

# Undergraduate & Postgraduate Conference 2024



英文系  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

香港恒生大學  
THE HANG SENG UNIVERSITY  
OF HONG KONG

Hang Seng University of Hong Kong  
Department of English

**Undergraduate and  
Postgraduate  
Conference 2024:  
On Language, Linguistics,  
and Literature**

Date: 27 May 2024

Time: 9:30am - 5:00pm

Venue: Creative Humanities Hub

## Head's Message

This year marks the 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the one-day student conference organized by our English Department. We are proud to announce that this is our first time to include two keynote speeches, one undergraduate presentation session, and two parallel postgraduate sessions from three degree programmes under the Department of English, namely our BA (Hons) in English (BA-ENG), MA in Global English Literary and Cultural Studies (MA-GELCS), and MA in English Language Teaching and Assessment (MA-ELTA). It is heartening to see how the number and scope of undergraduate (UG) and taught postgraduate (TPG) programmes have expanded extensively in the past decade, reflecting how far we have come in cultivating English language, linguistics and literature.

The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Conference is also a celebration of how much our UG and TPG students have learned and achieved in their studies. For the conference's morning session, we have come up with five BA-ENG paper presentations with topics that include existentialism in T.S. Eliot's poems, alienation and otherness in Herman Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener", power and freedom in C. N. Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian*, memes and jokes in mass media, and a comparative narrative analysis of D. H. Lawrence's short story and Christina Rossetti's poem.

For the afternoon sessions, we have invited eight interesting MA presentations with topics that range from ecofeminism in Jane Austen's novels, symbolism in Shakespeare's tragedies, autonomy in two novels on mental health treatment, Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, social values of documentary photography, memory retrieval of food-related vocabulary, J. M. Martin's genre-based approach for teaching IELTS writing, to working memory capacities on L2 English reading comprehension, all of which are great projects recommended by our fellow colleagues. I hope that you will find the conference programme inspiring. Enjoy the experience!

On behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our two keynote speakers - Dr. Winnie Chor, Associate Professor of Hong Kong Baptist University, and Professor David Carless of The University of Hong Kong, for sharing their recent research studies with us. I would also like to thank all the participants for their contribution, help and support. Once again, congratulations to all our students for their accomplishments.

Anna Tso, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Head, Department of English

## Editor's Message

In the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of this conference, we emerged from the dark grids of virtual meeting rooms and we gather once again in person for the first time in three years. We are also witnessing another significant shift: this year, the conference does not only showcase 5 outstanding Undergraduate presenters but it also highlights 8 exemplary capstone projects by our Postgraduate students from both the GELCS and ELTA programmes. By bringing together participants from distinct backgrounds, we hope to foster interdisciplinary conversations among students and colleagues.

While many sleepless nights and intellectual gymnastics are involved in the making of these fascinating presentations, they are the testimonies of growth and perseverance. Many of the Undergraduate papers took inspiration from the courses they have taken, showing their ability to leap beyond lecture materials and their good potential as independent researchers. Our Postgraduate papers, likewise, demonstrated scholarly vigour by tackling an impressive array of challenging topics.

For many of these young scholars, this is the first time that they are presenting in a formal academic setting. I would like to congratulate all of the presenters for overcoming their own demons and for their remarkable achievements! My gratitude also goes to our keynote speakers Dr Winnie Chor and Professor David Carless, who generously donated their time and expertise to enrich this event.

Chloe Leung, PhD  
Assistant Professor, Department of English  
Conference Organiser and Editor

## Organising Committee

### *Honorary Advisor*

Dr Anna TSO

### *Editor*

Dr Chloe LEUNG

### *Supervisory Board*

Dr Gavin BUI

Dr Paul FUNG

Dr Michelle HUANG

Dr Chloe LEUNG

Dr Maggie MA

Dr Jay PARKER

## Programme

09:30 - 10:30

### **Keynote Speech I by Professor David Carless (HKU)**

Assessment Re-design and the Development of Students' Competencies for Generative AI Use

10:40 - 12:20

### **Undergraduate Session (BA-ENG)**

14:00 - 15:40

### **Parallel Postgraduate Sessions (MA-ELTA & MA-GELCS)**

16:00- 17:00

### **Keynote Speech II by Dr Winnie Chor (HKBU)**

Interrogative Structures Beyond Simple Questioning: Form-function Mismatches for Social and Discourse-pragmatic Purposes

**Altan, LAI Sing Young**

*Übermensch*, and accepting Eternal Recurrence, in T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" and "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

