

ENGLink

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Prof. David Qian gives a congratulatory address to all FH graduates.



Mr Chan Pui Sun from MA in English Language Teaching gives a valedictory speech on behalf of the graduates at the second session.



Happy faces from graduates of BA in English Studies for the Professions

Congratulations to Our 300 Graduates at the 20th PolyU Congregation (8 November)

Graduation is one of the most important and memorable ceremonies in life. It resembles the achievement of a major milestone on the one hand and the commencement of a new challenge on the other. For our 303 graduates at the 20th PolyU Congregation of the Faculty of Humanities (FH), the graduation day is no doubt a precious one filled with joy. Conferment was made to 166 graduates at the Postgraduate Degrees session and to 137 graduates at the Bachelor Degrees session respectively.

Professor David Qian, Programme Leader of MA in English Language Studies, gave a congratulatory address to all FH graduates at the three sessions on behalf of the Faculty. He said that the graduation day implied a new beginning in the life of the graduates and he believed the critical tools, professional skills, and cultural awareness that they acquired during their course of study at PolyU would enable them to encounter future challenges. While the real world will not be as perfect as the graduates would think, he encouraged them to contribute their bit to the betterment of our society to make it a fair place. Before Prof. Qian closed his speech, he advised the graduates to "hold yourself in an honorable manner; be fair to everyone, take no advantage of the underprivileged, and do no harm to yourself."

Major awards for graduates and students were also presented at the ceremony which included the Dean's Certificate of Academic Achievement 2013/14, Department of English Performance Scholarship (BA Programmes) 2013/14, and Department of English Postgraduate Performance Awards 2013/14.

The Department takes this opportunity to congratulate all our graduates again and wishes everyone a bright and prosperous future.



Our student ambassadors and staff answer enquiries from visitors about our programmes.

PolyU Education Info Day 2014 (11 October 2014)

Over 30 staff and students of the Department took part in this annual university-wide event to promote our academic programmes to the visitors. This was a good opportunity for us to introduce our full-time undergraduate programme to parents and prospective students. Visitors were able to know us and our programme better from the exhibition panels in our booth or by talking to our student ambassadors. Three info seminars for the BA in English Studies for the Professions (BAESP) programme were organised and they were attended by about 180 participants. The event attracted over 30,000 visitors to the PolyU campus.



Programme Leader of BAESP Prof. Winnie Cheng explains the programme in details at the info seminar.

Reaching out to the Spanish Speaking World

In November 2014, the Spanish section of the Department organised several cultural activities under the theme of *HEAR, SEE & TASTE The Spanish Speaking World*. Spanish events under the same theme are offered to the PolyU community regularly to promote the various aspects of Spanish culture.

1 Spanish Film Festival (1 – 7 November 2014)

With the support of the Consulate General of Spain, four Spanish films were shown which brought distinctive culture and lifestyle of Spain to the audience: (i) *Las Aventuras De Tadeo Jones* [3D Tad, The Lost Explorer] (3 November); (ii) *Los Últimos Días* [The Last Days] (4 November); (iii) *Todas Las Mujeres* [All The Women] (5 November); and (iv) *Vivir Es Fácil Con Los Ojos Cerrados* [Living Is Easy with Eyes Closed] (7 November).

2 Salsa and Flamenco Workshops (11 – 12 November 2014)

With Salsa workshop on 11 November and Flamenco workshop on the next day, staff and students were able to experience the unique sensuous and passionate style of Spanish dance culture. On 12 November, there was also a live Spanish guitar music performance by a veteran guitarist.



The instructor teaches the participants the basic steps of the two dances at the workshops.



The Spanish music played by veteran guitarist Bernard Yim touches the audience.

Departmental Seminars

1 Making narrative film accessible as an object of study: the role of multimodal linguistics for teaching and research (3 October 2014)

Specializing in functional, computational and multimodal linguistics, Professor John Bateman from The University of Bremen, Germany, addressed the importance of narrative films and moving audiovisual images which have been primarily global mediator for the transmission and negotiation of socio-cultural values. The situation has led to the consideration of how the medium operates and whether the shift to the moving image poses consequences for the meanings are made. Presenting in the format of a workshop, Prof. Batemen placed emphasis on the means by which people might achieve systematic investigations of films analogously to how texts are studied: revealing stylistic and socially significant patterns for critical analysis.



2 'The Drover's Wife' – semiotic spanning between a story and a painting – an exercise in multisystemiotics (7 October 2014)

With expertise in teaching Business and Corporate Communication, Professor Eija Ventola from Aalto University, Finland used Murray Bail's short story *The Drover's Wife* to discuss multisystemiotics and semiotic spanning between various forms of art, with focus on the stories and the paintings at this seminar. She explored the grammar of the painting and its meanings and how Murray Bail links his work with the painting and construes his meanings in the story. She concluded that the work is a helpful tool in developing tools for multisystemiotic analysis.



