

**NUS ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE**  
**RESEARCH DAY**

**DATE: 16 NOVEMBER 2016**

**TIME: 10:00AM - 5:00PM**

**VENUE: AS5/05-09**

## 16 NOVEMBER 2016 (WEDNESDAY)

### ENGLISH LITERATURE

10:00 - 10:15

#### WELCOME & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Tania ROY, *Senior Lecturer, Chair of Graduate Programme in English Literature, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore*

10:15 - 11:55

#### SESSION 1

Moderator

John WHALEN-BRIDGE, *Associate Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore*

10:15

#### PRESENTATION 1

**Xu Xi's *The Unwalled City: Cosmopolitanism in the Marginalised Hong Kong Literature in English***  
Mandy Chi Man LO, *PhD Student, English Literature, National University of Singapore*

10:35

#### PRESENTATION 2

**A Simulated Gentleman's Club: Hemingway and Gossip on the Left Bank**  
TAN Teck Heng, *PhD Student, English Literature, National University of Singapore and King's College London*

10:55

#### DISCUSSION

11:55 - 12:45

#### SESSION 2

Moderator

Vasugi KAILASAM, *Lecturer, South Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore*

11:55

#### PRESENTATION 3

**Metaromanticism in Resistance Writing by Filipinos**  
Kathrine OJANO, *PhD Student, English Literature, National University of Singapore*

12:15

#### DISCUSSION

12:45 - 13:35

#### SESSION 3

Moderator

Anne M. THELL, *Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore*

12:45

#### PRESENTATION 4

**"Eyes turned inward": The Relationship Between Vision and Sightless Mathematics in Eighteenth-Century Philosophical Discussions**  
Su Min KIM, *PhD Student, English Literature, National University of Singapore*

13:05

#### DISCUSSION

## 16 NOVEMBER 2016 (WEDNESDAY)

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE

14:00 - 14:10

#### WELCOME & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Michelle LAZAR, *Associate Professor, Chair of Graduate Programme in Language Studies, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore*

14:10 - 15:10

#### PRESENTATIONS 1 & 2

Moderator

Michelle LAZAR

14:10

#### PRESENTATION 1

**Variation in L1 and L2 stop production among Korean learners of English in the Philippines**

Rowland Anthony IMPERIAL, *MA Student, Language Studies, National University of Singapore*

14:30

#### QUESTION & ANSWER 1

14:40

#### PRESENTATION 2

**Mock Singlish in voicings of class distinctions and resistance**

Jennifer ONG, *PhD Student, Language Studies, National University of Singapore*

15:00

#### QUESTION & ANSWER 2

15:10 - 16:10

#### PRESENTATION 3

Moderator

Leslie Lee, *Lecturer, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore*

15:10

#### PRESENTATION 3

**The language ecology of post-colonial Manila and Hokaglish**

Wilkinson GONZALES, *MA Student, Language Studies, National University of Singapore*

15:30

#### QUESTION & ANSWER 3

16:10 - 17:00

#### PRESENTATIONS 4 & 5

Moderator

Rebecca STARR, *Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore*

15:40

#### PRESENTATION 4

**Party Legitimation through Representations of CCP's (Post-)Communist Political Ideologies in Xi Jinping's Political Discourse**

WANG Jiayu, *PhD Student, Language Studies, National University of Singapore*

16:00

#### QUESTION & ANSWER 4

**16 NOVEMBER 2016 (WEDNESDAY)**

16:10	PRESENTATION 5 <b>Production of English tense and lax vowels among L1 Bengali speakers</b> <i>A R M Mostafizar RAHMAN, PhD Student, Language Studies, National University of Singapore</i>
16:30	QUESTION & ANSWER 5
16:40 - 17:00	OPEN DISCUSSION
<i>Discussant</i>	<i>Mie HIRAMOTO, Associate Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore</i>

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## Xu Xi's *The Unwalled City*: Cosmopolitanism in the Marginalised Hong Kong Literature in English

Mandy Chi Man LO

PhD Student (English Literature), National University of Singapore

Although Hong Kong is politically part of China, it possesses distinctive characteristics (in terms of culture, language, and identity) and specific historical and social backgrounds. The divergence between Hong Kong and China did not just begin to develop after Hong Kong's handover in 1997. Exacerbating conflicts between Hong Kongers and the Mainland Chinese has become even more obvious in recent years. The hostility towards the Mainlanders displays a cultural lack of cosmopolitanism in contemporary Hong Kong. However, by focusing on Xu Xi's novel, *The Unwalled City*, I argue that the literary text creates a fictional universe which is significantly cosmopolitan, even though it reflects only a fraction of Hong Kong life. I suggest that cosmopolitanism in Hong Kong is envisioned in the margin, reflected in a literary form, and created through a literary means. Hence, the literary text translates a vision of cosmopolitanism that appears contrary to the cultural lack of cosmopolitanism in contemporary Hong Kong.

