

## Abstracts for Colloquia

(all Tuesday 16.10 – 18.25)

### Colloquium in Seminar Room 1177

Name	<b>T. Balasubramanian</b>
Affiliation	Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, Oman
Name	<b>Chandrika Balasubramanian</b>
Affiliation	English Department, Western Carolina University
Name	<b>Christopher Blake</b>
Affiliation	English Department, Western Carolina University
Name	<b>Slobodanka Dimova</b>
Affiliation	East Carolina University
Title	<b>Global or Local? - A Framework for Analyzing New Varieties of English Within the ELF Context</b>
Abstract	<p>The rising status of English as a world language has resulted in the emergence of several new varieties of English that have been legitimized by expressions such as <i>New Englishes</i>. These varieties are recognized as systems unto themselves rather than deviant forms of traditional native varieties (Jenkins, 2003) and are viewed as yet another component of the emerging English a lingua franca model. Yet with this growing body of data on new English varieties have come new questions regarding the notion of English as <i>a</i> world language and the issue of mutual intelligibility across varieties of international English.</p> <p>The first part of this colloquium discusses the difficulty inherent in accepting the idea of English as <i>a</i> lingua franca. By presenting examples from the English spoken and written by speakers of Indian languages (Dravidian as well as Indo-Aryan) and Arabic, we question whether there is too much phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic variation to allow for a single World English.</p> <p>The second part addresses the issue of fluency as it relates to a single World English. We argue for a paradigmatic shift in how the notion of fluency is conceptualized within the discipline of World Englishes. Here we present, with corpus evidence, a framework in which fluency (a) functions as an <i>objective indicator of</i> rather than a <i>loose synonym for</i> proficiency; (b) is operationalized via temporal variables and (c) works in tandem with lexical and morphosyntactic constructs to provide a valid perspective of competencies across contexts.</p> <p>We conclude the paper by demonstrating how the proposed framework can be applied to key ideological and linguistic issues that are resident in the ELF context and used to resolve some of the thorny issues related to localized norms, assessments, and pedagogical models.</p>

## Colloquium in Seminar Room 1173

Name **Gail Forey**

Affiliation Department of English, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Name **Barry Tomalin**

Affiliation International House, London

Name **Jane Lockwood**

Affiliation Hong Kong Institute of Education

Name **Liz Hamp-Lyons**

Affiliation Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment,  
University of Bedfordshire

Name **Xu Xun-feng**

Affiliation Department of English, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Colloquium Title **Call Centre Communication Research: Globalisation, Business & Linguistic Reality**

Abstract The Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) industry is now recognized as a major contributor to global economy. Call centre communication, in bound and outbound calls of sales, customer service encounters, professional support and a range of other work carried out through telephonic exchange are part of this large and expanding industry. In this colloquium we focus on English call centre communication in India and the Philippines, two of the most popular offshore outsourced destinations. The colloquium discusses English as a lingua franca within the industry from a multidimensional perspective, combining insights from intercultural communication, assessment in the workplace, corpus linguistics, among other areas.

The discussion will start with Barry Tomalin introducing issues related to the failure of English as a Lingua Franca from the Indian call centre experience. Based on data collected in call centres in India, Barry will discuss cultural problems faced by the Customer Service Representatives (CSR) when dealing with British and American customers. In the cut and thrust world of the Business Process Outsourcing industry, hiring and firing decisions are made rapidly and often so-called language assessments play a major part in them. In the second presentation Jane Lockwood and Liz Hamp-Lyons discuss issues of assessing English in call centres and raise questions such as which test, which English? This paper describes discusses the impact of language tests/assessment on the language behaviour, measured performance, and attitudes of CSRs.

The second half of the colloquium will focus on the analysis of spoken interaction with reference to findings from corpus linguistics and sociolinguistics. Xu Xun-feng will discuss the findings from applying corpus linguistic tools to investigate lexical bundles, and patterns found in customer service calls. In the final presentation, Gail Forey raises questions about the sociolinguistic implications, the social engineering and the impact of English within and beyond the industry in these offshore outsourced destinations.

In this colloquium we aim to present a wide range of research which is currently being undertaken in the expanding and developing ITES industry.

## Colloquium in Seminar Room 1097

Name **Bruce Horner**  
Affiliation University of Louisville  
Name **Min-Zhan Lu**  
Affiliation University of Louisville  
Name **Catherine Prendergast**  
Affiliation University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Colloquium Title **Rewriting English as a Lingua Franca**

Abstract This colloquium presents three one-half hour accounts of research-supported approaches to the teaching of English alternative to pedagogies advancing ELF as a neutral and fixed language for communicating across differences. One half hour will be reserved for discussion.

In ‘(Re)Writing English as a Lingua Franca: Putting English in Translation’, Bruce Horner argues that recent scholarship demonstrating the responsiveness of ELF lexicon and grammar to immediate contexts of use renders ELF to be a more appropriate model for university writing pedagogy for both ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ English speakers than models aimed at inculcating an ostensibly neutral SWE as the medium of communication, particularly in light of the current linguistic heterogeneity of postsecondary student and faculty populations and the development and fracturing of world English(es). In addition to de-stabilizing notions of SWE, an ELF pedagogy would engage students in developing strategies to negotiate ways to (re)write English.

In ‘Transacting Living English’, Min-Zhan Lu analyzes non-idiomatic phrasings from student writing and examples of “Chinglish” posted on websites (e.g., ‘can able to’, ‘money collecting toilet’) to argue for a pedagogy teaching students a ‘living English’ in which students weigh 1) what English-only training can do for them against what such training has historically done to them and others whose language practices do not match standardized English usages; 2) how English-only instruction discredits the particular experiences and circumstances of life represented in the examples of non-idiomatic phrasings; and 3) how users might further tinker with the very standardized usages they are pressured by dominant notions of educational and job opportunities to reproduce.