3 Corpus Linguistics and Health Communication (13 October 2014)

Professor Elena Semino from Lancaster University, United Kingdom explained at the seminar how Corpus Linguistics is being applied to the study of health communication in two projects at the University: The 'Metaphor in End-of-Life-Care' and the McGill Pain Questionnaire (MPQ). Focusing on the experience of end life care, the former emphasised on 'manual' analysis and corpus linguistic methods in the study of metaphors used by terminally ill patients and healthcare professionals. The latter mainly concerned with how corpus methods were also applied to the assessment of a language-based tool for the diagnosis of chronic pain. The findings of the questionnaire indicated a correlation of use of pain descriptors with that of the questionnaire completed by the patients at a London Hospital. Based on the findings of the two projects, she argued the importance of the contribution of corpus linguistics to the study of health communication, and to research-based interventions in health care practices.





4 Jungle Listening- the need for a new model of speech (17 October 2014)

As a professional English teacher with broad teaching experience in different parts of the world, Dr Richard Cauldwell pointed out the current dominance of the Careful Speech Model (CSM) over language learning pedagogy. He argued the inadequacy of some aspects of CSM to characterise the unruliness, wildness and massive reductions that occur in spontaneous speech. Then he proposed the Spontaneous Speech Model (SSM) to facilitate a more effective method of teaching listening. He further extended his argument by highlighting the necessity for the teachers to develop a new mind-set which would encourage a different learning environment for the students.

5 Purposes of Academic Writing from Genre Descriptions to EAP materials online (30 October 2014)

With educational linguistics as a main research area, Professor Sheena Gardner from Coventry University, United Kingdom shared her findings and experience in the process of developing a classification of genres of assessed student writing. By grouping assignments with similar purposes and staging across university disciplines, a description of thirteen genre families was resulted. She also identified five major purposes of academic writing across these families. The descriptions of the thirteen genre families and the five purposes were further taken to engage learners of English with the purposes.



6 Inter- vs. cross-disciplinary in pragmatics and linguistics (25 November 2014)

An expert in Philosophy and Linguistics, Professor Jacob L. Mey from University of Southern Denmark, Denmark offered the explanation for two confusing notions: the cross-disciplinary and the (true) inter-disciplinary. In brief, the cross-disciplinary looks at pragmatics aspects in an individual discipline while inter-disciplinary mainly deals with the two disciplines' mutual interpenetration and dialectic interdependence. He further explained that while linguistics needs pragmatics to obtain a proper perspective for its findings, pragmatics needs linguistics to obtain the data required to prove its pragmatic points. A need recently has also been arisen to re-orient the debate on the semantics-pragmatics interface, which is informed by linguistically based, exclusively semantic approach.

Dr Mable Chan Shares Views on the English Standard of Hong Kong People in an Interview by TVB

Dr Mable Chan was interviewed by TVB programme – Scoop (東張西望) on 19 November to share her views on a survey released by a private English learning organisation in the same month. The survey results suggest a falling trend of English standard in Hong Kong. It was found that the standard of Hong Kong people was behind that of other Asian countries such as South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. During the interview, Dr Chan explained that the validity and reliability of a survey are affected by many factors and it might be hard to generalize the findings of this online test to Hong Kong people in general. She also cited IELTS results which might be a more reliable indicator of the English proficiency level of Hong Kong people.

At the end of the interview, Dr Chan gave some tips about learning English, one of which was about the use of corpus. [Corpus is a compilation of authentic and machine-readable texts that allow people to study language based on language use in real-life through frequencies, and relationships between words such as collocations and keyness.](#) While there are corpora for spoken and written English, some include native uses of the language and some others learners' corpora.

The two sentences below were provided by Dr Chan for the programme host to test some people in one of the business districts in Hong Kong. Do you know the answer, and why?

- (a) Offers are given on a first-come-first-serve basis
- (b) Offers are given on a first-come-first-served basis



Dr Mable Chan and the programme host, Mr Joe Chan had a lively discussion about the English standard of Hong Kong people during the interview.

English Debating Team Overcomes Challenges through Teamwork at the Northeast Asian Open 2014

The English Debating Team (EDT) took part in the Northeast Asian Open 2014 (NEAO 2014) which was held in the National Taiwan University (NTU) from 21 – 24 November. NEAO is one of the most accountable and competitive university tournaments in North East Asia, with more than 300 participants from South Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan.

