The 5th
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 5th Undergraduate Conference on Language, Literature and Linguistics

Department of English

Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

Date: 25 May 2020
Time: 10:00-16:00 (Mon)
Venue: MS Teams

HEAD'S MESSAGE

I am very pleased that twelve final-year students have submitted their research essays or reports for the Senior Project modules this year. These projects are syntheses of the knowledge they have acquired in their past 4 years. The topics this year are wide-ranging and intellectually stimulating. We have students researching feminism in Virginia Woolf, pessimism in Franz Kafka, race/power in American literature, orientalism in Rushdie, etc. On the linguistics side, we have students analysing English Chivalry, pop music and *Harry Potter* through text corpora. Others, who probably will soon become English teachers, have chosen to work on language acquisition, such as the correlation of fluency and planning time, the usage of conditionals, etc.

It is particularly encouraging to see these projects coming to light amid the pandemic. I can imagine our students must have exercised their superpower to maintain the same level of performance while they are required to work from home. The same applies to our colleagues who have other businesses to attend to while being confined at home. This wonderful piece of publication would not be possible without the persistence of the students and the professionalism of our colleagues.

My heartfelt thanks to my colleagues, especially Catherine Wong, who is responsible for organising the conference and editing this booklet. I look forward to another round of diverse harvest next year.

Dr Paul Fung
Associate Professor
Head, Department of English

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the proceedings of the 5th Undergraduate Conference on Language, Linguistics and Literature.

Each year, it is with high anticipation that I prepare this conference as it marks the harvest time of our graduating students; this year, however, I am preparing this conference with mixed feelings: a heavy heart and a mingled feeling of pride.

2019-20 has been a challenging year for everyone in Hong Kong and especially so for our final year students who have practically spent only 3 months in the classroom in this academic year of disruptions. This may not be an ideal way to end their university life; but I must say, when I was going through their abstracts, I was impressed by the fact that these young scholars all managed to complete their research projects against all odds, without even the slightest compromise on the quality.

This year, the conference is unprecedently going to be held online. The physical constraints, however, do not affect the good performance of our student – 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 12 outstanding research presentations from a wide range of topics. This online conference, therefore, represents the Programme's aspirations for our students: to be adaptable, resilient, and determined to excel despite all obstacles.

Congratulations to all our students for their achievements!

Dr Catherine Wong, Conference Organiser and Editor

THE 5th UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS AND LITERATURE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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Dr Paul FUNG

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Editor
Dr Catherine WONG

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PROGRAMME
Conference opening ceremony 10:00 – 10:15

Panel 1: Monday 25 May 2020, 10:15 – 11: 15

Ronald Chan
Effect of different Planning Time on L2 Utterance Fluency

Raymond Ng
The Influence of Gender, Income Level and Language Attitudes on L2 Learning Outcomes

Macy Wu
Willingness to Communicate: Relationship with modes of Communicative Tasks and L2 Fluency

Panel 2: Monday 25 May 2020, 11:30 – 12:30

Simon Luk
Abjection of self in Herman Melville's *Bartleby, the Scrivener* and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper'

RAMEEN
Edward Said's *Orientalism* and its Relevance to Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Shame*

Neo Tsim
Pessimism in Kafka's Fiction

Lunch break 12:30 – 13:45

Panel 3: Monday 25 May 2020, 13:45 – 14:45

Lorrain Choi
The Death of Chivalry: A Corpus Linguistics Study on Arthurian Legends

Kyle Lee
A Corpus Study on Production of Conditionals by Children and Adults

Erin Wu
Exploration of Magic: A Corpus Approach to Magic Presented in *Harry Potter* Series

Panel 4: Monday 25 May 2020, 15:00 – 16:00

Ben Chiu
Linguistic Properties of English Pop Lyrics

Tiffany Lau
American Representations of Race and Power: A Study of Three Films

Cherry Wong
Feminism in Literature: Strategising Womanhood in Christine De Pizan's The *Book of the City of Ladies* and Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*

Ronald CHAN
Effect of different Planning Time on L2 Utterance Fluency

Fluency, Complexity and Accuracy are the 3 dimensions of second language production, proficiency and development. The disfluencies in the first language (L1) speakers utterance are considered as the speaker's speaking style while the disfluencies in L2 speakers speech can reflect the proficiency level of that speaker. The utterance fluency can be influenced by many factors, such as the proficiency level of the speaker, topic familiarity as well as the length of planning time. This research invited 6 undergraduate students in Hong Kong with Cantonese as their L1 and English as L2. The participants were randomly divided into 3 planning time groups (No Planning, 1 minute and 5 minutes) and they have to complete a short written test before the experiment in order to ensure they are similar in terms of English proficiency level. Participants with different planning time conditions were asked to give 3 short presentations. Since topic familiarity can also influence a speaker L2 fluency, they have to give the presentations with 3 different topics and these topics are related to some common issues nowadays. Their performances were then analysed with 9 fluency measurements across 3 aspects of utterance fluency (Speed Fluency, Repair Fluency and Breakdown Fluency). The results showed that different lengths of planning and degree of topic familiarity did influence L2 speech making.