**Jeff, MAN Siu Kok**

The Symbols of Power in *The Headstrong Historian* and the Freedom it Brings

**Hysan, LAW Hei Shun**

From Literature References to Memes

**Leo, SHIU Yu Ki**

Contrary Narratives: A Comparative Analysis of D.H. Lawrence's "The Woman who Rode Away" and Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market"

**Sars, YIP Byron**

"Bartleby the Scrivener": Alienation and Otherness

**Lilian, LI Yan**

Analyzing Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility* from an Ecofeminist Theoretical Perspective

**Joan, TIAN Qiongqiong**

Symbolism in Shakespeare's Tragedies

**Sara, ZHANG Shuai**

Prison Break: Panopticon Effect in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Girl, Interrupted*

**Lisa, LIU Wenxiu**

How Literature Demonstrates Pedagogy

**Cindy, CHEN Xin**

The Reflection of Ecology Issues in Documentary Photography

### **ZHU Qia**

The Impact of Brand Context on Memory Retrieval of Food-related Vocabulary: A Psycholinguistic Study

### **Bessie, ZHANG Weiran**

The Impact of Different Types of Music on L2 Reading Comprehension among Students of Different Working Memory Capacities and Genders

### **Bridget, SU Yanhong**

J. R. Martin's Genre-Based Approach and Its Application to Teaching Part 1 of IELTS Writing

## **Opening Keynote Speech**

### **Professor David CARLESS**

#### **The University of Hong Kong**

Assessment Re-design and the Development of Students' Competencies for Generative AI Use

Generative AI is a potential stimulus for student learning but also risks becoming a barrier if students become over-reliant or use it inappropriately. What are students' competencies for productive genAI use, and what kinds of assessment re-designs might facilitate the development of these competencies?

In relation to students' competencies four themes are discussed: student interactional competence in dialogue with generative AI; verification and critical evaluation of its outputs; self-reliance in co-constructing writing with genAI; and learning how to use generative AI more effectively over time.

Implications for teachers' assessment re-design are guided by two key principles: reducing assessment overload, and co-creation between students and teachers. The goal of assessment should be to stimulate processes that enable students to develop assignments that they perceive as meaningful and valuable. Challenges and implications are discussed, including the issue of how students and teachers enhance their competencies in using GenAI.

## Altan, LAI Sing Young

*Übermensch*, and accepting Eternal Recurrence, in T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" and "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

Modernism and Existentialism are connected to each other. The same can be said for Eliot and Nietzsche. This research first explores the relationships between Modernism and Existentialism and the two key figures of these two intellectual movements. Establishing a linkage between Eliot and Nietzsche, this research proceeds to analyse two poems of Eliot namely "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "The Waste Land". In addition, key Nietzschean philosophical frameworks such as "Eternal Recurrence" and "Übermensch" will be employed. For the "Eternal Recurrence" part, it will be used to provide similarities and differences between the one proposed by Nietzsche and the one presented in selected Eliot's poems. For the "Übermensch" part, it will be used to argue if the protagonists in these two poems meet the standard and live authentically in a modern society.

## Jeff, MAN Siu Kok

The Symbols of Power in *The Headstrong Historian* and the Freedom It Brings

In *The Headstrong Historian*, there are several symbols that resemble the power of different parties. Characters in the story identified these symbols and would make their decisions to obtain it. From the power they obtained, freedom would follow tightly. However, in the process of finding power, characters in the story neglected the fact that their freedom is slipping away from their grasp. How can one obtain true freedom? The presentation I am about to give will explore the different symbols of power mentioned in the story and show the audience how freedom was obtained by different characters. By uniting these two ideas, I will argue that Grace, in the story, did not attain true power or freedom and was still a slave of western ideology at the end of the story. In the end of this presentation, the audience will find that true freedom can only be obtained with absolute power and people are living in a world suppressing them to attain true freedom.

## Hysan, LAW Hei Shun

### From Literature References to Memes

Because of the impact of mass media, internet jokes are formed and there are several memes going up and down. The purpose of the presentation is to convey my thoughts on how literature works could work as memes or 'Easter eggs' references. The topic focuses on how some of the memes in literature are commonly mentioned in certain works. Examples of the memes include certain celebrities, music works, famous lines or quotes, and stereotypes.

In case of certain jokes or puns that could be found in certain languages, the research would mainly focus on literary works in English. I will analyse certain sections of the film or text to seek the reasons behind the usage of memes or Easter eggs. To put it into a part of a presentation, it would be answering questions such as: "Why is this certain meme being used?" and "How is the Easter egg relevant to the literature work?". The same would go for exploring the reasons behind why certain quotes became memes after many years.