Throughout the competition, participated EDT members have learnt how to respond to points of information and speaking in a persuasive manner. They performed well in several rounds as the amount of material was enough to cover the seven-minute time that were given. On topics that they were not familiar with such as the motion that read “this house, as Japan, regrets Abenomics”, they used their spontaneous minds to tackle.

Even though they were beaten by other teams at the end, the learning experience and the feedback from the judges have enhanced their learning of debating. They also deeply felt debating is not about individual representation and teamwork is a more important element. To all the members, it was a relief after the competition because everyone was working very hard in debating and thinking of lines of attack. To the President of EDT Leo Kan who also took part in this tournament, he found this experience made him a better speaker and even perhaps a better critical thinker as a whole.



Before the competition officially starts, President of EDT Leo Kan (fourth from left) takes part in a welcoming dinner. There are also performances by NTU students during the evening which is a great opportunity to mingle with debaters from other institutions and make new friends.

News on The Research Centre for Professional Communication in English (RCPCE)

Plenary Talk on RCPCE Collaborative Projects with Key Industries

Professor Winnie Cheng, Director of RCPCE, delivered a plenary talk entitled 'Collaborative projects with key industries: Sharing of Hong Kong experience' in the 2014 Cross-Straits International Conference on English for Specific Purposes (ESP): Uniqueness and Diversity in ESP Research and Pedagogy at Asia University, Taichung, Taiwan on 3 – 5 October 2014, which was organised by Asia University and Taiwan ESP Association, and co-organised by the Chinese Association for ESP and RCPCE. The talk described a number of collaborative projects with the pillar industries in the Hong Kong economy, such as financial services, health care, surveying, construction engineering, and tourism, conducted by the RCPCE over the past years. It described the objectives and outcomes of these collaborative projects as well as methods employed to collect and analyse instances of professional communication, in particular the procedure adopted to compile profession-specific corpora, such as the Hong Kong Engineering Corpus and Hong Kong Financial Services Corpus. It also discussed the value and implications of these collaborative projects with the industries in Hong Kong in research and ESP pedagogies.



Prof. Winnie Cheng receives a souvenir from Prof. Chen Yingjue from Asia University.

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



Prof. Srikant Sarangi gives a seminar and also leads a discussion about healthcare communication research.

IRCCH Seminar on Research Methods in Healthcare Communication (1 December 2014)

The IRCCH team at PolyU hosted a one-day event on Research Methods in Healthcare Communication with the objective to enhance collective understanding of current methodological issues and strategic directions in international healthcare communication research. Professor Srikant Sarangi from Aalborg University, Denmark who is also a member of IRCCH (he was in Hong Kong as a visitor for HKU) gave a seminar and led a discussion on the topic: Working with paradoxes in qualitative healthcare communication research. This unique event was attended by over 30 local and overseas IRCCH members, and local PhD students and provided them an opportunity for informal discussion and professional interaction.

IRCCH Retreat – Seminar Presentations and Discussion (2 – 4 December 2014)

Following the Seminar on Research Methods in Healthcare Communication on 1 December, IRCCH has organised a 3-day retreat for its working committee with seminar presentations and discussions. The focus for 2 December was a 3-hour workshop on quantitative methods by Professor Peter Schulz from the Faculty of Communication Sciences at the University of Lugano in Switzerland. On 3 – 4 December, there were presentations and discussions on the strategic priorities for healthcare communication research in the next three years. The discussions were led by Professor Diana Slade of our Department, Dr Dorothy Jones and Professor Phillip Della from Curtin University, Australia. This retreat allowed members to develop their shared understanding of current strategies and to collaborate on current and future grant proposals in international healthcare communication research under the auspices of IRCCH. IRCCH would like to express its enormous gratitude to all the international visitors who provided their own funding to come to Hong Kong for the event.



The meetings and presentations at the retreat allow IRCCH working committee members to develop research collaboration ideas.

IRCCH is organising The 3rd International Roundtable on Healthcare Communication immediately following COMET on 27 – 28 June 2015. On 29 June, IRCCH is organising a joint full-day symposium in collaboration with the International Charter for Compassion. The Symposium is entitled [Communicating for Compassionate Healthcare: Mobilizing Values to Practice](#) and the speakers included Dr Rev. Joan Brown Campbell from Chautauqua Institute, USA; Dr Elizabeth A. Rider from Boston Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, USA; and Associate Professor Roger Dunston from University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

During the Symposium, there will be a launch for IRCCH at PolyU to become the Asia-Pacific Healthcare Hub of Charter for Compassion. The Charter for Compassion represents a major worldwide organisation working with over 1,100 partners to promote principles of compassion through practical action in a variety of sectors including healthcare, education, science/technology and research, environment, business and others. Everyone from the PolyU community is invited to attend the launch and the Symposium.