



北京师范大学 联合国国际学院
BEIJING NORMAL UNIVERSITY · HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY
UNITED INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE



The International Research Foundation
for English Language Education

International Symposium on AI-Empowered English Language Teaching and Learning

Date: 17th May 2025 Venue: United International College, Zhuhai, Guangdong, China

Keynote Speakers



AI for Language Education: New Opportunities and Challenges

Professor ZHU Tianqing is Professor and Vice Dean (Research) in the faculty of Data Science at the City University of Macau. She holds B.Eng. and M.Eng. degrees from Wuhan University, Wuhan, China and a PhD in Computer Science from Deakin University, Australia. Prior to that, she was a Professor at the China University of Geosciences (Wuhan). Professor Zhu will explore the transformative potential of AI in language education, including personalised learning and democratized access to resources, while also addressing challenges like data privacy, ethical implications, and cultural sensitivity. It aims to foster a balanced understanding of AI's role in shaping future educational strategies, considering both opportunities and obstacles.

The Role of AI in Revolutionizing Language Learning and Teaching

Professor David Nunan is Professor Emeritus of Applied Linguistics at the University of Hong Kong; President Emeritus and Distinguished Research Professor at Anaheim University, where he also served as President; and Senior Trustee at TIRF (The International Research Foundation for English Language Education). Professor Nunan will argue that generative AI (GenAI) presents significant opportunities for enhancing education, enabling the development of higher-order thinking, creativity, collaboration, reflection, and independent learning among students. However, achieving these benefits requires a shift in teachers' attitudes and practices, and it necessitates rethinking assessment methods to align with the goals of education in the era of AI.



AI Powering Learning-Driven Concordancing for Academic Writing

Professor LI Wenzhong is a doctoral supervisor at Zhejiang Gongshang University. He earned his PhD in Corpus Linguistics at Shanghai Jiaotong University and his Post-Graduate Diploma in English Language Teaching at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang University of Science and Technology. One area of Dr. Li's research interests is in data science applications in corpus linguistics. Dr. Li will explore the integration of corpus concordancing and AI technology in academic writing instruction, aiming to empower learners to independently explore language patterns and improve their writing. The approach combines this data-driven learning method with AI-generated feedback, offering learners a comprehensive understanding of academic language use and fostering more effective learning outcomes.

From Promise to Practice: Empowering Argumentative Writing with Generative AI

Dr. LENG Jing is an associate professor in the Department of Education Information Technology at the East China Normal University (ECNU) in Shanghai, China. She received her PhD at the University of Hong Kong. Her research centers on AI & language learning, computer-supported collaborative learning, and critical thinking. Dr. Leng will explore the use of generative AI, specifically ChatGPT, in enhancing university students' argumentative writing skills. She will investigate AI's role in providing feedback, fostering coherence, and promoting critical thinking through a multi-agent debate framework. Her talk aims to help language teachers leverage AI as a powerful, adaptable tool for scalable language learning solutions.



Registration Fee:
1,200¥ (Non-Students)
600¥ (Students)



International Symposium on AI-Empowered English Language Teaching and Learning Schedule

Time	Activity
9:00-9:30	Opening Ceremony & Group Photo
9:30-10:20	Keynote Speech 1 - David NUNAN (40m Presentation + 10m Q&A)
10:20-11:10	Keynote Speech 2 - ZHU Tiangqing (40m Presentation + 10m Q&A)
11:10-11:40	Tea Break & Networking
11:40-12:30	Panel Discussion (Moderated by Prof. LIU Jun)
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break
13:30-14:20	Keynote Speech 3 - LENG Jing (40m Presentation + 10m Q&A)
14:20-15:10	Keynote Speech 4 - LI Wenzhong (40m Presentation + 10m Q&A)
15:10-16:00	Panel Discussion (Moderated by Prof. LIU Jun)
16:00-16:30	Tea Break
16:30-17:30	Concurrent Workshops (Facilitated by UIC Faculty & Colleagues)
17:30-18:00	Closing Session (Prof. LIU Jun)
18:00-18:30	Reception



Introduction to UIC

Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University United International College (UIC) stands as a pioneering new liberal arts university at the forefront of higher education in China. Established in 2005 as a collaborative effort between Beijing Normal University and Hong Kong Baptist University, UIC was the first full-scale cooperation in higher education between Mainland China and Hong Kong. Located in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, UIC is a beacon of international education, embodying a unique blend of Eastern and Western academic traditions.

