CAES
Centre for Applied English Studies

The University Of Hong Kong

Centre for Applied English Studies

Newsletter 2014/15

From the Director

CAES's Role within the University

- Developing Academic Literacy
- Fostering Independent Learning
- Sustaining English as a Lingua Franca
- Nurturing Applied Linguistics Professionals

Professor Ken Hyland
Director
Chair Professor of Applied Linguistics

The Centre for Applied English Studies has just completed one of the busiest years in its 22-year history, launching a number of new courses and seeing the majority of its double-cohort students through their English language studies. The curriculum reform which saw Hong Kong universities transform themselves from three- to four-year institutions and accept an additional 30,000 undergraduates in the process, has been a challenging time for all teachers, but particularly so for those of us responsible for undergraduate academic literacy support.

Our contribution to the new curriculum has been to multiply the number of courses we offer, accept a large increase in students, double the number of credits awarded, and shift our emphasis from a general professional competence in English to academic literacy. Undergraduate students are now required to take 12 credits of English, six of which are in our Core University English course (CUE) and six in the form of "English in the Discipline" (ED). CUE is a first-year course for all freshmen designed to bridge students' school and disciplinary studies in English. ED courses, on the other hand, are the result of intensive discussions with faculty members throughout the university and various projects looking at the literacy demands and expectations of some 30 different subject disciplines. All these new courses have also involved finding ways to offer students the means to extend their learning experience beyond the classroom and into some 80 to 100 hours of out-of-class learning.

All this activity has resulted in some impressive numbers. In 2013-2014 the Centre taught almost 7,000 undergraduate students (including 2,800 in CUE), 1,200 students in summer workshops, staff courses and other programmes, and 1,308 students in postgraduate courses. We also conducted 2,564 self-access consultations in the Learning Commons and graduated students from our Postgraduate Diploma in English Studies and Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics programmes. We also continued to teach nine full-time and three part-time students on our PhD programme. Research was not forgotten as the Centre ran its active professional development seminar series bringing international names to HKU to speak. Several staff secured research and teaching development grants and almost everyone among our 50 teachers attended conferences, several giving plenary or keynote presentations. Many published their research in peer reviewed journals and in books, with titles appearing with Cambridge University Press, Routledge, John Benjamins, CityU Press and Shanghai Foreign Studies Press.

The 2014-2015 academic year promises to be another challenging and productive period as we prepare to introduce more new ED courses. We have just welcomed two new Assistant Professors and two full-time research students to the centre and have launched a new MA TESOL in collaboration with the Faculty of Education. We are also busy preparing to host a big international English language conference, "Faces of English", next June and colleagues are beginning funded research projects on a plagiarism awareness programme and English exit assessment which will eventually have an impact on undergraduate education at HKU. These initiatives are exciting new challenges which we intend to meet with the same enthusiasm and attitude towards research-informed language education for which we are well-known.

CAES International Conference

The Centre for Applied English Studies will host an international conference from 11 to 13 June 2015. The conference theme is "Faces of English: Theory, Practice and Pedagogy". This highlights the rich diversity of approaches to understanding English and the range of contexts in which it is taught and studied across the globe. The conference will bring together academics, researchers, practitioners and research students from around the world to discuss the interdependence between theory and practice, with papers which focus on the analysis, description and teaching of English in order to better understand the ways in which theory, research and pedagogy interact and inform each other. It also encourages participants to share practical ideas and teaching materials related to the use of English in a variety of social, professional, educational and virtual contexts.

Presentations in the formats of papers, colloquia, workshops, demonstrations and poster displays will address 13 sub-themes. Five internationally renowned speakers in Applied Linguistics and English Language Education have been invited to give keynote speeches and lead post-conference workshops:

- **Professor Rod Ellis**
  (The University of Auckland, New Zealand)
- **Professor Bonny Norton**
  (University of British Columbia, Canada)
- **Professor David Nunan**
  (The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR)
- **Professor Wen Qiufang**
  (Beijing Foreign Studies University, China)
- **Professor Ken Hyland**
  (The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR)

This will be an academically and culturally stimulating conference in the vibrant city, Hong Kong, where East meets West and where English has long been at the centre of life, education and work. We envisage 500-800 scholars from all over the world will attend this exciting event. We invite you to join us by submitting presentation proposals or attending the conference to develop professional knowledge exchange, insights and collaborations.

More details about the conference can be found at: **http://caes.hku.hk/facesofenglish**

MA (TESOL)

The Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second or Other Language (MA TESOL) programme is a new one-year, three-semester, full-time programme jointly offered by the Division of English Language Education in the Faculty of Education and the Centre for Applied English Studies. It aims to develop students' understanding and knowledge of key concepts, theories and research related to TESOL, and their ability to carry out an independent project. Students will study a total of 12 modules, including six core modules, four elective modules and a two-module equivalent independent project. The CAES teaching staff are responsible for teaching three core modules, two elective modules and supervising projects.

Farewell to the 3-year Curriculum

In the 1990s, initiation of the 3-year curriculum signified the first time the Centre was to offer credit-bearing English courses to all faculties. For Centre staff, it was exciting and challenging to be designing new courses for all major disciplines with the Engineering and Medicine faculties taking the lead in requesting and advising on specialist materials.