In ‘The Upside of Incomprehension: Tactical Subversions of ELF by Transnational Subjects’, Catherine Prendergast draws on six months of ethnographic fieldwork in Slovakia to demonstrate how transnational subjects of Eastern European origin confront and subvert the inequities of English as the global lingua franca through acts of ‘cross-languaging’. These acts demonstrate that although the current political climate may strive to convince us otherwise, incomprehension is not simply lack, the absence of comprehension; incomprehension is generative of productive social relations meriting pedagogical as well as scholarly attention.

Name **Bruce Horner**  
Affiliation University of Louisville  
Title **(Re)Writing English as a Lingua Franca: Putting English in Translation**  
Abstract Recent studies (Canagarajah, 2007; Meierkord, 2004) show English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) to be defined not in terms of a fixed lexicon and set of forms but as something re-created in each context through social interaction involving the negotiation and adaptation of language resources immediately available to communication participants. This paper explores the implications these studies have for the teaching of written English in English-

medium universities. While studies of ELF highlight its (re)construction by and functions for non-native speakers of English, the speaker will argue that the growth of world Englishes, the increasing interpenetration between varieties of English and other languages (Brutt-Giffler, 2002, Leung et al., 1997), and the increasingly multilingual character of university students and faculty (Matsuda, 2002) render ELF a more appropriate norm for writing pedagogy to advance for ‘native’ as well as ‘non-native’ speakers of English than the norm of Standard Written English. Such a pedagogy would de-stabilize notions of the universality, ‘purity’, and fixed character of SWE, treating all uses of English in the context of other possible uses and languages, and thus always ‘in translation’ (Pennycook, 2008); thus encourage ways to interpret perceived differences from SWE as meaningful rather than ‘error’; and develop with students strategies for negotiating the meanings of the ways they (re)write English.

### References

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- Canagarajah, A. (2007), ‘Lingua Franca English, multilingual communities, and language acquisition’, *Modern language journal*, 91, pp. 923-39.
- Leung, C., Harris, R., and Rampton, B. (1997), ‘The idealised native speaker, reified ethnicities, and classroom realities’, *TESOL quarterly* 31(3), pp. 543–75.
- Matsuda, P. (2002), ‘Alternative discourses: a synthesis’, in C. Schroeder, H. Fox and P. Bizzell (eds) *ALT/DIS: Alternative discourses and the academy* (pp. 191–96). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Meierkord, C. (2004), ‘Syntactic variation in interactions across international Englishes’. *English world-wide*, 25 (1), pp. 109-132.
- Pennycook, A. (2008), ‘English as a language always in translation’, *European journal of English studies*, 12 (1), pp. 33-47.

Name **Min-Zhan Lu**

Affiliation University of Louisville

Title **Transacting Living English**

Abstract This paper explores writing pedagogies contesting dominant views of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) as the means to individual and national economic success. It contrasts what it terms ‘English only’ rulings that aim to require a standardizing of English worldwide in the name of achieving such success against what it terms ‘living-English’ practices. Acknowledging the dominance of English-only ideologies in language instruction and policy (Brooke, Horner and Trimbur, 2002; Lu, 2004; Lu, 2006, Kim 2003), the speaker analyzes non-idiomatic phrasings from student writing and examples of “Chinglish” posted on websites (e.g., ‘can able to’, ‘money collecting toilet’) to argue for a pedagogy teaching students a ‘living English’ in which students weigh 1) what English-only training can do for students carefully against what such training has historically done to them and to peoples, cultures, societies, and continents whose language practices do not match standardized English usages; 2) how English-only instruction discredits particular experiences and circumstances of life; 3) how diverse users have grasped their problems with English-only instruction; and 4) how users might tinker with the very standardized usages they are pressured by dominant notions of educational and job opportunities to reproduce. Drawing on scholarship in globalization and translation studies (Appiah, 2000; Cronin, 2003; Harvey, 2003; Spivak, 2000) that challenge English-only fixations on fluency in the skills demanded by employers by highlighting trans-actions which transplant, transport, translate, and transform nations, cultures, peoples, and language(s), the speaker offers models for engaging students in living-English work in which they use rather than are used by what is termed English.

### References:

- Appiah, K. (2000) Thick translation, in L. Venuti (ed) *The translation studies reader*, London, Routledge: 417-29.

Brooke, James (2005) For Mongolians, E is for English, F is for Future, *The New York Times*, National Edition, 15 Feb.: A1, A9.

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Spivak, G. (2000) The Politics of translation, in L. Venuti (ed), *The translation studies reader*, London, Routledge: 397-416.

Name	<b>Catherine Prendergast</b>
Affiliation	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Title	<b>The Upside of Incomprehension: Tactical Subversions of ELF by Transnational Subjects</b>
Abstract	<p>At the same time that English has become the language of global communication, it has also become, as Alastair Pennycook has put it, the language of 'dis'communication' [sic]—a language that lets people know their place rather than move around and especially up in the global order. This paper, drawn from six months of ethnographic fieldwork in Slovakia, demonstrates how transnational subjects of Eastern European origin confront and subvert the inequities of English as the global lingua franca through acts of 'cross-languaging'. These acts demonstrate that although the current political climate may strive to convince us otherwise, incomprehension is not simply lack, the absence of comprehension; incomprehension is generative of productive social relations, and it deserves more of our appreciation and attention.</p> <p><b>Reference</b></p> <p>Pennycook, A. (2003), 'Beyond homogeny and heterogeny: English as a global and worldly language', in <i>The Cultural Politics of English</i>, Christopher Mair (Ed.) Amsterdam: Rodopi, pp. 3-18.</p>