

The 4th Undergraduate Conference Language Linguistics and Literature



英文系

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

香港恒生大學

THE HANG SENG UNIVERSITY
OF HONG KONG

The 4th Undergraduate Conference on Language, Literature and Linguistics

Department of English

The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

Date: 20 May 2019 (Mon)

Time: 09:00-13:30

Venue: A315, S H Ho Academic Building

HEAD'S MESSAGE

The Senior Project is a wonderful opportunity for students to integrate what they have learnt in the past four years. The BA-ENG programme is a unique combination of language, linguistics, literature, as well as business studies and general education.

This year, I am very glad to see a broad range of research topics coming from our best students in the cohort: The notion of law in Shakespeare's *Othello*, gun culture in American comedy, the spatial language in football commentary, to name just a few. These are truly interesting topics which can be further developed at the postgraduate level. It is a challenging task to complete a quality 6000-word research essay amid the tough workload you encounter in the very last year of study. Upon the submission of the essay, it is proven that you are a self-disciplined young adult, who can work and think independently. This is a big achievement and you should be proud of yourself.

For some of you, this could be the last time you wrote so much on an academic topic. For others, this could be the beginning of an academic career. No matter which path you are taking, I hope you will treasure this conference, which I see as the milestone of your personal and academic development. It is always mesmerising to see students getting serious about their work. Because it is the time when you are learning something new and becoming a better person. It may sound odd, but I was happy in seeing a lot of serious faces in the last conference. I look forward to seeing more this year!



The 4th Undergraduate Conference on Language, Linguistics and Literature

Last but not least, I would like to thank my colleagues in supervising these wonderful projects. Special thanks to Catherine in organising the event. I look forward to reading more exciting projects next year!

Dr Paul Fung

Associate Professor

Acting Head

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the proceedings of the 4th Undergraduate Conference on Language, Linguistics and Literature.

Each year, it is with high anticipation that I prepare this conference as it not only gives a finishing touch to our students' senior projects but marks the completion of their 4 years of study – it is the time when they reap the fruits of success yielded by the seeds of hard work they sowed in their academic pursuits.

My colleagues and I, through working closely with these students in the past year, were honoured to witness their growth: they are no longer the naïve freshmen we once met; but keen, determined, young intellectuals ready for the next stage of life. Indeed, it was a great pleasure to work with these students: we could from time to time engage in the thought-provoking conversations or even intellectually stimulating debates. It brought academic pursuits beyond formal studies, but among students, between faculty members.

This cohort, the Class of 2019 is a very small one. But like their predecessors, they are an extraordinary and diverse group who are dedicated young scholars with keen insights into the field of linguistics and the literary world. I am happy to report to you that this year's conference is continuing the string of success of the Department of English and is featuring 8 outstanding research presentations from a wide range of topics.

Congratulations to all our students for their achievements!

Dr Catherine Wong, Conference Organiser and Editor

**THE 4th UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE,
LINGUISTICS AND LITERATURE ORGANISING COMMITTEE**

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PROGRAMME

Registration open, 09:00 – 13:30

Conference opening ceremony 09:15 – 09:30

Panel 1: Monday 20 May 2019, 09:30 – 10:30

Moderator: Cherry Wong

Jennifer Cheung

Orientalism in Novels: A Comparative Study of Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha*, Geling Yan's *The Flowers of War* and Lilian Lee's *Farewell My Concubine*

Heidy Lo

Law and Identity in *Othello* and *Twelfth Night*

Jeffrey Tam

Death and Change in Modernity

Panel 2: Monday 20 May 2019, 11:00 – 11:40

Moderator: Macy Wu

Aggie Lam

Don't Blame on Guns, Blame on People: The Evolution of Gun Related Humour in American Animated Comedies

Patrice Yim

Spatial Language in Football Commentary

Panel 3: Monday 20 May 2019, 11:50 – 12:50

Moderator: Tiffany Lau

Leeann Chang

A Study on Film Adaptation from Graphic Novel, Play and Prose Fiction

Crystal Cheng

Past and Present: Princesses in Fantasyland

Jenny Tsang

Nonsense in *Alice's Adventures in the Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* and its Hidden Meaning

