

ENGLink

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Academic Staff Receives Prestigious Teaching Award for Outstanding Teaching Performance

President Professor Timothy W. Tong (seventh from left) and PolyU representatives congratulate Dr Forey (ninth from left) for winning the award.

Dr Gail Forey, an Associate Professor of our Department has been awarded the 2015 University Grants Committee (UGC) Teaching Award to recognise her outstanding teaching performance and achievements, as well as leadership and scholarly contributions to teaching and learning. The Secretary for Education, Mr Eddie Ng Hak-kim, presented Gail with the award at the ceremony on 9 September. The Ceremony was held at the Harbour Renaissance Hotel, Wanchai and Chief Executive CY Leung was also present and gave an address to the packed audience. There were three awardees from eight UGC funded institutions. This is the second teaching award presented to Dr Forey this year, as she received the President's Awards for Excellent Performance/Achievement for 2013/2014 in Teaching earlier in March 2015.

The journey as part of the selection process leading to this award was challenging and demanding. However, at the same time it allowed Gail to reflect, rationalize and report what she does as a teacher. The process started in March and ended early September with the final hurdle — a 40-minute rigorous panel interview. In this interview the discussion evolved around issues related to working with students, her own professional development, the relationship between teaching and research, the role of scholarly teaching, and a range of other thought provoking issues. The whole process involved a great deal of thought and energy where Gail had to make explicit her philosophical, epistemological and basic beliefs related to teaching and learning.

Gail has been teaching in PolyU for 19 years, and she is grateful for the outstanding teachers and inspirational leaders she has met. She holds a strong belief that teachers 'make a difference' and when they teach, they should teach to make a difference. She incorporates evidence-based research in all of her classes, guiding her students to become researchers. Matthew Whiley, a student of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching, remarked that "Dr Forey's depth of knowledge, clarity and energy are ever present but what makes her really stand out, what gives her a very special ability to inspire and enthuse her students, is the passion, integrity and warmth that shine through in every encounter."

In recent years, Gail has led large-scale consultancy projects which focus on the professional development of teachers across primary, secondary and tertiary contexts. The teachers who participated in the related workshops are able to improve their understanding of English, disciplinary specific language and pedagogy. The aim of these professional development workshops is to support teachers to have a positive impact on their students.

While this UGC award is an individual one, Gail would like to share it with the teachers that inspired her. She expressed that there are so many excellent teachers in the Department who also deserve this award. In her acceptance speech Gail stated that, "I think teaching is a privilege, working with learners, sharing ideas, collaborating with students and colleagues, discovering together, knowing that there is always more to learn and more to do is one of the tremendous benefits of our profession". We celebrate this award with Gail and pay tribute to the many great teachers we have in our Department!



At the media briefing on 8 September, Dr Forey and the other two awardees were interviewed by the local media about their own unique teaching philosophies as an outstanding teacher.



Secretary for Education Mr Eddie Ng Hak-kim presents the UGC Teaching Award to Dr Forey.

Summer Programme for Local Secondary School Students

The Department has offered a special one-day summer programme entitled “Love x Thoughts: Fascinating Aspects of English” on 6 July at the PolyU campus. The activity is part of the PolyU Summer Programme 2015 which is a new initiative undertaken by the Secondary School Relations Section (SSRS) with the aim of promoting PolyU and its undergraduate programmes to local secondary school students.

Twenty-five students from 16 secondary schools took part in the programme and they were engaged in three practical and interesting sessions learning to communicate effectively in English. During the first session “Modern fashionable language in English”, students were introduced to fashionable words in English and had a chance to create new words based on the need of society. The second session “Learning critical thinking through English and vice versa” aimed at guiding students to explore the way to become simultaneously a critical thinker and competent English user. Some examples of use of English in authentic situations in both local and overseas contexts were analysed to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the goals. At the last session “Gendered language through love letters”, students read love letters by legendary personalities and wrote letters to their beloved ones in gender-specific language.

Feedback from the students for this summer programme are very positive. All participants expressed they enjoyed the programme very much and they all agreed the presentations and demonstrations were clearly delivered. More than 95% found our activities were interesting and would recommend the programme to their friends.



The students are able to understand the fascinating aspects of English with the workshops and activities given by Ms Angela Tse (second row left) and Dr Victor Ho (second row right).



BAESP students Kathy Chan (left) and Cola Tang (right) share their study experience with the secondary school students.

Departmental Seminar

The Effects of Processing Instruction on the Acquisition of English Simple Past Tense: Age and Cognitive Task Demands (8 September 2015)

Specialising in second language learning and teaching, Professor Alessandro Benati from the University of Greenwich, United Kingdom, presented an empirical research investigating the effects of Processing Instruction on two different age groups and the role that cognitive task demands play in the results generated by Processing Instruction. While the results from the first interpretation and production task and second sentence-level interpretation task are different, Prof. Benati explained the findings indicated that Processing Instruction is an effective instructional treatment in helping school-age children and adult L2 learners to make accurate form-meaning connections.



