

# ENGLink

## WINTER 2022 ISSUE



### HIGHLIGHTS

- P2** Academic Staff Receive Funding for Research in Japan and Spain
- P3** Online Workshop for PolyU PhD Students
- P4** Health Symposium Covers Issues on Importance of Effective Communication
- P6** New Edited Book by Academic Staff on Metaphor and Psychotherapy Research

## Congratulations to Our Graduates at the 28<sup>th</sup> PolyU Congregation

The 28<sup>th</sup> Congregation of the Faculty of Humanities (FH) was held at the Jockey Club Auditorium via hybrid mode on 5 November 2022. We were delighted to celebrate this memorable milestone with our 259 graduates, 201 of whom received awards at the postgraduate level or above, and 58 of whom were awarded bachelor's degrees.

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

Faculty Awards for Outstanding Achievement 2021 – Teaching (Individual)	Professor Hu Guangwei
Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence 2021/22	Dr Max Diaz
Dean's Award for Research Excellence 2021/22	Dr Gerald Stell
Faculty of Humanities Outstanding Teaching Award for Postgraduate Students/Postdoctoral Fellows 2021/22	Dr Hassan Nejadghanbar Dr Azar Tajabadi

Ir Dr Chan Fuk Cheung, BBS, Former General Manager of CLP Engineering Limited, Outstanding PolyU Alumni 2013, and graduate of our MA in English for the Professions in 2001, gave a congratulatory address in the first session of the Congregation. Ir Dr Chan expressed that the pandemic over the past two and a half years has brought unprecedented changes and innovation opportunities. He advised the graduates to adopt a fast-learning method called "Ultra-Learning" and to learn about new technologies such as 5G, AI, IoT, and Blockchain to achieve organisational goals. He concluded his speech by encouraging the graduates to realise their dreams and make positive contributions to society.

The Department extends our sincere congratulations to all the graduates and wishes them a bright and prosperous future!



The Dean of FH, Prof. Li Ping (right), presents the Faculty Awards for Outstanding Achievement – Research and Scholarly Activities: Outstanding Researcher (Individual) to Prof. Hu Guangwei.



Prof. Li Ping (right) presents the Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence to Dr Max Diaz.



Prof. Li Ping (right) presents the Dean's Award for Research Excellence to Dr Gerald Stell.



Prof. Li Ping presents the Faculty of Humanities Outstanding Teaching Award for Postgraduate Students/Postdoctoral Fellows to Drs Hassan Nejadghanbar (left photo) and Azar Tajabadi.



# DEPARTMENT UPDATES

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## Academic Staff Awarded JSPS Invitational Fellowship for Research in Japan

Dr Phoebe Lin has been awarded an Invitational Fellowship for Research in Japan. The Invitational Fellowships, sponsored by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), provide overseas researchers who have an excellent record of research achievements with an opportunity to conduct collaborative research, discussions, and opinion exchanges with researchers in Japan.

During her two-month stay in Japan during November and December, Dr Lin spent her time at Yokohama City University, where she worked with researchers from across Japan to explore the potential of developing an automatic system for scoring learner intonation. During her stay, Dr Lin delivered lectures at three universities, including Yokohama City University, the University of Tokyo, and the University of Tsukuba. She also interviewed local teachers and learners of English and gained invaluable insights into the English language learning environment in Japan.

Dr Lin shared that the biggest benefits from the Fellowship included being provided with opportunities for exchanges with international researchers and also receiving great inspiration for her upcoming projects.



From left to right: Dr Alex Gilmore (University of Tokyo), Dr Steve Kirk (Nippon Medical School), Dr Neil Millar (University of Tsukuba), Dr Keiki Tsuchiya (Yokohama City University), and Dr Phoebe Lin.

