

# How linking research and pedagogy can inform design and practice in language curricula: A case study of medical PBL

This inaugural seminar of the Constituent Theme of Languages, Media & Communication - Language in Education & Assessment will be opened by Prof. Paul Tam, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).

## Speakers

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27 April 2006 (Thursday) 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.  
LG06 Hui Oi Chow Science Building, HKU

## Abstract

In this paper we wish to show how the relationship between research and teaching informs the design of language curricula and learning tasks. We report two investigations we carried out into the specific language and communication needs of medical students in problem-based learning (PBL) tutorials: the first into student discourse in PBL and the second into students' conceptualisations of PBL. While PBL requires students to be both autonomous learners and effective communicators, the first study showed that gaps existed between expectations and performance in these areas. The second study, of a pedagogical task based on the initial research findings, suggests that we can only begin to improve the quality of students' participation in PBL tutorials and enhance their communicative performance when students conceptualize PBL at a level that matches expectations and demands. We will discuss how linking research and pedagogy has engaged us in a cyclical process, whereby research informs the design of learning tasks in language classes where practice in turn generates further research.

*As coordinator of courses for the Faculty of Social Sciences, **Anne Storey** is responsible for the courses: English for Academic Communication for the Social Sciences, Professional Communication for Social Science students and Professional Writing Skills for Social Work. She also teaches English Enhancement for Medicine, Clinical Communication Skills and English Enhancement for Law. Research interests currently focus on interaction in problem-based learning tutorials in medicine.*

***Tse Lai Kun** has been coordinating courses for medical students since 1998 and is responsible for the courses: English for Problem-based Learning in Medicine, and English for Clinical Clerkship. She also teaches other English for academic communication and professional communication courses to students of Chinese Medicine, Engineering, Medical Engineering, and Nursing Her current research interests include English for Specific Purposes, student learning, and student communication in problem-based learning.*

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