Leeann CHANG

A Study on Film Adaptation from Graphic Novel, Play and Prose Fiction

With the universal tendency of literary works being turned into films nowadays, there is an intricate and close relationship between films and literatures, as film creates visual images that represent meanings, while literary works depict meanings and images by words. The project aims to analyse the process of film adaptations that are based on literary works by conducting three case studies on a graphic novel, play and prose fiction and their film adaptations, so as to find out the impacts of film adaptation. The project holds that there must be inevitable changes made to the original literary work during film adaptation, due to the distinctive natures of each media. Through the examinations on Zack Snyder's *Watchmen* based on the graphic novel *Watchmen* by Alan Moore, Baz Luhrmann's film adaptation based on the play *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare, and Denis Villeneuve's *Arrival* based on the short story 'Story of Your Life' by Ted Chiang, these case studies respectively include the observation on the differences between the literary works and its film adaptation, the discussion on the process of adaptation, and the analysis on the impacts of film adaptation. This study systematically discusses the features of these literary genres and the literary works, analysing the adaptation process of each genres, as well as exploring the impacts of the film adaptation compared to the original literary works.

Keywords: film adaptation, graphic novel, prose fiction, montage, characterisation

Crystal CHENG

Past and Present: Princesses in Fantasyland

This research explores four stories from the *Grimm Tales*, 'Cinderella', 'Briar Rose', 'The Singing, Springing Lark' and 'Snow White'. The princesses are the models for investigating the social expectations on gender roles from the 17th century to the present. The *Grimm Tales* provides the traditional framework of the social expectations in the 17th century while changes will be identified and investigated by reviewing the feminist revisionist mythology, *The Bloody Chamber* and *Good Bones* and also the most updated live-action movies produced by Disney, *Cinderella*, *Maleficent*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Mirror Mirror*. The characterisation in the *Grimm Tales*, recognising femininity in feminist revisionist mythology and the new story-telling in Disney Hollywood productions are investigated. Values change and keep are recorded, and the universal social values of gender issues are found out. From the exploration of theories and analysis of the texts, the moral values are summarised. A new value related to the concept of family is found which encourages positive communication and interaction between youngsters and their family members.

Keywords: gender roles, fairy tales, princess, feminist revisionist mythology, live-action movies

Jennifer CHEUNG

Orientalism in Novels: A Comparative Study of Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha*, Geling Yan's *The Flowers of War* and Lilian Lee's *Farewell My Concubine*

In *Orientalism*, Said has explored and explained how Western writers and scholars have represented, reinvented and hegemonised the Orient through studying, reinterpreting and writing about them. *Orientalism* focuses mainly on the orientalised of the Middle East by the West. This essay aims to therefore further explore the notion of not only Orientalism by Western novelist, but also Self-Orientalism by Eastern novelists on the Far East. Three selected novels including *Memoirs of a Geisha* by Arthur Golden, *The Flowers of War* by Geling Yan and *Farewell My Concubine* by Lilian Lee are analysed according to Said's understanding and observation on Orientalism. *Memoirs of a Geisha* is a reconstruction of the Japanese geisha world by an American writer, whereas *The Flowers of War* and *Farewell My Concubine* are the Chinese writers' portrayal of the lives of Asian courtesans. This essay then looks into how the three novels have antithesised and sexualised the Orient, and how their notions of Orientalism echo or differ from each other.

Keywords: Orientalism, Self-Orientalism, antithesisation, sexualisation, Orient

Aggie LAM

Don't Blame on Guns, Blame on People: The Evolution of Gun Related Humour in American Animated Comedies

This study focuses on how humour related to guns on the popular American animated comedies. *The Simpsons*, *Family Guy* and more recently *Rick and Morty* reflect changes in American culture attitudes about guns over the last several decades using the framework, *General Theory of Verbal Humour* proposed by Victor Raskin and Salvatore Attardo (1994). The framework includes 6 fundamental components: Language, Narrative Strategy, Target, Situation, Logical Mechanism and Script Opposition. It is used to study the semantic distance between the animated comedies. This study focuses on the linguistics and visual construction of gun related humour across difference shows broadcast at different time reflecting changing attitudes toward gun as reflections of changes in American culture with a shifting focus of humour over time from guns as instruments to the perpetrators of gun violence. This study suggests that the changes in the structure of gun-related humour may serve as a technique to shift focus on gun processor rather than the instrument.