Keywords: Planning Time; Second Language (L2) Production; Utterance Fluency; L2 Proficiency; Disfluency

Ben CHIU
Linguistic Properties of English Pop Lyrics

This project is an analysis of different aspects of language within the genre of pop music, including a semantic analysis of song lyrics, a word, and syllable level analysis of sub-categories of pop music and an analysis of some of the phonological processes within these songs. This analysis explores how language and music are connected in these ways in a sample of 50 pop songs performed by 10 different female artists from the Billboard top 100 charts from 2005 to 2018. Study 1 categorizes these 50 songs into five categories (Self-empowerment; Eudaimonia; Blindness; Love Story and Break-up) based on an analysis of their lyrics following Rentfrow, Goldberg, and Levitin (2011). Study 2 analyses the songs in these categories for lexical density, syllable, and repetition. Blindness gets the most lexical density, Self-empowerment gets the most repetition based on the Nunes, Ordanini, & Valsesia. (2015). Eudaimonia gets the largest in syllable. Study 3 discusses three phonological processes (re-syllabification, lenition, and consonant cluster simplification) that these artists accommodate the lyrics to the musical structure of the song. Salley. (2011). Stops appear in a different position and frequently used. Re-syllabification and lenition appear in line initial and middle positions. Consonant cluster simplification appears in the line final position. Pop music requires comprehension (reading and listening) and acquisition (speaking and writing). Investigating the actual connection between language and music contributes to the concrete understanding of artists and read about the reason for transformation while singing. They can have a better understanding without questioning.

Keywords: Pop music; Phonological process; Re-syllabification; Lenition; Consonant cluster simplification

Lorraine CHOI

The Death of Chivalry: A Corpus Linguistics Study on Arthurian Legends

The concept of chivalry was first popularised in medieval Europe with the help of hero tales such as Arthurian legends and revisited in Europe before WWI as a kind of propaganda. In both periods, chivalry embedded in the Arthurian literature represented and promoted the masculine ideal shaped by the different social and political environments. This research analyses the changes in the chivalric, masculine ideal in Arthurian literature in different eras, and the relationship between different versions of chivalry and the time they were created. *Le Morte d'Arthur* from medieval Europe, *Arthuriad* from pre-WWI America, and *The Once and Future King* from post-WWI Britain are chosen for the database in this research. Studying the topic-modifying dictions in three versions of Arthurian legends with a corpus linguistic approach, the research aims to break down misunderstandings on chivalry and clarify its definition. The different choices of diction in the three books shown in the corpora illustrate a tendency of the chivalric ideal being less masculine as time evolves, shifting its focus from traditionally manly virtues to a more superficial image of the knights, and even disillusioning the male ideal. In its conclusion, the research assures the relationship between the different interpretations of chivalry and their writing background. The modern readings of chivalry are found to be representing America's fantasy of the alien monarchy history, and the disillusionment of chivalry as a reaction to Britain's entry into World War I.

Keywords: Arthurian legends; Chivalry; Masculinity; Corpus linguistics; Stylistics

Tiffany LAU
American Representations of Race and Power: A Study of Three Films

Racial issues have long been concerned by social scholars. For multi-racial countries such as the United States of America, the dynamics, negotiations and politics between different racial and cultural groups are definitely central to the definition of their nationhood. In spite of series of reforms and social movements, the tension between different ethnic groups are still not resolved. This research focuses on the inter-racial tension in the US and it studies the relationship between race and power among its different ethnic groups. The discussion of this research centres around the frequent discrimination that is taken place against the racial minority community while it aims to uncover the reasons behind as well as its impact on one's identities and social status. To achieve this goal, films are chosen: *The Help*, *Green Book*, and *Intouchables*. The ultimate goal of this study is to discover the contrast of the power relationship between mainstream and minority in different societies. The setback of the social assimilation and integration is also hoped to be revealed so that some efficient recommendations can be provided at the end of the research

Keywords: Assimilation; Culture; Discrimination; Identity; Race

Kyle LEE
A Corpus Study on Production of Conditionals by Children and Adults

Conditionals are sentences that consist of an antecedent (P) that would lead to a consequent (Q). In English, these sentences often consist of markings like "if" or "when". Previous studies have shown that conditionals can be categorised using two categorisation methods – the English Language Teaching (ELT) method, and the first order predicate logic method. Studies on comprehension of conditionals adopts the first order predicate logic method and suggest that children's ability to understand some first order predicate logic types of conditionals is better than that of adults. Meanwhile, there are not many studies on production of conditionals, but the ones quoted in this study utilise the ELT method. It was unclear whether the ELT types of conditionals that children and adults produce are different, and whether these two categorisation methods are correlated. This study therefore compares the ELT types of conditionals produced by children and adults from two sets of corpus data and finds out whether there is correlation between these two categorisation methods. It is found that higher grade children do not produce ELT types of conditionals that are more similar to adults, and some of the ELT conditional types and first order predicate logic types are indeed correlated.