Orientation Events for the New Academic Year

The Department arranged two orientation activities to help students to make a smooth start for the 2015-16 academic year:

1 MA Programmes Orientation Day (29 August 2015)

All new MA students were invited to this afternoon activity and about 100 attended. Students of each programme first attended an individual introduction session by the corresponding Programme Leaders. It was then followed by a common briefing session where the students learnt more about the Academic Support Programme, auditing of subjects, study pathways in the Department etc. The last session was a library orientation session and the students were introduced the use of various resources available in the library.



MA Scheme Leader Dr Li Lan gives explanation on the major areas related to our Department's MA programmes during the common briefing session.

2 Programme Orientation for BA Students (31 August 2015)

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. The students were also briefed on different programmes available to them during their study including overseas exchange, service learning, and Work-Integrated-Education (WIE).



BAESP programme leader Professor Winnie Cheng introduces the Department and its academic staff to the new students during the orientation.



Getting to Know the New Head of the Department

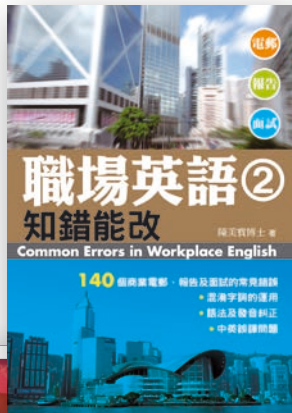
Hans J Ladegaard joined the Department of English on 1 September as Professor and Head of Department. Our new Head — who prefers to be called Hans — studied English Language & Literature, Scandinavian Studies, and Linguistics at Odense University, Denmark and Cambridge University, England. He received his PhD in Sociolinguistics in 1995, and taught at universities in Denmark and the UK for 11 years before moving to Hong Kong in 2006. He was Head of the Department of English Language & Literature at Hong Kong Baptist University before taking up the headship of our department.

Hans' research expertise is in intercultural communication, language attitudes and stereotypes, language and gender, narratives of migration, and pragmatics and discourse analysis, but he is interested in most areas of Applied Linguistics. He has just finished a book about the life stories of domestic migrant workers in Hong Kong (to be published by Routledge, 2016). He is also Co-Editor and Review Editor of *Pragmatics & Society*, an applied linguistics journal published by John Benjamins.

Talking about his visions for the Department of English, Hans emphasises two important issues. First, he would like for everyone to share the same visions. A department head may have his/her own ideas about where the department is headed, but visions only matter if they become shared. Second, he would like the department to be a happy (or happier) place to work. Happiness and performance are interrelated and if colleagues feel good about their job and their workplace, it is more likely they will go the extra mile. So, *everybody* needs to be involved in creating a stimulating environment for teaching and research.

There is no point denying that there are countless challenges to tackle for the new head of department. However, Hans expressed confidence that the department will grow and develop. It has so many high achievers in teaching and research and there is great potential to build on. He feels privileged to have been put in charge of such a great department.

Recent Publication



職場英語2 — 知錯能改 (**Common Errors in Workplace English**)

Author: Dr Mable Chan

This book discusses the common errors Chinese professionals make in the workplace when writing email messages; preparing business reports and attending interviews. Unlike existing books about common mistakes in English, this book is unique in making use of authentic examples in explaining common errors and confusion made by second language learners in terms of areas such as use of words; parts of speech, pronunciation. Clear, concise and effective explanations are given to account for the incorrect examples and readers can understand correct uses easily.

Dr Chan's book is officially released at the Hong Kong Book Fair in July.

News on the International Research Centre for Communication in Healthcare (IRCCH)

IRCCH Seminar Series — *corpkit*: a new tool for functional linguists (4 September 2015)

In this talk, Daniel McDonald, a PhD student from the Linguistics and Medical Schools at the University of Melbourne, Australia, introduced *corpkit*, a full-featured, open-source corpus linguistics tool created during his attachment period at PolyU. Focusing on a dataset of psychotherapy sessions, he demonstrated how the tool can be used to uncover and visualise lexicogrammatical patterns in a large, structured corpus. Daniel is attached to PolyU and IRCCH as a visiting PhD student for three months until early September.



Summer WIE Placement Programmes

The Department organized WIE placement programmes in Australia and the Chinese Mainland for BAESP students during summer 2015. Through these offshore placement opportunities, students gained hands-on experience of 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 (23 May – 20 June)

“ My experience from the Southern Cross University Placement Programme provided me with valuable working experience as I could gain exposure to the Australian culture first hand. I believe that gaining the experience of working in a multicultural environment has certainly benefited me not only for my studies at PolyU, but also in becoming open-minded towards the opinions, values and cultures of others on a day-to-day basis. ”

— *Patricia Jover, Year 3 BAESP Student*



Patricia (right) works as a teaching assistant in the KM kindergarten class of Lismore Public School.



BAESP interns with their work supervisors Professor Ken Peters (left) and Professor Jerry Cahn (right) from Queen's College of the City University of New York.