For my expectations, it is most likely related to how the writers, directors or even game designers of Role Playing Games wanted to pay tribute based on their favourites, or as a format to create a sense of humour over the audience.

## Leo, SHIU Yu Ki

### Contrary Narratives: A Comparative Analysis of D.H. Lawrence's "The Woman who Rode Away" and Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market"

In the nineteenth century, the ideology of "Victorian feminine ideal" promoted the social expectation of separate gender roles for men and women. The ideology, that men were to occupy the public sphere and women the private sphere, restricted women's lives and exacerbated inequalities. In response, the first-wave feminist movement began. During this time, women writers used their works as a platform to challenge traditional social norms and experimented with literary forms and techniques. This trend influenced the writing style and laid the foundation for modern literature. One of the most prominent women poets in the era, Christina Rossetti's work is regarded as a pioneer of the movement. Her work, "Goblin Market", stands as a revolutionary work that captured the complexity of women's lives. On the other hand, D.H. Lawrence's works are considered as the opposite. His work, "The Woman who Rode Away", is criticised for its portrayals of stereotypical gender roles. This research studies and compares the contrary narratives in Lawrence's "The Woman who Rode Away" and Rossetti's "Goblin Market". Through a comparative analysis, it decomposes the function of the contrary narratives and how they relate to the feminist movement of that time.



## Sars, YIP Byron

### “Bartleby the Scrivener”: Alienation and Otherness

The literature I have chosen is “Bartleby the Scrivener”. The text mainly describes a worker named Bartleby, who has a strange appearance and awkward pattern of behavior throughout the text. The act that he performs violates the human’s knowledge of a normal person. The story describes the company owner hiring him as a scrivener but ends up moving the company away from him. The story implies the awkwardness of Bartleby as he was seen as an alienated person from society. The theme of investigating the definition of normal is widely discussed among scholars. Bartleby is an example towards the topic discussing alienation as his appearance and behavior are not accepted by the public and the author either. The ending of the story is also intriguing as Bartleby stays in the empty office all the time until he dies from starvation. The act of “preferring not to” is the sentence Bartleby often mentions, this classified himself and the crowd to emphasize his otherness. In my presentation, I will mainly focus on the part about otherness and alienation towards himself and others. Alienation will also be mentioned in the presentation as the issue of Bartleby vs Self could be further elaborated.

## Lilian, LI Yan

### Analyzing Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility* from an Ecofeminist Theoretical Perspective

Ecofeminism, a philosophy that intertwines ecology and feminism, has emerged as a powerful framework for understanding the interconnectedness between gender oppression and the exploitation of nature. It posits that the oppression of women and the exploitation of the environment are deeply intertwined and perpetuate one another. Ecofeminism not only seeks to dismantle patriarchal structures and empower women, but also emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing the inherent worth of the natural world. Ecofeminism is widely present in numerous literary works with women as the main characters, not only manifesting in the writings of authors but also influencing the mindset of readers. Although Jane Austen was born before ecofeminism was defined, I can still see traces of ecofeminism in her works: the pursuit of liberating women and nature, establishing a harmonious and equal relationship between humans and nature, and between men and women. In Austen’s writings, there is a homogeneity between male oppression of women and human alteration of nature. Her ultimate desire for a happy ending is her attempt to break this binary opposition, achieve gender equality, and establish an ideal state of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, however, it is actually a utopian idealization.

## Joan, TIAN Qiongqiong

### Symbolism in Shakespeare's Tragedies

This paper examines the use of symbols in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. It is valuable to have a deep understanding of the symbolism used by Shakespeare, so that people will know more about the background and the deep meaning Shakespeare wants to express. As an artistic expression, symbols broaden the vision of readers and diversify the thinking for great literature. In my research, I conduct close reading to analyze symbols such as the ghost and compare different scholars' opinions about the use of symbols in Shakespeare's tragedies. For the same symbols, different scholars have different opinions. The various interpretations are examined. Also, the Freudian theory is used to interpret symbols and their functions in Shakespearean tragedies.