**Key words:** Hong Kong, Hong Kong literature in English, Hong Kong-China conflict, (literary) cosmopolitanism

**Mandy Chi Man LO** earned her BA and MA in English Studies from the University of Macau which sponsored her as a Visiting Student Researcher in the Department of English at the University of California, Berkeley, USA from 2012 - 2013. She is now a PhD candidate in the Department of English Language and Literature at the National University of Singapore. Her current research focuses on cosmopolitanisms in Singapore and Hong Kong literatures in English in the 21st century.

**Research interests:** Asian literatures in English, Migrant literature, postcolonial studies, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, transnationalism

# A Simulated Gentleman's Club: Hemingway and Gossip on the Left Bank

TAN Teck Heng

PhD Student (English Literature), National University of Singapore and King's College London

Scholarly reception to Hemingway's work, as it pertains to gender, falls into two broad categories: the first charges him with misogyny, while the second acquits him by reading complexities and ambiguities into his portrayal of women. I propose a method of tropic reading which bridges these standpoints. I argue that Hemingway's "misogyny" often deploys a triangular trope: two men talking in the absence of woman. As per Eve Sedgwick and Jane Gallop, such a structure is fundamental to homosocial relations. However, I reframe their insights by suggesting that this triangulation (two speaking about an absent other) also underpins the communicative structure of gossip. By looking at how such a triangular constellation of homosocial gossip extends from Hemingway's journalism to his poems and novels, I conclude that Hemingway calibrates the trope according to the contexts of publication, which fall along a spectrum from the journalistic, the timely and the popular, to the literary, the timeless, and the elite. Such sophistication, which produces different formations of gendered ideology, allows him to appeal to different reading publics. This manner of reading reveals 1) Hemingway's own negotiations with print capitalism, 2) Hemingway's leveraging of his celebrity status, resulting in textual innovations that draw from both high art and mass culture, and 3) recursive distinctions between what is recognised as "literature" vis-a-vis "journalism" within a specific historical and cultural context.

**Key words:** Hemingway, gossip, gender, masculinities, homosociality, modernism

TAN Teck Heng is a first-year PhD candidate in English Literature at the National University of Singapore, having also received a BA (Hons) in 2013 and an MA (Research) in 2015 from the same institution. His research interests include new modernist studies, celebrity culture, gender theory, journalism from the twentieth century, and linguistic anthropology. His current focus is on twentieth century Left Bank writers, particularly "hyper-canonical" journalist-novelists such as Ernest Hemingway and George Orwell, with an eye to how their celebrity status (then and now) were produced and continue to be sustained, particularly by mis/readings in different reading cultures such as Chinese and Chinese diasporic communities. His scholarly interests are informed in part by his experience working in stints for The Business Times lifestyle pages, a financial daily in Singapore.

**Research interests:** New modernist studies, celebrity culture, journalism in the early twentieth century, gender and sexuality, literature and linguistic anthropology

# Metaromanticism in Resistance Writing by Filipinos

Kathrine Ojano

PhD Student (English Literature), National University of Singapore

At the forefront of the anti-dictatorship movement among intellectuals in the Philippines in the 1970s, Ninotchka Rosca and Emmanuel Lacaba made an interesting duo. As activists, they proved to be too radical to move beyond the fringes of the literary canon; as writers, they were too esoteric to be shortlisted as hardliners. The maverick writers benefited from the exclusion. On a more affirmative note, their double position allowed them to promote the revolution, on one hand, and to claim a niche for literature, on the other.

Turning to Rosca's stories in *The Monsoon Collection* and Lacaba's in *Salvaged Prose*, I show how Romanticism informed the artistic experimentation in resistance writing in the Philippines. The rage for the end of the Marcos dictatorship is backdrop and core of their prose, but the authors' narrative ambivalences and excesses push the short story to an opaque or unmanageable state. In what manner do such aesthetic innovations aid or retard the revolutionary causes of the authors? The answer to the question partly depends on a weaving of the historical discourses on the protest movement in the Philippines with philosophical conversations on genre among continental thinkers.