UIC is committed to providing a liberal arts education that nurtures well-rounded, innovative, and socially responsible individuals. The college offers a diverse range of programs across disciplines such as Business and Management, Humanities, Social Sciences, Culture & Creativity, and Science and Technology, all designed to foster critical thinking, creativity, and a global perspective among students.

English is the medium of instruction at UIC, reflecting its commitment to preparing students for the demands of a globalized world. The college's English Language Center (ELC), under the School of General Education, plays a pivotal role in supporting students' linguistic and academic development, ensuring they are well-equipped to thrive in their studies and future careers.

UIC's mission extends beyond academic excellence. The college places a strong emphasis on whole-person education, encouraging students to engage in emotional intelligence, community service, cultural activities, and leadership development. This holistic approach ensures that graduates are not only knowledgeable in their fields but also possess the ethical grounding and interpersonal skills necessary to make meaningful contributions to society.

As a leader in international education in China, UIC attracts students and faculty from around the world, creating a vibrant, multicultural campus environment. The college's commitment to innovation and quality has earned it a reputation as a model of higher education reform in China, making it a top choice for students seeking a world-class liberal arts education with a global outlook.

UIC is more than just an academic institution; it is a community dedicated to fostering intellectual growth, personal development, and cross-cultural understanding. Through its innovative programs and commitment to excellence, UIC continues to shape the future of education in China and beyond.



Introduction to TIRF

Since 1998, the mission of TIRF (The International Research Foundation for English Language Education) has focused on improving the global landscape of language education. Through engaging in various research-based activities, TIRF has demonstrated its continued commitment to positively influencing the lives of its stakeholders, including teachers, researchers, authors, publishers, philanthropic foundations, government agencies, and corporations. Our Trustees believe that the ultimate success in meeting the Foundation's goals will depend to a large degree on support from both individuals and groups around the world. We wish to partner with others who share this philosophy and desire to take part in this critical endeavor. The following provides an overview of TIRF's programs and activities – past and present.

TIRF Publications: TIRF has demonstrated a history of commissioning research on some of the most important topics in the field of language education. Through partnering with like-minded organizations and individuals, TIRF has produced a number of publications which address critical areas in the field of language education. In 2012, TIRF entered into a publishing contract with Routledge (Taylor & Francis) to produce an international research-based series, "Global Research in Teaching and Learning English." Since that time, the Foundation has published 11 volumes. Also, TIRF co-publishes the TIRF Insights series with National Geographic Learning. Through this series, TIRF profiles recent research in the field of English Language Teaching in a practical and accessible format. These publications are written for parents, teachers, school leaders, and all student advocates who want to review recent educational trends in a nonacademic way.

Grant & Prize Programs: The Foundation's flagship grant opportunity – its Doctoral Dissertation Grants (DDG) program – began in 2002. Designed to provide financial support to candidates in the final stages of their doctoral studies, the DDG program has made 208 awards to individuals from nearly 30 countries. TIRF partners who have made major contributions to this program for more than two decades include the British Council, Cambridge English (part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment), Duolingo, Educational Testing Service, among others. Beyond the DDG program, TIRF offers annually the TIRF Kathleen M. Bailey Teacher-Research Award, the TIRF James E. Alatis Prize for Research on Language Policy and Planning in Educational Contexts, and the TIRF-British Council Research Mentoring Awards.

Professional Services: TIRF provides various types of services in the field of language education. These services include professional development opportunities for language education professionals, program review services for language education centers, TIRF Talks, conference co-hosting, and others.

Board of Trustees: TIRF's Board is composed of internationally renowned, senior members in language education. The Trustees represent academic, business, and policy perspectives in our field. The Foundation's current Trustees are from or live in the following countries: Australia, Brazil, China, Egypt, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Norway, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Organizational Support: Over the years, the Foundation has enjoyed support from numerous organizations in our field, for example, from the British Council, Cambridge Assessment English, Cambridge University Press, the Center for Applied Linguistics, Duolingo, Educational Testing Service, Laureate International Universities, National Geographic Learning, Pearson Education, TESOL International Association, Walt Disney Company, and many others. We continually work toward providing our partners important PR coverage, including via our website, newsletter, and our social media outlets.