Keywords: American culture, comedy, gun violence, humour, power

Heidy LO

Law and Identity in *Othello* and *Twelfth Night*

This project focuses on exploring the concepts of laws and identity in *Othello* and *Twelfth Night* using Derrida's essay 'Before the Law'. In 'Before the Law', Derrida explores the idea of laws (moral law, legal law and social conventions) and 'the law of laws' in regard to deconstruction, and his ideas are put into this project as the main source of argument. In the Derridean concept, all laws must abide to 'the law of laws', which states that laws cannot have history and that it is subjected to interpretations, like literature. There are also discussions in relation to how moral law, legal law and social conventions are related to each other in order to examine the key concepts of this project fully. The main section of this project is separated into subsections that focus on Derrida, Identity, Deconstructive Language, Parodies of Law, and Paradoxes. Throughout these subsections, the main method used is close reading with the help of the social context in the respective plays to discover and compare the differences and similarities between Derrida and Shakespeare in terms of how they handle these concepts. For instance, how deconstructive language is used to alter Othello and Malvolio's respective identities, and the significance of the trial-like procedures in the two plays will be explored so as to discover whether Derrida and Shakespeare execute the idea of law and identity in a similar way.

Keywords: Derrida, Shakespeare, deconstruction, language, social conventions

Jeffrey TAM

Death and Change in Modernity

This project aims to explore the notions of death and change in *The Rainbow* and in 'Bartleby, the Scrivener'. Death as a metaphorical theme is present throughout the two texts, and are used to imply people's struggles with modern life.

In 'Bartleby', the notion of 'death' is evoked when discussing the environment of Wall-street, as well as the 'dead-wall', a wall without openings, at which the peculiar Bartleby stares. 'Death' is once more mentioned at the end of the story, where the narrator speaks of 'dead letters', and their relation to the notion of 'life', or more precisely, the potential of changing people's lives.

In *The Rainbow*, the notion of 'death' takes on a multiplicity of implications. While 'Bartleby' uses 'death' as a metaphor for the hardships of life in Wall-street, for how ideology presents itself to its subjects, 'death' in *The Rainbow* is used to discuss a plethora of issues including gender politics, industrial capitalism, and education. Both texts contrast the notion of life and to that of death. Characters of the story experience 'life' as the communion between people, between lovers mostly, and refer to that life as 'living' and as their 'reality', as opposed to the modern life of industry and education, which are to them 'dead' and an 'unreality'.

What is to be had from the conversation between texts is the dynamism between life and death, metaphors for the struggles with modernity. Characters from both texts inevitably confront 'death', but from said 'death' arises discussions on 'life', on changes in mind.

Keywords: capitalism, ideology, gender politics, social change, interpellation

Jenny TSANG

Nonsense in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* and its Hidden Meaning

This research works on literary nonsense which is both a genre of narrative literature and a device in literature. The use of literary nonsense leads to concealing meaning. In this research, literary nonsense and its underlying messages will be examined by studying two world-famous and recognisable literary nonsense works written by Lewis Carroll which are *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*. These two works are about a series of adventures that the main character, Alice, engages in. Literary nonsense and their concealed messages will be investigated and unveiled. The aim of this research is to examine the methods of creating humour through using literary nonsense. There are various devices used in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, including incongruity, homophone/homonym, sarcasm and typography. These devices can be divided into three levels which are phonetic level, visualisation and semantic level. The ultimate goal of this research is to investigate the underlying messages in the two works through analysing the content using the techniques in these three levels.

Keywords: literary nonsense, Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass, Victorian Era, humour and parody

Patrice YIM

Spatial Language in Football Commentary

Spatial language is highly dependent on contexts. Existing research on spatial language is often context-generic and therefore limited. This research explores the influence from context on spatial language, using football commentary in English as a case study. Specifically, we investigate the distribution and meanings of spatial deixis in football commentary (e.g. *left/right*, *front/back post*). Commentaries of 50 football matches were extracted, annotated and compared against data from the British National Corpus (BNC). Results show that football commentaries deviate from context-free data by two measures. First, listeners are expected to use both referenced objects (RO, *'the cage'* in *'The bird is on the left of the cage'*) and located objects (LO, *'the bird'*). Contrary to this general pattern in object orientation, our data show tendency to omit LO (e.g. *'Moura heads over the crossbar'*). There is a RO (*'the crossbar'*) in this commentary but the LO (*'the ball'*) is missing. This suggests that contexts may contribute to meaning, and the absence of LO does not affect comprehension of spatial deixis in football commentary. Second, studies have shown preference for goal path information (*'to France'*) over source path (*'from England'*), i.e. listeners tend to prioritise information about source/goal path in their description on motion events. However, data from football commentators show a more balanced selection between goal and source paths, contrary to data from context-free corpus. This illustrates how contexts interact with semantic meaning in spatial language.

Keywords: spatial language, football commentary, deixis, corpus, semantics

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BA in English Programme

Class of 2019

Senior Project Presentations