For the most part, this paper pays attention to the authors' storytelling techniques which tangibly reveal the influences of Romanticism. The politics in the texts is important, but the way in which it is kept or staked demands to be understood, too. David Duff's borrowed term, "metaromanticism," holds here as Rosca and Lacaba no longer merely express; they also question and exceed their means of expression. As inheritors of the Romantic lesson, they embarked on a metaromantic struggle with their vocation. They not only reworked the resistance's aims but also unsettled the literary form to invite ways of reading and imagining outside and alongside institutions of inequality and oppression.

**Kathrine OJANO** joined the PhD in English Literature program at NUS in August 2016. She finished her MA in Comparative Literature at Binghamton University-State University of New York on a Fulbright scholarship in 2012. Her general research interests lie in the intersections of aesthetic theory and resistance literature. She is currently studying the fictive works of women writers associated with the Left, namely, Ninotchka Rosca, Nadine Gordimer, and Han Suyin. In her research work, she aims to examine how writings of these women interrogate and reconstitute notions of the aesthetic and the revolutionary.

# “Eyes turned inward”: The Relationship Between Vision and Sightless Mathematics in Eighteenth-Century Philosophical Discussions

Su Min KIM

PhD Student (English Literature), National University of Singapore

In Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Gulliver alights on the air-floating island of Laputa and observes an eccentric condition of the mathematical Laputians' eyes: "one of their Eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the Zenith." Although this depiction of the eyes satirizes the Laputians' mathematical obsession, the relationship between mathematics and sight offers an exciting exploration. Eighteenth-century Europe witnesses significant scientific and philosophical discussions over vision and visibility. Newton's *Opticks*, published in 1704, is a beginning landmark, while Diderot's *Lettre sur les aveugles à l'usage de ceux qui voient* (*Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those Who Can See*), for example, explores vision and visibility in relation to loss of sight. I focus on philosophical writings of the eighteenth-century to explore how mathematics, something sightless and abstract, is understood in relation to the function of the eyes and of the mind.

Su Min KIM graduated from College of Liberal Studies, Seoul National University, South Korea in 2014 with a BA in Comparative Literature. She came to the National University of Singapore in 2015 to start her doctoral studies in English Literature. Although her main focus is on literatures in English, she enjoys exploring literatures in other languages, particularly French and German. She has developed a great interest in foreign languages and diasporic experience, having spent most of her life outside Korea. However, she has recently become fascinated with the presence and use of mathematics in literary texts. Although "mathematics and literature" are less frequently paired than "science and literature" and the combination elicits mixed responses, she is fascinated by writers such as Edwin A. Abbott, Jorge Luis Borges and Italo Calvino, to name but a few, who use mathematics to enrich narrative spaces.

**Research interests:** mathematics in nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature, mathematical philosophy in literary texts

# Variation in L1 and L2 stop production among Korean learners of English in the Philippines

Rowland Anthony IMPERIAL

MA Student (Language Studies) and Graduate Teaching Assistant, National University of Singapore

The Philippines has recently experienced rapid growth in the English language learning industry, attracting students primarily from Korea (Choe, 2016). Learners in this setting come into contact with Philippine English (Phile), a variety that is still undergoing nativization and indigenization (Borlongan, 2011; Schneider, 2003). While some prior work has examined the language attitudes of Koreans toward Phile (e.g., Castro & Roh, 2013), not much is known about the impact of Phile on Korean learners' English. It is also unknown whether learners' exposure to Phile results in distinctive phonetic drift patterns in their L1 (cf. Chang, 2012). This study therefore investigates how factors such as length of exposure to Phile predict learners' production of both English and Korean.

This analysis focuses on the production of English and Korean word-initial stops, measuring Voice Onset Time (VOT) and fundamental frequency ( $f_0$ ) at vowel onset. Relative to standard varieties of English, Phile features shorter VOTs for voiceless aspirated stops (Regala-Flores, 2014), making this feature a salient site for potential effects of English study in the Philippines. The data are drawn from recordings of 18 Koreans studying in the Philippines (6 short-term and 12 full-time university students) as well as comparison samples of 6 local Filipino university students and 5 Korean students studying abroad in Singapore.

An analysis of learners' L1 Korean and L2 English production across different speech styles finds that greater degrees of interaction with Phile speakers and involvement in classroom learning correlate with shorter VOTs, suggesting categorical assimilation to the non-native L2 variety. Other stop production patterns are also found to categorically assimilate to their L1. Moreover, the analysis finds that learners produce overall English tonal contrast patterns that lie between L1 and L2 production norms. Overall, the data illustrates a bi-directional nature of phonetic transfer (consonantal and tonal) in the interlanguage of the learners, comprising both 'native' L1 and 'non-native' L2 influences.

