

**English Across the Curriculum:
Writing Effective Assignment Questions,
Assessing Language in Student Presentations, and
Improving Students' English Use in Assignments**

9 October 2015

Hong Kong Polytechnic University

TU411

Workshop organised by
UGC-funded inter-institution project
'Professional Development in
Enhancing English Across the Curriculum'
together with EDC &
CoP in 'Enhancing Students' English Abilities'

Speakers:

Dr Damian Fitzpatrick, CUHK

Dr Tracey Costley, CityU

Dr Julia Chen, PolyU

UGC & CoP projects

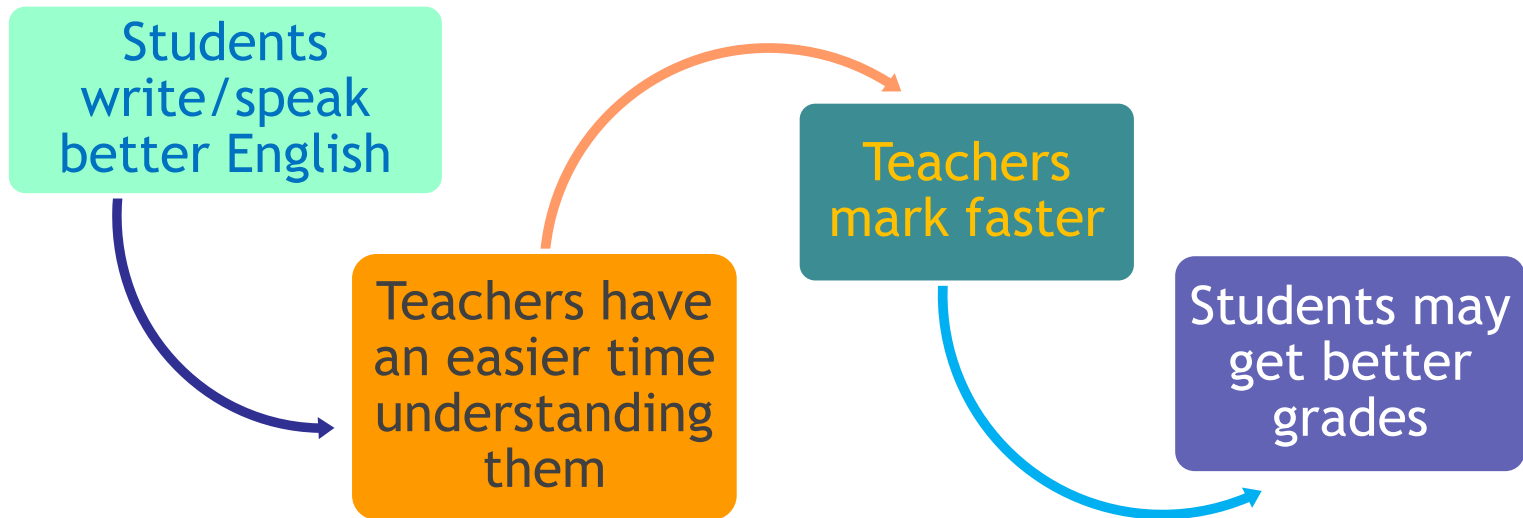
- Aim: To enhance Students' English Abilities through English across the Curriculum
- Website: <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/CoP/English/>
- Dual purpose:
 - Professional development for staff
 - (workshops, task design, assessment criteria)
 - Language help for students
 - (supplements related to subject assessments)

Aim of today's workshop

- To explore ways to
 - Write more effective exam/essay Qs & titles
 - Assess English performance in oral presentations
 - Encourage better English use in assignments

Part 3 of today's workshop

- How do we encourage students to pay more attention to English in non-ELC assignments?
- Why do we want to give such encouragement to students?



WIN-WIN SITUATION

Tips: 1

Assessment rubrics and weighting

- State clearly that poor English can affect the grade
- Include English in an 'easy' way in the assessment criteria
 - Comprehensibility/Readability (handout 1)
- Give 'Comprehensibility/Readability' a weighting

Handout 1

For writing assignments – Criterion: **Readability**

Suggestion: Readability can be the last criterion and carries **20%** of the assessment.