WIE Programme at the University of Shanghai for Science and Technology (USST) (4 June – 5 July)

“ This internship really helped me to understand more about the work environment and workplace culture in the educational field. It was an invaluable opportunity for me to learn from everyone around me, such as the professors from the US and the teachers and staff at USST. Local students at USST were very helpful and friendly. It was an opportunity not only to make friends with people living in the Chinese Mainland but also to get to know more about their culture. ”

— *Jason Cheung, Year 4 BAESP Student*

Individual WIE Placements

Apart from departmental WIE programmes, some BAESP students sourced their own WIE placements locally or overseas.

1. **WIE organization: Moscow International Higher Business School, Russia**

“ The School which I was attached to is planning to set up a Chinese/Russian business school in the future. My responsibilities there were to help them to research the Chinese educational system and to analyze the possibility of their plans. It was certainly a good experience for me, as I was able to work and communicate with locals there. They also took us around Moscow and let us have a taste of the local culture. We became good friends afterwards! I will recommend this internship to all the students in the Department. ”

— *Sunny Lai, Year 4 BAESP student*



2. WIE organization: *RUFIL Consulting, Russia*

“ My attitude towards working has changed after the internship in Russia — I now understand the importance of arriving at the office on time even without being supervised, keeping things neat and tidy, setting a work schedule for every task, working systematically, and many other strategies that you may not experience in a local business context. ”

— *Kannus Hui, Year 4 BAESP Student*



The internship gives Kannus (right) a taste of Russian culture and lifestyle.

3. WIE organization: *Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, Canada*

“ I was responsible for liaising with performers and politicians about the summer festival that the centre was hosting. I was very delighted to have an opportunity to talk to the members of the Parliament and even the mayor of Toronto on different occasions. I even worked as an emcee for a Canada Day celebration event! ”

— *Linus Ng, Year 3 BAESP student*



4. WIE organization: *Comprea, Spain*

“ Being part of this international team, all of us had to speak in the language which is not our mother tongue — English. However, with the willingness to keep everyone on the same page and the passion of striving for efficiency, the whole team communicated openly and effectively most of the time. This experience has strengthened my confidence and courage to voice my opinions in the workplace. ”

— *Lorraine Wong, Year 4 BAESP student*



As a marketing intern in the company, Lorraine (first row left) is given many opportunities to suggest creative ideas for different campaigns.

5. WIE organization: *Escuela Martín Buber, Argentina*

“ Being a teaching assistant in Escuela Martín Buber in Buenos Aires, I got the opportunity to teach first- to fourth-graders in a secondary school. Buenos Aires is a very lovable city and wall graffiti is its signature street art. This experience is certainly unforgettable and fruitful to me! ”

— *Selena Wong, Year 4 BAESP student*



Selena (first row middle) makes a lot of new friends in Argentina during her internship.

6. WIE organization: *Hong Kong Housing Society, HK*

“ Being a marketing intern, I helped the team to prepare promotional materials and assisted with their sales operation for the redevelopment project in Cheung Sha Wan. I feel grateful for having the opportunity to work in this non-governmental housing organization. ”

— *Sharon Chung, Year 4 BAESP student*



7. WIE organization: *Music Office, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, HKSARG*

“ My main duty was to assist the Summer Music Workshop which was held during summer in 17 different venues. I was allowed to try all types of work, ranging from clerical work to site management, indoors to outdoors. I enjoyed working with children and music very much. ”

— *Caley Lin, Year 4 BAESP student*



8. WIE organization: *Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, HK*

“ I was a temporary clerk in the Purchasing and Supplies Section. I had the opportunity to get hands-on experience of every step before and after the purchasing process. I feel really thankful that I had a group of great colleagues who were lovely and helpful to me, so I had a really fruitful summer holiday this year. ”

— *Sara Tong, Year 4 BAESP student*



Doctor of Applied Language Sciences Invites Application for 2016/17 Admission

The Doctor of Applied Language Sciences (DALs) offered by the Faculty of Humanities is inviting application for its fifth intake in September 2016. This professional doctorate programme is the first of its kind in Hong Kong and Asia which combines interdisciplinary scholars and experts from the Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, the Department of English, the English Language Centre and the Department of Computing. DALs aims to help nurture and develop a critical mass of future leaders in language-related professions and is a suitable further study option for our Department's alumni.

Unlike traditional PhD programmes, DALs is a flexible mixed mode programme that combines not only theoretical components,

but also advanced studies and research in areas of professional significance and relevance. The four key strands within DALs are: (1) Second Language Education; (2) Intercultural and Professional Communication; (3) Translating and Interpreting; and (4) Language and Information Technology.

Promising scholarships will also be offered exclusively to outstanding students with excellent academic and professional merits, and teaching assistantship to qualified candidates. More information about the programme can be found at www.polyu.edu.hk/FH/DALS. Online applications can now be made until 29 April 2016 at Study@PolyU website www.polyu.edu.hk/study.