Keywords: Conditionals; Production; Corpus; Syntax; Semantics

Simon LUK

Abjection of self in Herman Melville's *Bartleby, the Scrivener* and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper'

This project examines one of the Kristeva's concepts, the abjection of self. And how it appears in the characters in Herman Melville's *Bartleby, the Scrivener* and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper'. Julia Kristeva writes in *Power of Horror, An Essay on Abjection* that abjection has the effect of forcing the subject to review his/her own identity. I propose the abjection of self is a progression with three stages, which when achieved, the person's identity will be renewed. In the ending of Melville's story, the lawyer expels Bartleby from his office because of his eccentricities, which has also made an impact to the narrator's identity. The character Bartleby becomes an invasive subject, which provokes the lawyer of the need to abject. In Gilman's story, the imaginary woman in the yellow wallpaper forces the narrator to approach the wallpaper. As a result, she eventually becomes the imaginary woman herself. This project offers an alternative reading of the questions about identity in the two texts, through the progression of abjection of self.

Keywords: Juila Kristeva; Abjection; Identity; Herman Melville; Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Raymond NG
The Influence of Gender, Income Level and Language Attitudes on L2 Learning Outcomes

With the changing economic environment of Mainland China and the political relationship between Hong Kong and the Central government, Mandarin has become a more important language in the last decade. While previous research on how language attitudes can affect one's second language acquisition in Hong Kong were mainly focused on Cantonese and English only, very few studies have taken Mandarin into consideration. This qualitative study thus explores how gender, family income level and language attitudes towards Cantonese, English and Mandarin will influence the English performance outcome of senior secondary school students. Results show that there is positive relationship between the language attitudes and the target language i.e. English. Firstly, respondents who hold more positive attitudes towards English than Cantonese and Mandarin, have a better English performance outcome. This is due to they have more integrative and instrumental motivations in learning English than the other two. Secondly, female respondents show more positive attitudes towards English and Mandarin than male respondents. This suggests that female learners generally have a higher sensitivity of identifying the prestige language where prestige means the degree of respect to a language (or a variety) when compared to that of other languages (or a variety) in a particular speech community. This drives them to generate more incentives for learning English and achieve a better result. Thirdly, it is noted that higher family income tends to have more positive language attitudes towards English since their opportunities of exposure to English-speaking communities are higher than other social groups. This also contributes to their English learning outcomes positively.

Keywords: Language attitudes; Gender; Social class; English performance; Sociolinguistics

RAMEEN
Edward Said's *Orientalism* and its Relevance to Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Shame*

As readers of magic realist texts, we witness the magic in that which is familiar – in the everyday goings-on, or, in the perceived laws of nature. Fundamentally resembling this concept and often overlapping with it is the Saidian theory of Orientalism which not only attacks western colonisers and literature for having constructed the idea of the Orient for the Western spectators, but also for tainting it with labels of irrationality, exoticism, and incivility. The main question that I pursue is whether Salman Rushdie, an Oriental magic realist writer, writing about the Indian Subcontinent, is self-Orientalising or not. The texts chosen to investigate what his works imply about the Indian Subcontinent, and if they bear any resemblance to Said's theory are *Midnight's Children* and *Shame.* Epistemology, the notion of the Oriental woman, and exoticism are of the features discussed in *Orientalism* that I will verify against the features of magical realism: metafiction, political critique and fantastical elements to infer what Rushdie implies as to self-Orientalising. The selected themes of *Midnight's Children* and Shame largely influence both the texts on the whole, as well as their characters. In particular, it is the influence of the themes on the narrators Saleem in *Midnight's Children* and an unnamed one in Shame that I am interested in given their authority and influence on how the direct and the implied audiences conceive the stories narrated by them. On the whole, Rushdie's work indicates self-Orientalising in some areas, and not in others.

