

# Distinguished Lectures in Humanities



## Prof. Martin PICKERING

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Martin PICKERING is Professor of the Psychology of Language and Communication at the University of Edinburgh. He has published over 200 papers concerned with language comprehension, production, dialogue, bilingualism, and the relationship between linguistics and psychology. He is known for the theory of interactive alignment in dialogue (most recently discussed in the book "Understanding dialogue", with Simon Garrod), and for research in structural priming within and between languages and language comprehension as reflected in patterns of eye movements. He is the former editor of the Journal of Memory and Language and a Fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

## Predicting Language in Difficult Circumstances

6 March 2024 (Wednesday)

4:30pm - 6:00pm (Hong Kong time (GMT+8))

Online via Zoom

Registration:

<https://polyu.hk/qqliu>



## Abstract

Much research shows that people often predict when comprehending language – they pre-activate aspects of the meaning, grammar, or sound of what they are about to hear. I review research indicating that such predictions can be delayed under difficult circumstances, for example when comprehenders have to perform a secondary task or are not using their first language, but also suggest that simultaneous interpretation does not typically delay prediction. I also present evidence that prediction involves two components, one based on automatic association and one based on strategic processing, and argue that only the strategic component can be delayed. I argue that the strategic component involves prediction-by-production, whereby comprehenders covertly imitate the speaker, adjust for differences between themselves and the speaker, and then use their production system to predict upcoming language.