtual and physical attendees.

Departmental Online Seminars

1. The ideological and ontological beliefs of EAL educators (6 October 2021)

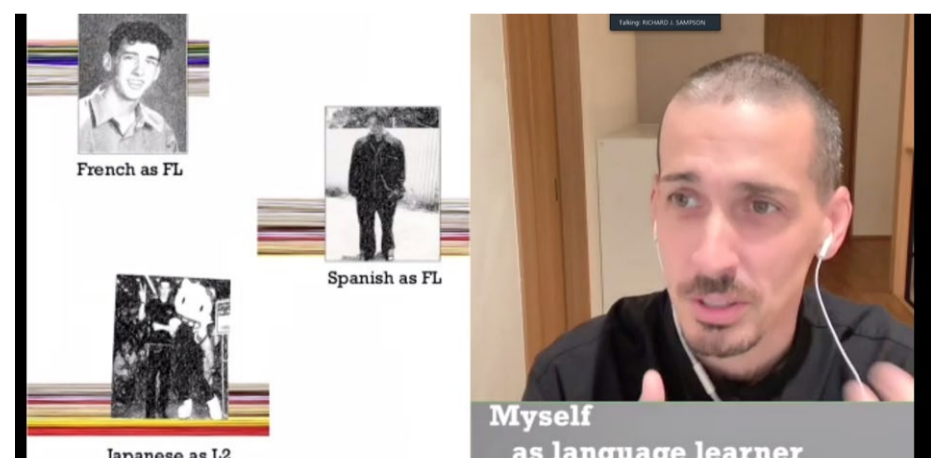
Professor Christopher J Hall and Dr Clare Cunningham from the Centre for Language and Social Justice Research, York St John University, United Kingdom, held a discussion with over 100 participants on Zoom on analysing the sets of ontological beliefs concerning English and other languages. The two speakers stated that what can be inferred from educators' attitudinal discourse could shed light on how ideological beliefs which reinforce and perpetuate social injustices prosper in the educational system. They further addressed how ontological analysis can potentially be used in teacher development programmes to allow educators to understand and reassess their own ideologies and professional practices, challenging and more effectively resisting unfair and harmful narratives from above.



A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel:
<https://youtu.be/TryNPePDsow>

2. A complex case for L+ classroom research (18 October 2021)

As complexity perspectives on additional language (L+) learning and teaching have become increasingly widespread, Dr Richard J Sampson from Rikkyo University, Japan, presented his arguments to about 140 participants on Zoom that practitioner-instigated classroom inquiries are uniquely positioned to do justice to the complexity of L+ learning. He introduced three frameworks that have been usefully applied in classroom research: Reflective Practice, Exploratory Practice, and Action Research. Participants had opportunities to discuss learner data collected through action research with Dr Sampson, and considered how complexity thinking might inform or add to understandings of the people forming classroom contexts.



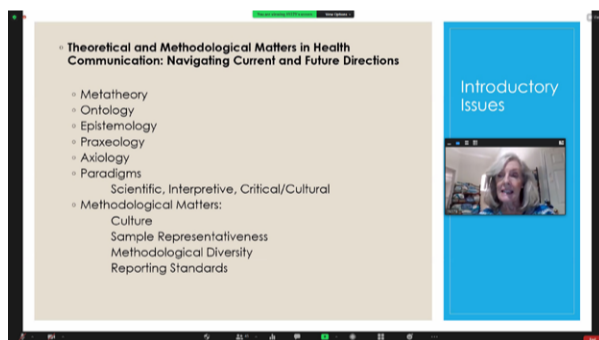
A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel:
<https://youtu.be/sYD1ZE70P6I>

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Joint Online Seminars with the International Research Centre for the Advancement of Health Communication (IRCAHC)

1. Current trends in health communication: The arrival of the third edition of the *Routledge handbook of health communication* (15 October 2021)

Professor Teresa L. Thompson, editor of *Health Communication* and important texts on health communication, discussed the evolution of health communication over the last 50 years. *Health Communication* began publication in 1989 and has been an important resource for researchers from various backgrounds to turn their attention and efforts applying what is known about communicative processes to health issues and the healthcare setting. The journal quickly grew and now publishes 14 issues a year, averaging 15 articles per issue. The abundance of work led to a need to bring the growing field together with the publication of the *Handbook of health communication*, which is published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. There have been three editions, with the third being released in September of 2021. Professor Thompson, the senior editor of all three editions of the handbook, led an online discussion and introduced how the field has expanded over a short time span and highlighted new trends that have emerged in the health communication domain.

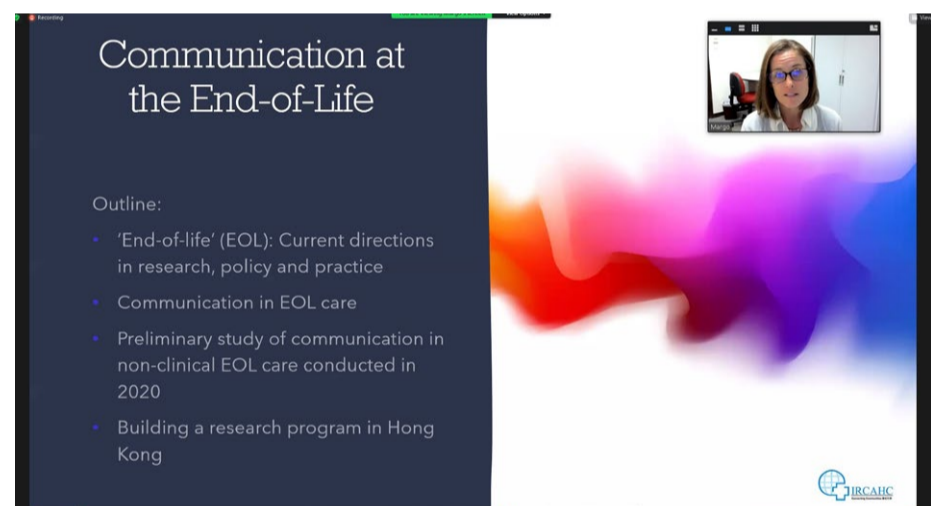


A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel:
<https://youtu.be/w4nHSS0yCqY>



2. Communication at the end-of-life: An initial study of communication and interaction in community-based services (22 November 2021)

Presenting to over 100 participants on Zoom, Dr Margo Turnbull from our Department discussed the findings of a preliminary study that looked at communication at the end-of-life from the perspective of a group of non-clinical workers in Hong Kong and Australia. Data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic and analysis highlighted aspects of communication that were "lost" as a result of restrictions on interactions as well as unique adaptations developed by workers as they sought to preserve key aspects of their relationships with service users.

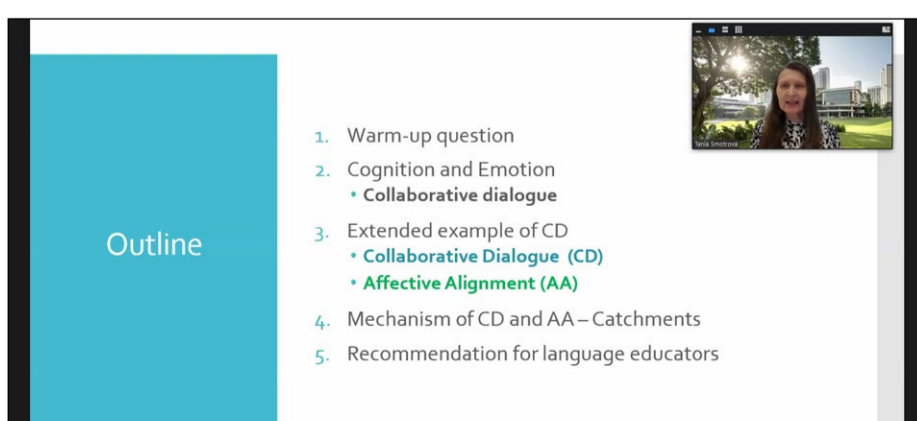


A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel:
<https://youtu.be/Cb26YvTzGQ4>



Joint Online Seminar with the International Society for Gesture Studies – Hong Kong (ISGS-HK)

The study of gestures as an area of linguistics has flourished internationally, with research centres mushrooming around the globe. Every semester, ISGS-HK organises talks by gesture scholars working across the region. The Department started the first joint online seminar with ISGS-HK in September 2020 to further expand the scope of its academic seminar. The below seminar was held in the first semester.