## Sara, ZHANG Shuai

### Prison Break: Panopticon Effect in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Girl, Interrupted*

Both *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* and *Girl, Interrupted* feature characters living in 1960s America. In these novels, there is a notable conflict between the way doctors treat the patients and how the patients perceive themselves, the dynamic between doctors and patients goes beyond the traditional conflict between medical ethics and patient autonomy. Instead, it resembles the control and surveillance typically seen in a prison setting, where the authorities exert authority and oversight over the prisoners. The author's setting is reminiscent of Foucault's Panoptus theory, where panopticism was used primarily in psychiatric hospitals in the 19th century, and there is a definite imbalance in the mechanism that governs the relationship between individuals. In both novels, the relationship between the patient and the doctor is generated under such an unbalanced relationship. In such a relationship, a psychiatric hospital is more like a prison, where patients are monitored and controlled. In this case, medical ethics were overwhelmed by power intervention and resistance, which ultimately led to tragedy. This thesis mainly discusses the choice and fate of the characters in the two novels from the perspective of Foucault's discipline theory, and whether medical ethics can still play a role when right intervention is above everything else.

## Lisa, LIU Wenxiu

### How Literature Demonstrates Pedagogy

If education considered justice without considering social levels, racism, genders, and if education's essence was to teach what we should teach for individual purpose instead of instilling the same contents in mind, then what do critical pedagogy perspectives aim for? Normally, we think that school is the institution that can solve problems at the social level. Basically speaking, there should be a pure and equal atmosphere in school. We normally think that students from middle class and higher-class families are the same in school, and that they have equal resources and rights to be educated, including black and female students. But actually, if we know the situation after World War II in capitalist societies, especially in America, we can realize that they have undergone from the golden time to the Ice Age, the economy dropped rapidly, there was a huge gap between the poor and the wealthy. What's more, capitalism's exploitation of the working people aggravated class contradiction and worsened social turbulence. Under that situation, class divisions became more obvious, which created an unequal atmosphere in school. Wealthy people could take better resources in education, and they even have schools for decent and noble people. They enjoy much better conditions than the poor. Therefore, students who got the better resources got better social positions. Thus, the school had already turned into the institution which made the different social classes instead of solving the classes problems. When philosopher Paulo Freire contributed the first concept of critical pedagogy, theorists and educators started to think of schooling in the critical way, and in order to bring the critical thinking way to the students, more educators attend into this field. Freire lightened up the fire of the critical pedagogy.

## Cindy, CHEN Xin

### The Reflection of Ecology Issues in Documentary Photography

This creative project involves a series of digital documentary photos, exploring how to effectively convey the social value of documentary photography through the representation of the subject's identity in photography. Moreover, appropriateness of choice of identity in photography has had a positive impact on social ideology. Exactly, this project mainly focuses on creating a series of digital documentary photos to reflect ecological problems and enhance humans' ecology protection consciousness under sustainable economic development by narrative pattern. The series of documentary photographs specifically narrates a clearing-away outdoor team often organized team members do some clearing work on the mountain roads and seashores. The creative project uses the narrative function of the documentary photos to convey the ecological problems and raise the viewers' awareness to engage with the theme and understand the context and significance of the images. In terms of social value and global influence, the effective combination of digital documentary photos and ecology protection issues explores the coexistence relationship between humans and nature. It can have a positive impact and significance to social ideology. The project will help us to explore how documentary photographs represent and reflect issues of environmental protection, as well as bring deep analysis about how documentary photographs can fully demonstrate their remarkable ability to transmit and reveal the transformation and grasp the issue of environmental change affecting human society.

## ZHU Qia

### The Impact of Brand Context on Memory Retrieval of Food-related Vocabulary: A Psycholinguistic Study

This study investigates the psycholinguistic impact of brand context on the retrieval of food-related vocabulary. The theoretical background of the research includes contextual effects and memory retrieval mechanisms in psycholinguistics. Using McDonald's as the background, the experiment was designed to present food-related words and assess participants' choices and memory during subsequent lexical retrieval. The experiment included 30 participants (15 males, 15 females) with a mean age of 16.47, randomly assigned to two groups. Both Groups A and B viewed the same 86 food-related words. Group A was presented with McDonald's branding in the background, while Group B was not. They were then asked to recall the words they had seen. The experimental results, comparing the keywords "hamburger" and "chips," showed that in Group A, 5 participants chose "hamburger," 3 participants chose "chips," and among these 8 participants, 2 of them chose both "hamburger" and "chips". In contrast, in Group B, only one participant chose "hamburger," another participant chose "chips," and no participant chose both items simultaneously. These findings suggest a significant impact of brand context on participants' long-term memory storage of vocabulary and their working memory retrieval processes. The results suggest a need to consider introducing elements with specific contextual environments to stimulate students' emotional engagement and memory associations, while emphasising diversified learning and the cultivation of learning strategies during the teaching process.