## Research-Stay Funding at the University of Alcalá in Spain Granted to Academic Staff



Dr Renia Lopez has been awarded a one-month study-stay at the University of Alcalá, Spain, under their prestigious programme Giner de los Ríos, established in 2015. Under this programme, renowned scholars are invited to work with Alcalá's researchers to explore new topics and develop international co-operations.

This residency will also serve to strengthen existing cooperation. Dr Lopez has been working with scholars and students at the Department of Philology, Communication and Documentation of the University of Alcalá for a few years. With their help, she has led a project studying the benefits of online learning of Spanish as a foreign language when the input is presented in different modalities (video, audio, or text). A second project, still ongoing, evaluates the benefits of online teaching when the teacher's grammatical explanations are presented with or without gestures. Among the new collaborative opportunities Dr Lopez will explore is a study on the affective elements of the foreign language teaching and learning process.

Dr Lopez will also be giving talks to students and staff at Alcalá and exploring opportunities for further collaboration and possible exchanges between the University of Alcalá and PolyU.

## Academic Staff Gives Plenary Talk at International Metaphor Conference

Professor Kathleen Ahrens gave a keynote lecture at the 36<sup>th</sup> Pacific Asia Conference on Language, Information and Computation (PACLIC 36) held online from 20 – 22 October 2022. The talk, titled "Breaking Through Glass Ceilings or Opening Glass Doors? Addressing the Challenges of Equality and Inclusion via Metaphors", examined gendered associations with conventionalised conceptual metaphors and how women use them to position themselves as leaders. Prof. Ahrens discussed how scholars can influence the interpretation of metaphor use to promote positive social change.

The conference was jointly hosted by the Department of English and Applied Linguistics (DEAL), Br. Andrew Gonzalez FSC College of Education (BAGCED), De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines; the College of Computing and Information Technologies (CCIT), National University, Manila, Philippines; and the Lasallian Institute for Development and Education Research (LIDER), De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



## PolyU Undergraduate Info Day (8 October 2022)

The PolyU Undergraduate Info Day was conducted via hybrid mode on 8 October 2022, with physical activities being held throughout the whole day and online activities being provided between 9:30 am and 2:00 pm. PolyU was the first UGC-funded institution to organise a full-scale physical Info Day event after the pandemic.

Over 20 staff members and students from the Department took part and talked to campus visitors, including prospective students and parents. The Department organised two hybrid info seminars for the BA (Hons) in English and Applied Linguistics (BAEAL) programme. During each talk, there was a sharing session with students and alumni who talked about their student life and how our programme helped them become professional communicators. The BAEAL info seminars reached over 280 in-person and online participants. There was also a Student Assignment Showcase delivered via a hybrid format. During the Showcase, three current students each shared an assignment from one of the subjects they took to show attendees how they applied the knowledge they learnt to real-life situations.

A total of 26,000 visitors participated in the PolyU Undergraduate Info Day (with around 7% of participants joining the event online). The Academic Registry (AR) has also converted the online event platform into the UG Admissions Info Platform, so prospective students can revisit the recorded seminar sessions and easily obtain related admission/programme information. In addition, AR has also launched the Virtual Campus Tour on the Admissions Info Platform and Study@PolyU website to allow prospective students to understand PolyU's campus facilities.



Our staff members and student ambassadors are excited to meet many visitors to the PolyU campus.



Our Department Head, Prof. Eric Friginal introduces the Department to participants at one of the info seminars.

## EEPRS Online Workshop for PolyU PhD Students (22 October 2022)

The Effective English for Postgraduate Research Students (EEPRS) programme organised an online workshop titled "Writing a Successful (International) Conference Abstract: Ideas That Work!" and our Department Head Professor Eric Friginal was the speaker. Developing effective strategies and learning how to write a successful abstract for international conferences is critical for graduate students and early-career researchers. During this online workshop, Prof. Friginal provided an overview to about 130 PolyU Research Postgraduate students of the abstract writing process, including effective templates and an exploration of the abstract review process, focusing on the sciences, humanities, and social/behavioural sciences fields.

EEPRS is an advanced academic English programme run by the Department to provide support, advice, and guidance to PhD students at PolyU. Since its inception in 1998, EEPRS has offered help and support to more than 1,900 workshop and mentoring session participants from various departments at PolyU. In addition to generic workshops, EEPRS offers three non-credit-bearing subjects: "Communication Strategies in Research Contexts in English" (in conjunction with the ELC), "Writing Research Articles", and "Advanced Oral Skills".

For more information about EEPRS, visit <https://polyu.hk/KoeXJ>.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

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## Health Symposium: Do You Understand What I Am Saying? (9 December 2022)

The International Research Centre for the Advancement of Health Communication (IRCAHC) organised a symposium titled “Health Symposium: Do You Understand What I Am Saying?” on 9 December 2022. It was the third symposium conducted by IRCAHC and the first co-hosted with The University of Queensland’s Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences. The symposium brought together international and local experts in healthcare. All the talks centred on the critical importance of effective communication across different healthcare settings.

Over 140 participants from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Iran, mainland China, Macau, Malaysia, Pakistan, Vietnam, the United Kingdom, and the USA attended the one-day hybrid event, both face-to-face and online. Participants included doctors, nurses, students, researchers, and science communication writers.

All five talks were well-received by the audience. Professor Richard L. Street, Jr.’s talk on “Communication pathways to improved health outcomes: The ‘what’ and ‘how’ of effective clinician-patient communication” was voted the most valuable talk at this Health Symposium. Comments by attendees at the symposium included: “Super event. Extremely relevant to my work!”; “Please continue holding this event”; and “Great event. Hope next time can talk about communication skills in specific areas of health, e.g., discussion of weight with patients”.



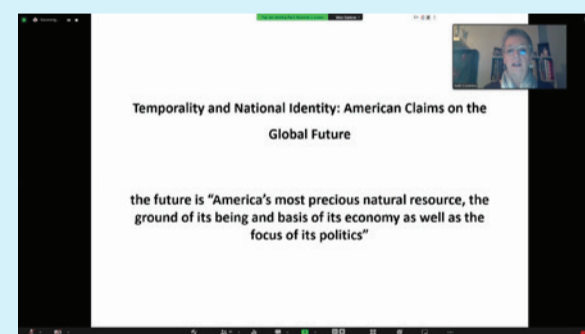
A group photo of participants attending the Symposium in person.

## Departmental Online Seminars

### 1. Temporality & National Identity: American Claims on the Global Future (3 October 2022)

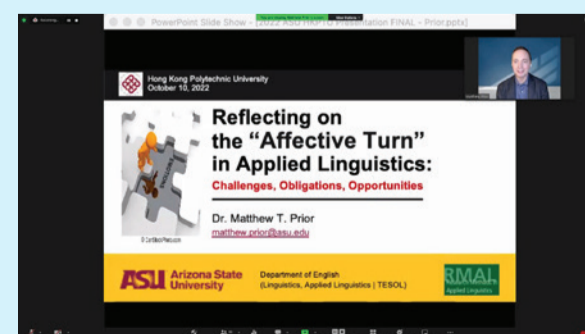
In this seminar with over 50 participants on Zoom, Professor Patricia Dunmire from Kent State University, United States, discussed how America's claim to a special relationship with the future has shaped its national identity and exceptionalism. The discourse of exceptionalism embeds the claim that America is the exemplar of the future and has a special right to shape the geopolitical future, as demonstrated through a critical analysis of Cold War discourse. During the presentation, Prof. Dunmire provided insight into how the future has figured in America's conception of its place and purpose in the world.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department’s YouTube channel:  
[https://youtu.be/x\\_SuYz5uVYI](https://youtu.be/x_SuYz5uVYI).