**Key words:** sociolinguistic variation, second language acquisition, Korean, Philippine English

**Rowland IMPERIAL** is currently a final-year graduate student (Masters by Research). He has published a journal article in the *Philippine Journal of Linguistics*, and also presented papers at international linguistics conferences. He will present another paper at the 3rd Variation in Language Acquisition (ViLA) Conference in Salzburg, Austria next year.

His current MA research work concerns the study of language learning/acquisition of English as a Second Language (ESL) by South Korean nationals in the Philippines. Drawing from a sociophonetic perspective, the study looks at language variation and change in the participants' speech production and perception patterns, the social correlates of these patterns, and their accompanying language attitudes and ideologies.

**Research interests:** Sociolinguistic variation, sociophonetics, second language acquisition, Philippine English

# Mock Singlish in Voicings of Class Distinctions and Resistance

Jennifer ONG

PhD Student (Language Studies), National University of Singapore

This research investigates a previously unexamined aspect of Colloquial Singapore English (CSE)—supposedly playful renderings of an imagined variety of Singlish referred to here as Mock Singlish. These pseudo-Singlish features can be found in parodic voicings of discontent that are frequently projected in a humorous frame. While studies on other linguistic mock varieties have primarily attended to their role in discourses of ethnicity or racism, this paper locates Mock Singlish within the ideological scheme of social stratification, for language dictates social class, an especially salient fact in Singapore's dominant language ideologies. Central to the perspective of this paper is the idea that linguistic differentiation is hardly identified through abstraction and is, instead, materially embodied. To that end, Agha's (2007) "emblematic figures of identity" is invoked to explain the ideological processes in the formulation of dominant-subordinate class distinctions.

Data was elicited from YouTube, a global video-sharing website wherein people can upload content and post personal comments, hence functioning as a discursive site where performers and viewers jointly construct voice and legitimacy through a body of shared experiences and ideologies. Preliminary findings showed ideological fractalisation effects that afford both performers and viewers symbolic power which rationalises and reinscribes class distinctions. Further, parodic performances of emblematic political Singaporean figures suggest the subversive potential of Mock Singlish as a rhetorical resource for voicings of resistance by grafting humour onto counterhegemonic messages to deflect state scrutiny.

**Key words:** Colloquial Singapore English, mock language, humour, ideology, resistance

**Jennifer ONG** is a second-year PhD student in the Department of English Language and Literature, NUS. She graduated with an MA in Language Studies from the same institution in 2014. Her research interests include language ideologies, issues of power and its resulting tensions, particularly in Singapore English.

**Research interests:** language ideologies, language attitudes, vernacular languages

# The language ecology of post-colonial Manila and Hokaglish

Wilkinson GONZALES

MA Student (Language Studies), National University of Singapore

In this presentation, I demonstrate a preliminary description of a post-colonial Northern Philippine contact language called Hokaglish. It primarily involves Hokkien, Tagalog, and English and is generally spoken in Binondo, Manila by local-born Filipino-Chinese people (Gonzales, 2016; Gonzales, forthcoming). Based on the data collected between 2014 and 2016 from my fieldwork, I report some notable linguistic features of Hokaglish including the morphological, phonological, and syntactic characteristics.

While there has been historical evidence of Chinese-Filipino contact since the Han Dynasty (Solheim, 1964), Hokaglish is a contact variety that emerged as a result of a relatively recent language contact and linguistic change phenomena that has been taking place in Manila since around the 1890s, when all the three languages were present (Gonzalez, 2004; Klöter, 2011; Rafael, 1995; Tan, 1993). Among the three involved languages, English appears to show the most superficial influence as it is largely limited to a level of lexical borrowing. Between Hokkien and Tagalog, Hokaglish appears to reflect a Philippinized grammatical system especially in the morphosyntactic features. Thus, I suggest Hokaglish is not a mere code-switching phenomenon but a Philippine creole language such as Chavacano, a Spanish-based creole spoken by the Zamboangueno people in Southern Philippines.

First, I will refer to Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) idea of 'borrowing scale' to discuss the intensity of contact among Hokkien, Tagalog, and English. Then, I will use the substrate influence framework (e.g., Bao 2010, Lefebvre, 2001, 2004) and the superstrate theory (e.g., Mufwene, 1996, 2001) to explain evidence of Hokaglish as a creole language.

Ultimately, what my presentation aims to accomplish is to provide an improved and novel perspective of post-colonial Hokaglish apart from Myers-Scotton's (1993) Matrix Language Framework (MLF) which I have loosely attempted before (Gonzales, 2016). How the investigation of Hokaglish is significant to the language ecology of modern Manila as well as language contact and variation research in the Philippines and Asian context eventually forms the conclusion.

