



澳門大學  
UNIVERSIDADE DE MACAU  
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**Faculty of Arts and Humanities**

**Department of English Distinguished Lecture Series**

**Prof. Jerry Won Lee & Prof. Christopher J. Jenks**

**Aesthetic Metapragmatics and Unequal Englishes in Hong Kong**

Friday 18 January 2019, **15:00**

**Venue: E4-G062**

**All are Welcome**

**Abstract:**

Scholars have long acknowledged the inherent equality of languages, including, from the perspective of world Englishes, the view that the many varieties of Englishes spoken within and across nations should be viewed equally. Despite these proclamations, the unequal relations across Englishes persist through various means. One such way, as will be discussed in this paper, is through the metapragmatic aestheticization of language, which we define as a process in which individuals evaluate a language resource or usage as aesthetically appealing on the basis of its stylistic, grammatical, or phonological “appearance.” This study, based on a classroom ethnography in Hong Kong, demonstrates that language aestheticization is an ideological commitment that sustains a speaker’s metapragmatic distance from English. Our analysis shows how aesthetic evaluations of language represent, and can exacerbate, social and linguistic inequalities. These findings contribute to current understandings of world Englishes in that metapragmatic distance is reflective of a complex interplay of ideology and access to dominant language resources, and thus useful in exploring the continued inequality across Englishes in various global contexts.

**Biography:**

**Jerry Won Lee** is Associate Professor of English at the University of California, Irvine, and a faculty affiliate in the Departments of Anthropology, East Asian Studies, and Asian American Studies. His publications include *The Politics of Translingualism* (Routledge 2017), *Korean Englishes in Transnational Contexts* (co-edited with Christopher J. Jenks, Palgrave MacMillan 2017), and a special issue of the *International Journal of Multilingualism* on “the ordinariness of translinguistics” (co-edited with Sender Dovchin, forthcoming).

**Christopher Jenks** is a scholar of language, communication, and culture. He has worked as a professor in a number of countries, including the United States, England, and South Korea. Christopher specializes in the study of language in society and is particularly interested in the political and cultural implications of the global spread of English. His research interests include discourse analysis, computer-mediated communication, intercultural encounters, critical pedagogy, and identity construction. His eight co-edited and published books include *Race and Ethnicity in English Language Teaching* (Multilingual Matters, 2017), *Korean Englishes in Transnational Contexts* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), *Language and Intercultural Communication in the Workplace* (Routledge, 2017), *The Discourse of Culture and Identity in National and Transnational Contexts* (Routledge, 2015), *International Perspectives on ELT Classroom Interaction* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), *Social Interaction in Second Language Chat Rooms* (Edinburgh University Press, 2014), *Transcribing Talk and Interaction* (John Benjamins, 2011), and *Conceptualising Learning in Applied Linguistics* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

**\*Language: English**