### 2. Reflecting on the “Affective Turn” in Applied Linguistics: Challenges, Obligations, and Opportunities (10 October 2022)

Applied linguistics has seen a growth of interest in the presence and influence of emotion in language education and personal/professional lives, prompting a “turn to emotion” that engages with emotion as a topic in its own right. Dr Matthew Prior from Arizona State University, United States, explained the current situation to over 120 participants on Zoom and highlighted that we must also consider what we are turning from and to, and why. Dr Prior addressed these questions by tracing emotion research developments and highlighting challenges, obligations, and opportunities.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



## 3. Communicating disciplinary knowledge to a wide audience: How students engage with popularisation of science in 3MT presentations (17 October 2022)

The emergence of Three Minute Thesis (3MT) presentations as a new academic genre is training research postgraduate students to communicate their research within three minutes to a general audience. In this seminar, Professor Kevin Jiang from Jilin University, China, presented to about 120 participants on Zoom the rhetorical language use students draw on to construct a persuasive speech while building an inclusive relationship with the audience. The analysis highlighted how the particular rhetorical contexts of genre, register, and disciplinary knowledge shape students' use of interactional resources and adapt their discourse accordingly to connect their disciplinary knowledge to real-world concerns.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/MrA4M6aUGf4>.



## 4. Evaluation across newspaper genres: Hard news stories, editorials, and feature articles (21 November 2022)

In this seminar with over 80 participants on Zoom, Dr Jonathan Ngai from the Hong Kong Metropolitan University argued that evaluation is a key factor in text construction, and examined how it operates in hard news stories, editorials, and feature articles using a 900,000-word corpus of newspaper texts. The analysis employed a framework of five evaluative dimensions to explore the dynamic role of evaluation in the construction of these genres.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/q1ptks-gp2A>.



## Joint Online Seminars with Research Centres

### 1. Multimodal conduct and professional discourse identity in oral advocacy: Insiders' perspectives (9 November 2022)

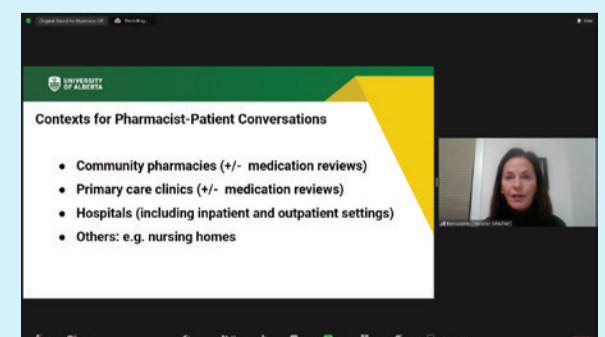
This seminar with over 70 students on Zoom was jointly organised with the Research Centre for Professional Communication in English, with Dr Christoph Hafner from the City University of Hong Kong and Dr Tongle Sun from the Chinese University of Hong Kong as the speakers. Research on professional legal communication suggests that multimodal conduct, including gesture, facial expression, gaze, and speech, can play an important role in the construction of a professional discourse identity. Dr Hafner and Dr Tong reported on an eight-month ethnographic study of law students preparing for a mooted competition and examined how coaches and students perceive the role of multimodal conduct in oral advocacy presentations and how they strategically exploit these forms of expression in accordance with legal cultural norms. The findings have implications for research on multimodality in academic/professional communication and for pedagogy in English for Academic Legal Purposes.



### 2. Theory-based communication skills for health professional learners (using pharmacy as context) (18 November 2022)

In this joint seminar with the International Research Centre for the Advancement of Health Communication, Dr Bernadette Chevalier from the University of Alberta, Canada, explained to over 60 participants on Zoom how theory-based research, specifically Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), can be translated into communication skills lectures for health professional learners. The CAT-based communication training was demonstrated through an introductory communication lecture for University of Queensland final-year pharmacy students and internationally trained pharmacists in a bridging program at the University of Alberta. This training can be transferable to other health professional learners conducting consultative patient interactions.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/3uuf9xOF8fU>.



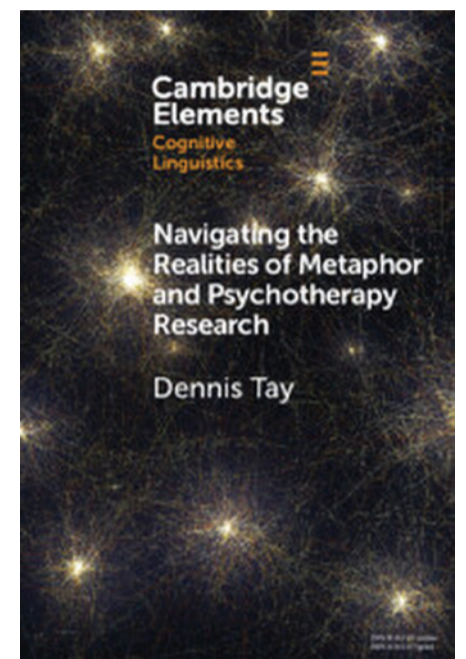
## New Book by Academic Staff on Metaphor and Psychotherapy Research

A new short-form book titled *Navigating the Realities of Metaphor and Psychotherapy Research*, written by our Professor Dennis Tay, discusses how to navigate the practical realities of applied metaphor research, using psychotherapy as an example.

The three foundational components of psychotherapy - the therapist, the client, and the interactional setting - are discussed in turn, covering issues like ethically engaging therapists in research design and data analysis, dealing with underexplored variabilities in client responses, and managing the inherent tension between spontaneity and control in an interactional setting like psychotherapy. This book also offers thoughts on how the lessons are transferable to other research contexts.

More information about the book: <http://bit.ly/3ldajjY>

Video abstract of the book: <http://bit.ly/401BiSP>



## Recent Research Publications

Hou, R., Huang, C. R. & Ahrens, K. (2022). Regional varieties and diachronic changes in Chinese political discourse. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 9, 466. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01488-8>

Nejadghanbar, H., & Hu, G. (2022). Predatory and legitimate open-access journals in language and linguistics: Where do they part ways? *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 53, 224-248. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jsp-2022-002>

Tay, D. (2022). *Navigating the Realities of Metaphor and Psychotherapy Research*. Cambridge University Press.

Xu, S. B., & Hu, G. (2022). A cross-disciplinary and severity-based study of author-related reasons for retraction. *Accountability in Research: Policies and Quality Assurance*, 29(8), 512-536. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08989621.2021.1952870>

## PhD Graduate and Student Present at Research Showcases for Promotion of PhD Fellowships in Hong Kong

PhD graduate Dr Carol Yu and PhD Student John Ganaah 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 Carol Yu – Communication and Interpersonal Dynamics in Virtual Team Meetings: An Applied Linguistic Perspective (14 October 2022)

Dr Yu's thesis explored the experiences and perceptions of virtual team members towards virtual team meetings (VTMs) and analysed authentic VTM interactions using Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) as a theoretical framework. As highlighted by Dr Yu, this study identifies linguistics/communicative devices associated with CAT accommodation strategies and contextual factors influencing the strategies employed, which can be developed into a training package to improve professional communication practices in virtual work teams.



### 2. PhD Student Research Showcase by Mr John Ganaah – Identity (re)presentation and discursive construction in critical inquiry (7 November 2022)

PhD student Mr John Ganaah provided an overview of his PhD research on analysing the political discourses associated with Jerry John Rawlings, Ghana's longest-serving leader, to examine the linguistic tools and discursive strategies used by powerful social actors to construct specific discourses in their performance of politics. Mr Ganaah emphasised that the focus is on how the study situates itself in the research tradition of analysing social actors' use of language/discourse resources to construct various representations of reality that can ideologically influence how we see, think, and talk about issues and people.