Keywords: Orientalism; Midnight's Children; Shame; Edward Said; Salman Rushdie

Neo TSIM
Pessimism in Kafka's Fiction

This project aims to investigate pessimism as a state of mind and a doctrine being exercised in the works of Kafka. In decades many of Kafka's work have been studied by literary and cultural critics with the reception of surrealism and modernism, including his world-famous writing style Kafkaesque. The mental qualities of the protagonists more or less reflect that of Kafka and his worldview. This project holds that these mentalities are worth further studied, and it first provides a definition of pessimism, combining the work of psychiatrist James Sully's *Pessimism: A History and A Criticism*, and the essay of Schopenhauer's *On the Sufferings of the World*. It will specifically be applied in the selected works of Kafka, including *The Trial*, 'A Hunger Artist' and 'In The Penal Colony', and will argue in what way he practises pessimism in those fictions. Through studying the significance of becoming pessimistic, as the characters going through changes either psychologically or philosophically, topics like loss of hope, guilt and ideological chain will be looked into. The essence of being pessimistic will be analysed as well as its relationship to various forms of suffering on physical aspects, from behaviours to environments and objects Kafka presents to the readers. Finally this project suggests that death as a solution, is offered by Kafka in his works, by examining relevant issues, for examples punishments and departures. The ultimate goal of this project is to uncover the connection between pessimism and Kafka's mental worldview through his works.

Keywords: Franz Kafka; Pessimism; Suffering; Death; German literature

Cherry WONG

Feminism in Literature: Strategising Womanhood in Christine De Pizan's *The Book of the City of Ladies* and Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*

This paper focuses on the representations of the stereotypical images of women across centuries. Women have been suffering from predefined gender roles since the beginning of the civilization of humans in the modern world. They used to be unfairly treated in terms of legal rights and deprived of the opportunity to receive education, etc. Christine De Pizan's *The Book of the City of Ladies* and Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* are used in this paper to analyse the concept of freedom in the sense of autonomy and confinement. By looking into them, this paper firstly discusses the virtues of women and sees how virtues transform to become the norms that restrict women physically and spiritually from women's image in the Bible to women's writing in the Middle Ages. It will then look into the development of feminism and to identify the relation of the quality of feminism and the power relationship between men and women presented in the two books. The idea of freedom is changed from the protection of virtue to an ideological sense of women's independence. Women from the beginning of the 20th century become more conscious of the abolishment of patriarchal values and elevate their social status. The ultimate goal of this paper is for the readers to derive an informed understanding of the representation of freedom in relation to gender equity and the evolving purpose of the feminist movement.

Keywords: Feminism; Feminine virtues; Gender relationship; Christine De Pizan; Virginia Woolf

Erin WU

Exploration of Magic: A Corpus Approach to Magic Presented in *Harry Potter* Series

The *Harry Potter* series is renowned for Rowling's construction of the imaginative wizardry world. This research therefore aims to identify how magic is represented in the *Harry Potter* series and the difference with conventional magic. Feldt's (2015) idea of magic in the series being composed of dark magic and contemporary magic sets the framework of this project, with data sets of fairy tales and romance being reviewed for the conventional concept of dark magic. The topics of contemporary magic are further explored in this research. Enchanters, agencies of enchantments and objects with magical properties are focused in the analysis of the *Harry Potter* series. Corpus tool AntConc is used for the processing of text data to facilitate the analysis. The study is expected to explain why readers enjoy the 'magic' in the *Harry Potter* series in the corpus approach with the result of magic in the series showing diversity as well as the hybrid of mystery and familiarity.

Keywords: Harry Potter; Magic; Fantasy; Corpus approaches; Stylistics

Macy WU
Willingness to Communicate: Relationship with modes of Communicative Tasks and L2 Fluency

Speech production is always a popular issue when investigating the effectiveness and performance in second language learning. Initiation of speech often correlates to the level of Willingness to Communicate (WTC). While most of the studies use monologues and dialogues to evaluate L2 performance, not many studies compare the differences between the two tasks and analyse whether they correlate with WTC. This mixed-method research aims to investigate the relationship between willingness to communicate and two aspects: performance in different modes of communicative tasks and speech fluency. A total number of 6 participants took part in this study. The data were collected through the completion of a questionnaire on WTC, which was adopted from MacIntyre, Babin & Clément (1999). Participants were divided into monological and dialogical groups in accordance with high and low WTC to complete a communicative task, which then followed by a structured interview. The result suggested that participants in dialogical tasks tended to speak more than those who complete the task individually. Surprisingly, Participants with low WTC appear to be more communicative than those who have higher WTC. The findings also suggested that the level of willingness does not relate to speech fluency. With the influence of personal and external factors, the result of this study is analysed and explained.

Keywords: Second Language Acquisition; Speech production; Willingness to communicate; Fluency; Monologic and dialogic tasks

Notes

Notes

BA in English Programme

Class of 2020

Senior Project Presentations