Gesture for collaboration and affective alignment in the language classroom (10 November 2021)

Recent decades have seen an increasing research interest in the role of gesture in the process of teaching and learning occurring in the classroom. Dr Tetyana (Tania) Smotrova from the Centre for English Language Communication, National University of Singapore, gave an overview to over 120 participants on Zoom about major studies that reveal the collaborative and affective functions of gestures in classroom interactions (with the focus on gestural catchments). She presented illustrative cases reflecting these functions and concluded with recommendations for language educators with regards to pedagogical uses of gesture.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel:
<https://youtu.be/0ZJZIPStdqw>



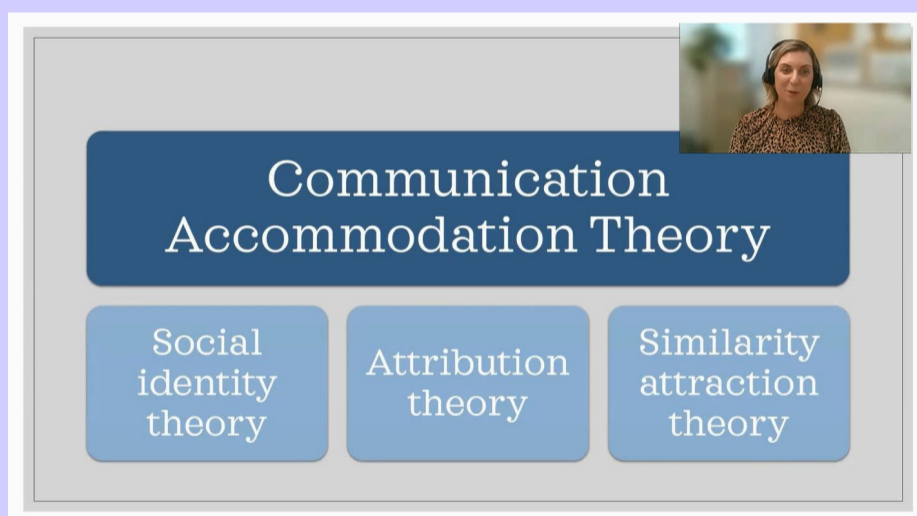
RESEARCH

IRCAHC Organises Joint Practical Online Talks on Health Communication and Wellbeing

The International Research Centre for the Advancement of Health Communication (IRCAHC) ran two joint online talks in October and December for the general public and healthcare practitioners:

1. Joint interprofessional education community of practice (27 October 2021)

IRCAHC collaborated with The University of Queensland Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences for this talk with the theme of “Enhancing Intergroup Communication in Healthcare”. Medical errors are the third leading cause of death, and a number of them are the result of a breakdown in communication. Ms Melanie Barlow, a Registered Nurse and a Lecturer in Nursing at the Australian Catholic University, Australia, described the intergroup dynamics of communication in healthcare in this talk. She discussed “speaking up”, where a health professional voices concerns about an imminent action by another health professional, as a critical component in healthcare communication — yet many health professionals are reluctant to speak up. Ms Barlow discussed the importance of the health professional as a receiver in these messages and how speaking up can be enhanced to improve interprofessional communication and, ultimately, patient safety.



A recording of this talk is available on the Department's YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/2n5zfUeN36w>



2. Building resilience and wellbeing in clinicians who work in high-stress environments (13 December 2021)

This online talk was jointly organised with the Mental Health Research Centre of PolyU and invited Dr Tarli Young, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of Psychology at The University of Queensland, Australia, to share her research on wellbeing interventions and resilience. The aim of Dr Young's research is to improve the wellbeing of adults – particularly within the workplace. In the talk, Dr Young discussed evidence-based approaches to building resilience and wellbeing in high-stress environments. She provided specific tools that participants can use to manage complex thoughts and emotions while taking actions in line with their values. She also discussed the importance of work design and research culture. Attendees left the talk with practical approaches they could take to improve their wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around them.



A recording of this talk is available on the Department's YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/RzfXuDJtk44>



Recent Research Publications

Ahrens, K., & Gong, S.-P. (2021). Contextual congruency and novel metaphor integration. *Cognitive Linguistic Studies*, 8(1), 109-132.

Bhatia, A. (2021). The discursive construction of legitimacy in the abrogation of Indian Constitution's Article 370. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 183, 132-141.

Cummings, L. (Ed.) (2021). *Handbook of pragmatic language disorders: Complex and underserved populations*. Springer International Publishing AG.