**Key words:** language contact, Philippine languages, grammar, Hokaglish, post-colonial

**Wilkinson GONZALES** is a currently a graduate student (MA by Research), and is also affiliated with the Linguistic Society of the Philippines. His research interests include contact, historical, and corpus linguistics, as well as World Englishes and English Language Teaching (ELT). Specifically, he is interested in diachronic change in Philippine English, emergence of Philippine Englishes, Philippine Hokkien grammar, and local contact languages, particularly Hokaglish. Some of his research on these topics have been presented in international conferences, while others have been published in refereed local and international journals.

**Research interests:** contact linguistics, variationist linguistics, Hokkien, Philippine English, English Language Teaching

# Party Legitimation through Representations of CCP's (Post-)Communist Political Ideologies in Xi Jinping's Political Discourse

WANG Jiayu

PhD Student (Language Studies) and Research Scholar, National University of Singapore

This paper analyzes how Xi Jinping's political discourse legitimizes the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as the China's "permanent ruling Party" through representations of political ideologies. It probes two dimensions of the representations: the first is thematic representations concerning the topics and topical patterns in Xi's discourse, and the second is evaluative representations concerning the attitudes and emotions associated with these topics. The study adapts Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional approaches towards Chinese political discourse analysis: description of linguistic features of the discourse, interpretation and explanation of the discourse by considering China's social, and especially political and cultural particularities. Through the analysis, this paper reveals the discursive practices through which CCP exploits a range of political ideologies to legitimize its politics. It is also to be hoped that this study can shed light on adapting critical discourse analysis (CDA) to Chinese political discourse analysis regarding China's particular cultural and politics

**Key words:** CCP, political discourse analysis, political ideologies, Chinese culture

WANG Jiayu is a PhD candidate and has published several papers and one book review on critical discourse analysis, political discourse analysis, and multimodality in international peer-reviewed journals including *Social Semiotics*, *Journal of Language and Politics*, *International Journal of Communication*, *Critical Arts and Language and Intercultural Communication*. His current PhD research work involves the critical discourse analysis of China's presidential discourse and the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) "discursive governance", that is, the dimension of governance effected through discursive means such as different registers (e.g., institutional versus banal), banal narratives and metaphors.

**Research interests:** critical discourse analysis, political discourse analysis, multimodality

# Production of English Tense and Lax Vowels Among L1 Bengali Speakers

A R M Mostafizar RAHMAN

PhD Student (Language Studies) and Research Scholar, National University of Singapore

Most dialects of English maintain a phonemic distinction between tense and lax vowels (e.g., /i:/ as in FEAST vs. /ɪ/ as in FIST), which generally differ in both duration and position of articulation. Because this contrast is rare in other languages, however, many L2 English speakers do not differentiate between these vowel classes. This study investigates the production of tense and lax vowels in English by L1 Bengali speakers in Bangladesh; as Bengali features no tense-lax distinction or length distinction in its vowel system, it is of interest to investigate whether Bengali-English bilinguals make any such distinction in their English vowels, and whether vowel production differs among speakers of various social and demographic backgrounds.

Data collected from recordings of a reading passage and sentence list by a total of nineteen speakers are analysed, focusing on the contrast between traditionally paired English monophthongs /i:/ vs. /ɪ/; /u:/ vs. /ʊ/; /ɔ:/ vs. /ɒ/; and /ɑ:/ vs. /ʌ/ in terms of their quality (height and frontness) as well as duration. The findings suggest that the participants do not distinguish between these pairs in height or frontness, but do maintain a length distinction. Additionally, the production of these vowel pairs is found to show sociolinguistic stratification by gender.

**Key words:** tense vowels; lax vowels; vowel length; vowel quality; vowel conflation; acoustic analysis

**A R M Mostafizar RAHMAN** is a PhD candidate in English Language and Linguistics at the National University of Singapore. He obtained his BA (Hons) in English and MA in English Language Teaching (ELT) from Aligarh Muslim University, India in 1999 and 2001 respectively. He obtained his second MA in Applied Linguistics from University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia in 2008. He is interested in the phenomena of language choice and use in language-in-contact situations, language ideology and sociophonetics. In his PhD programme, he investigates linguistic hybridization and language ideology, drawing on his MA thesis in Applied Linguistics, in which he tried to explore language choice phenomena in a multilingual context, and his research work on language use and language attitudes.

**Research interests:** Sociophonetics, contact linguistics, language attitudes and ideology