More recently, after a period of internal growth and development, the Centre has been engaged in stronger integration and collaboration with major degree programmes in preparation for the 4-year curriculum.

Fond Memories of the 3-year Curriculum

Joanna Lee, Programme Coordinator for Social Sciences, 2012 - present

"Courses of the 3-year curriculum served as a valuable and practical learning ground for the development of our new courses."

Natalie Fong, Programme Coordinator for Education, 2006 - Dec 2014

"To reminisce about the planning, development and coordination of Education courses for the 3-year undergraduate curriculum, the experience of the past make for the present."

Ken Lau, Programme Coordinator for Engineering, 2008 - 2012

"I really enjoyed teaching the ProTech course in which students had to make a car that could move using recycled paper and an elastic band. Not only did they learn the language of writing a technical report about the project, you could really see students' creativity and the excitement during the in-class competition!"

Research and Publications

CAES has continued to make a significant contribution to the academic community by producing substantial research output. Colleagues continue to make numerous presentations at local and international conferences, and to write articles for a range of international journals such as *System, Journal of Second Language Writing,* and *Pragmatics and Society*. In addition, two scholarly books have recently been published by our colleagues: *Academic Written English* by Ken Hyland and *Managing Self-access Language Learning* by David Gardner (co-authored with Lindsay Miller from CityU).

Knowledge Exchange and Outreach

The Centre for Applied English Studies takes an active role in extending our expertise into the wider community. The CAES Publicity and Outreach Committee has recently been allocated UGC-Knowledge Exchange fund to develop a website to contribute our knowledge of professional communication to the business sector and the general public.

In addition, we welcomed more than 100 local and overseas academics and students to our Centre in 2013-14. During the visit, they learned about our Centre's academic profile and administrative operations. We continue to receive requests for providing informative talks from various organisations outside HKU.

Our commitment to knowledge exchange is also reflected in our constant involvement in academic visits and a range of projects and courses for professionals, teachers and students outside the University.

For details, please visit: http://caes.hku.hk/home/knowledge-exchange/

The HKU English Public Speaking Competition 2014

Hosted jointly by CAES and the HKU Campus Toastmasters Club the goal of this competition was to hone the public speaking skills of HKU students. The final was judged by distinguished members of the university and the community. The competition was popular and the quality of the presentations was impressive.

Staff News

Promotions, Arrivals, Departures

From left: Peter Voller, Tse Lai Kun

*Congratulations to **Newly promoted colleagues:***

Joanna Lee, Senior Lecturer

Eleanor Kwan, Lecturer

Julie Ng, Lecturer

Bernadette Wo, Lecturer

*Farewell to **Departing colleagues**:*

Kay Chan, Keith Chau, Vivian Li, Connie Ng, Chris Sun, Tse Lai Kun, Jane Tsoi and **Peter Voller.**

We wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

*A Warm Welcome to **New colleagues**:*

Peter Crosthwaite, Assistant Professor

Michael Yeldham, Assistant Professor

Achievements

We are delighted to announce that Jon Hui and Daya Datwani have recently completed their doctoral studies at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and Northeastern University in the US respectively.

Tse Lai Kun (Retired in June 2014)

Lai Kun has a passion for teaching and she always has a lot of creative ideas for pedagogy. In the early 90s, she developed the first credit-bearing course in the Centre with David Gardner. She has a keen interest in ESP and health communication. Over the past 13 years she worked closely with the Faculty of Medicine to develop and coordinate six different courses for medicine students. She has also presented on related topics at various local and international conferences. She will be missed by everybody in the Centre.

Right: Tse Lai Kun

Interview with Peter Voller (Retired in June 2014)

Right: Peter Voller

What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction during your time in the Centre?

Actually, moving the English Language Resource Centre from the old campus to the new campus was an accomplishment because it was hard work but finally it worked out okay. The planning for that started years ago, so I suppose I'm happy that it has worked out okay. I'm also very happy with the architecture English-in-the-discipline course. I produced quite a lot of stuff for this course and it seems to work. We started working on that five years ago. I suppose teaching the autonomy module of the Master's course has been very interesting. It has been quite satisfying doing that. In terms of my personal career, it's the publishing and editing books in autonomy that has been satisfying.

What did you like most about teaching?

It depends on students and the nature of the course. Some students are great; some students aren't. For example, science students are fabulous to teach because they are far more receptive than architecture students in a sense. Classroom dynamics are also very important. You have a wide range of students. Why some students are great while some students aren't, you can't always figure out.

Can you imagine what you might have done had you not chosen to enter the teaching profession?

Who knows! Maybe I would have got to do training in a bank. I did very well in my postgraduate studies. I haven't really imagined not doing university teaching because I started off doing that straight away. When I was really looking for my first job in the UK, there was a big recession there in the 70s. So I had to get out and fortunately, Japan was expanding, so a Japanese university took me up. Then I shifted always within university teaching which is good. So I have never considered things other than teaching.

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