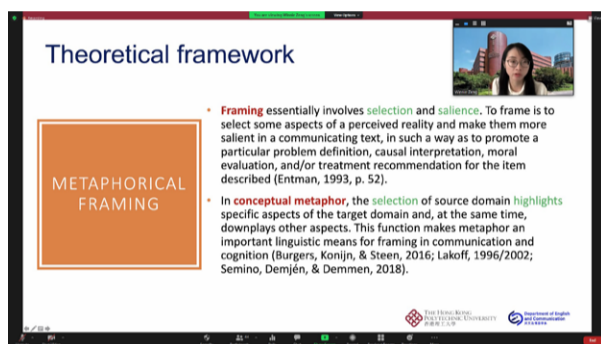
Gan, Z., Hu, G., Wang, W., & An, Z. (2021). Feedback behaviour and preference in university academic English courses: Associations with English language self-efficacy. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 46, 740-755. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2020.1810628>

Neupane, B. M., & Hu, G. (2021). “Commenting on your work is a waste of time only!”: An appraisal-based study of evaluative language in supervisory feedback. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 68. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2020.100962>

STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

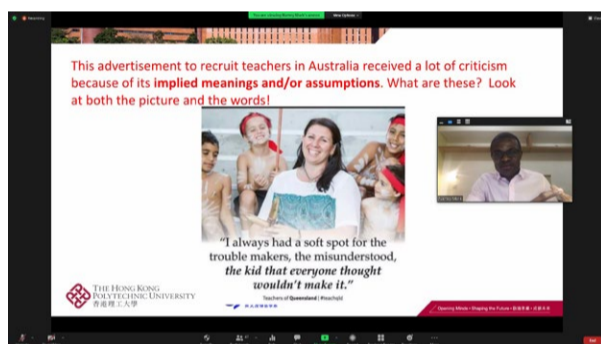
PhD Graduates Present at Research Showcases for Promotion of PhD Fellowships in Hong Kong

Two recent PhD graduates, Dr Winnie Zeng and Dr Mark Nartey, gave presentations on their theses and shared their PhD journeys in two info webinars to encourage potential students to pursue their PhD studies in the Department via PhD fellowships in Hong Kong.



1. PhD Graduate Research Showcase by Dr Winnie Zeng – Framing metaphor use over time: “Free Economy” metaphors in Hong Kong political discourse (1997-2017) (21 October 2021)

Dr Zeng’s thesis investigated the diachronic changes of economic metaphors focusing on the concept of FREE ECONOMY in a corpus of Hong Kong political discourse spanning two decades (1997-2017). The fundamental changes (transformations of source domains) and incremental changes (transformations of source-target mapping principles) in FREE ECONOMY metaphors were analysed. Given the complex socio-historical background of Hong Kong, this study provides a distinct East-West perspective on diachronic economic metaphor use in an Outer Circle English context.



2. PhD Graduate Research Showcase by Dr Mark Nartey – Identity (re)presentation and discursive construction in critical inquiry (12 November 2021)

The analysis of public discourses and the discursive construction of social, cultural, and political phenomena represent a vibrant area of research in applied linguistics, in general, and critical linguistics, in particular. During the showcase, Dr Nartey described what critical inquiry entails and how it contributes to an understanding of identity and discursive construction. He presented a synopsis of his research and illustrated how it not only had its roots in his PhD work, but also built on it. Finally, Dr Nartey articulated a number of reasons why students aspiring to pursue a PhD in applied linguistics or communication studies should consider the Department, which included first-class supervision and elite training, excellent facilities and resources, and stimulating academic context.

Alumni Association Holds the First IG Live Chat

To better connect with people during the pandemic, the Department of English Alumni Association (DEAA) organised the first Instagram live chat with the Department’s alumnae Ms Nicole Chan on 7 November. Ms Chan is a graduate of the Department’s BA in English for Business and Professional Communication (EBPC) programme in 2018. She shared her invaluable experience as a marketing intern in the United Kingdom with our current students and alumni in the chat. Ms Chan suggested ways of establishing social networks for the betterment of one’s career, steps she took to build her personal brand in her portfolio via social media platforms, and techniques for better stress management during the pandemic. The chat discussed how we can thrive in our professional and personal lives in the age of COVID-19.

Dr Amy Suen, Chairperson of the DEAA, is the host of the IG live chat.