## Bessie, ZHANG Weiran

### The Impact of Different Types of Music on L2 Reading Comprehension among Students of Different Working Memory Capacities and Genders

This study investigates the influence of working memory capacities (High Vs Low) on L2 English reading comprehension performance under two types of background music conditions (Chinese Vs English songs) among male and female students. The study utilizes a mixed-method approach, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Postgraduate students majoring in English Language Teaching and Assessment were selected as participants and divided into four groups based on their working memory capacities and genders. Comparable reading materials were used, and two versions of the same pop song in Chinese and English served as background music. The results showed that Chinese songs had a more negative impact on people's reading task performance than English songs. However, this study does not provide substantial evidence regarding the influence of different working memory capacities and gender differences on L2 reading comprehension.

## **Bridget, SU Yanhong**

### **J. R. Martin's Genre-Based Approach and Its Application to Teaching Part 1 of IELTS Writing**

The importance of teaching writing as a skill in L2 instruction has consistently been acknowledged, and among a variety of teaching approaches in the field of L2 writing, product approach and process approach have always been the major two methods. In the 1980s, the genre-based approach in the Sydney School emerged following the development of Martin's (e.g. 1993, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2009, 2013) genre model and has increasingly been applied in language education for teaching various textual forms of writing. This paper revisits Martin's genre model and genre pedagogy, reviews its implementation in teaching various genres of writing, and attempts to propose a research plan for applying the genre-based approach to teaching Part 1 of the IELTS writing test.

## **Closing Keynote Speech**

### **Dr Winnie CHOR**

#### **Hong Kong Baptist University**

### **Interrogative Structures Beyond Simple Questioning: Form-function Mismatches for Social and Discourse-pragmatic Purposes**

In our daily interactions, we often engage in co-constructing the discourse as we negotiate our points of view. On some occasions, we converge and arrive at consensus via affiliative moves (i.e. convergent alignment); at other times, we disagree with or challenge our interlocutors (i.e. divergent alignment). Interrogative forms in daily interactions are found not only used for information-seeking, but can also be used for a diverse range of interactional functions such as confirmation-seeking, expression of surprise and unexpectedness, as well as displaying a range of speaker's affiliative and disaffiliative stances. As Stivers put forward, affiliation is understood as the hearer's taking a stance that matches the speaker's stance, whereas disaffiliation as the hearer's lack of support or endorsement towards the speaker's stance (Stivers 2008). Some interrogative strategies might have stronger affiliative colours, while others might be deployed as strong disaffiliative speech acts. Consider the English examples below. While all of them take an interrogative form from a syntactic perspective, none functions as a real question to elicit information that was originally unknown to the speaker:

*Do you think I'm stupid?*  
(to express accusation/indignation)

*I can't believe you did that, can you?*  
(to express surprise/disbelief)

*You won't be helping, right?*  
(to express doubt/resignation)

*This is the best movie ever, isn't it?*  
(to invite agreement/shared enthusiasm)

The questions presented here are referred to “biased” questions. When uttering a biased question, the speaker already holds a subjective judgement regarding the proposition content of the question. These “questions” are not truly intended for inquiry but rather serve other interactional purposes due to socio-cultural and politeness factors. In Cantonese, biased questions are commonly conveyed through the utilization of sentence-final interrogative particles. These particles are observed to play a significant role in Cantonese conversations by expressing the speaker’s subjective and intersubjective stances, in addition to their primary function of interrogation. For instance, a question formed with *me1* is always negatively biased and express the hearer’s disaffiliative stance with the speaker, as in *Nei1 tiu4 kwan4 hou2 gwai3 me1?* (lit. This dress is very expensive? **I doubt it.**), while one with *ho2* is always positively biased and the hearer is affirmative and aligns with the proposition suggested by the speaker but is seeking and demanding a confirmation, as in *Nei1 tiu4 kwan4 hou2 gwai3 ho2?* (lit. This dress is very expensive, **right?**).

Adopting a discourse-pragmatic approach within the broad interactional linguistic framework, this study addresses the inquiry of how an interrogative form can serve functions beyond information-seeking, including confirmation-seeking, solidarity-seeking, indication of assertiveness, and so on. Specifically, the study pays attention to the interrogative strategies that are particularly utilized by English and Cantonese speakers for non-questioning purposes. The study demonstrates how effective deployment of these interrogative strategies contributes to discourse management, allowing for the expression and negotiation of the speaker’s (inter)subjective stances in conversations.



**NOTES**



**NOTES**



香港恒生大學  
THE HANG SENG UNIVERSITY  
OF HONG KONG

英文系  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH