Issues on the Syntax-phonology Interface

Date: December 13, 2018 (Thursday)
Time: 3:30 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.
Venue: Room 101, 1/F, Leung Kau Kui Building,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Professor Hongming ZHANG
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

Abstract

The nature of the syntax-phonology interface is of crucial importance to prosodic studies and it involves two fundamental problems: a) how accessible is syntactic information to phonological processes, and b) what grammatical properties are relevant to phonology.

This seminar centers on theoretical issues of the phonology-syntax interface based on tone sandhi in Chinese dialects. It uses patterns in tone sandhi to study how speech should be divided into domains of various sizes or levels.

Tone sandhi refers to tonal changes that occur in a sequence of adjacent syllables or words. The size of this sequence (or the domain) is determined by various factors, in particular, the syntactic structure of the words and the original tones of the words. Chinese dialects offer a rich body of data on tone sandhi and are thus great evidence for examining the phonology-syntax interface and for examining the resulting levels of domains (the prosodic hierarchy).

Speaker