

Keynote Speaker - Prof Winnie Cheng

Title: Empowering discipline teachers: How to improve university students' EAP competence

Abstract

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University has a strong English support programme in which students study reading and writing skills and strategies related to their discipline areas in their early years of study. These courses are, however, not often referred to by teachers of discipline subjects. Working with discipline subject teachers, the Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) project¹ aims to supplement this by revisiting these skills and strategies through embedding them in discipline subjects. This talk describes the recently completed inter-faculty teaching development project that involved nine academic departments in The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Cheng, *et al.*, 2014). The WAC project aims to address the challenges of improving students' writing in the context of their academic subjects by embedding academic reading and writing skills related to their discipline areas in the subject syllabuses and major assessments. The project introduces WAC strategies and activities in three major ways: (1) by designing innovative written assessment tasks that are conducive to effective, critical writing and thinking rather than simply cutting and pasting from other sources; (2) by providing scaffolding to help students to plan and structure their writing effectively; and (3) by including feedback not only on the content and grammar but also the rhetorical functions and structural pattern of their writing. The talk will present examples of each of these approaches in order to explore the effectiveness of the WAC strategies and activities.

Reference

Cheng, W., Chan, M., Chiu, H., Kwok, A., Lam, K. H., Lam, K. M. K., Lim, G., & Wright, R. (2014). *Enhancing students' professional competence and generic qualities through writing in English across the curriculum*. Hong Kong: The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Bio-data

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