Excellent/outstanding (A+/A)	Good (B+/B)	Satisfactory (C+/C)	Barely satisfactory (D+/D)	Inadequate (F)
o Use language highly accurately and highly appropriately so that it is very easy for the reader to understand the content and follow the flow	o Use language accurately and appropriately so that it is easy for the reader to understand the content and follow the flow	o Use language generally accurately and generally appropriately so that it is generally easy for the reader to understand the content and follow the flow	o Use language that contains frequent intrusive errors and/or that are rather inappropriate so that it is difficult for the reader to understand the content or follow the flow	o Use language inaccurately and inappropriately, which causes communication breakdowns , and the reader finds it very difficult to understand the content or follow the flow

For speaking assignments – Criterion: **Comprehensibility**

Suggestion: Comprehensibility can be the last criterion and carries **20%** of the assessment.

Excellent/outstanding (A+/A)	Good (B+/B)	Satisfactory (C+/C)	Barely satisfactory (D+/D)	Inadequate (F)
o Use language highly accurately and highly appropriately ; delivered highly comprehensible speech so that it is very easy for the audience to understand and follow the presentation; delivered very clear and appropriate transitions from one member to another.	o Use language accurately and appropriately ; delivered comprehensible speech so that it is easy for the audience to understand and follow the presentation; delivered clear and appropriate transitions from one member to another.	o Use language generally accurately and generally appropriately ; delivered generally comprehensible speech so that it is generally easy for the audience to understand and follow the presentation; delivered generally clear and appropriate transitions from one member to another.	o Use language that contain frequent intrusive errors and/or that are rather inappropriate ; or delivered speech that was hard to comprehend so that it is difficult for the audience to understand or follow the presentation; delivered unclear transitions from one member to another.	o Use language inaccurately and inappropriately, which causes communication breakdowns ; delivered speech that was very hard to comprehend so that the audience finds it very difficult to understand or follow the presentation; delivered unclear or missing transitions from one member to another.

Tips: 2

Encourage proofreading before assignment submission

- Provide a self-checklist to students (handout 2)
- List proofreading items on assessment information sheet
 - Put the responsibility on the student
 - Encourage earlier completion of assignments

Handout 2

Referencing Checklist for (Subject Code) [Subject Name]

Before doing referencing

- I know the reference style as required by my teacher/subject. It is _____.

In-text citation

- I have acknowledged all the works used.
 - I have acknowledged all the books/journals I used.
 - I have acknowledged all the online materials I used.
 - I have acknowledged all the tables I used.
 - I have acknowledged all the figures I used.
 - I have acknowledged all the images I used.
- I used the exact wording as in the source text.
 - I have put quotation marks around the word(s) I used.
 - I have included the name of the author(s).
 - I have included the year of publication.
 - I have included the exact page number(s).
- I did not use the exact wording as in the source text.
 - I have rewritten the idea of the author(s) in my own words.
 - I have included the name of the author(s).
 - I have included the year of publication.
- The works used are properly cited.
 - I have followed the convention of referencing style as required by my teacher.
- I have numbered all the tables, figures and images used.
- I have provided captions for all the tables, figures and images used.

Reference list (End-of-text reference list)

- I have included a reference list at the end of my assignment.
- All the references used in my text are included in the reference list.
- I have followed the convention of referencing style as required by my teacher.


Tips: 3

Encourage earlier preparation of assignments & submission

- Set an acceptable originality % on Turnitin
 - Remember to use Turnitin filter
- Ask students to submit to Turnitin > 2 days before deadline
- Tell students to revise assignment until originality % falls within acceptable level
- Require an Honour Declaration Form
 - <http://edc.polyu.edu.hk/PSP/Honour%20Declaration%20Forms.pdf>
- Encourage academic integrity

Tips: 4

Encourage less copying & more reference to original sources

- Problem: Students cite teacher's PowerPoint in assignment 
- Solution 1: Leave gaps in Ppt slides for students to fill in class
- Solution 2: Give achievable reading tasks (textbooks/articles)

Encourage writing from summaries of reading

- More reading  better writing

Tips: 5

Work with our projects on English Across the Curriculum!

- Discuss how to
 - word assignment topic to avoid ambiguity
 - include language-related checklists, assessment criteria and weighting
- Receive
 - Handouts on use of English relevant to your assignments
 - Briefings for students
- Join
 - Staff development workshops
- Encourage students to
 - refer to our handouts
 - come to WAP/SAP/CILL (A305)
 - attend CILL workshops

Tips: 5 (Cont'd)

CILL (Centre for Independent Language Learning) – A305
Help Desk On-Duty

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
11.30-12.20	✓	✓		✓	✓
12.30-13.20		✓			
14.30-15.20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15.30-16.20		✓	✓	✓	✓

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Thank You



Q & A