



香港中文大學

CUHK

語言學及現代語言系

Department of Linguistics and
Modern Languages



語言學及現代語言系
Department of Linguistics and
Modern Languages

*Anniversary
Commemoration*



二十週年紀念特刊
香港中文大學語言學及現代語言系



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Milestones

01 August 2004

Establishment of the

Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages

2004

Introduction of the

B.A. in Linguistics
M.A. in Linguistics

French Minor
German Minor
Italian Electives
Spanish Electives

2005

Introduction of the

Hong Kong Sign Language Electives

2006

Introduction of the

Spanish Minor
Korean Electives
Thai Electives

2008

Introduction of the

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language
Acquisition

2012

Introduction of the

Korean Minor
Arabic Electives

2013

Introduction of the

Russian Electives

2019

Introduction of the

B.A. in Bimodal Bilingual Studies

2020

Introduction of the

Dual Degree Programmes with
Peking University

Hong Kong Sign Language Minor

2022

Introduction of the

Double Major Programmes in
Linguistics and Translation /
Linguistics and Psychology

Chinese Language (Cantonese) as a
Second Language Minor
Chinese Language (Putonghua) as a
Second Language Minor



Message from **Dean** **Faculty of Arts**

Professor Max Xiaobing TANG

Dean of Faculty of Arts

Sin Wai Kin Professor of Chinese Humanities

At the milestone of its 20th anniversary, I offer to the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages my warmest congratulations. One of the youngest units in the Faculty of Arts, the Department has in two decades firmly established itself and now commands respect from scholarly communities from around the world. In 2024, for instance, the QS World University Rankings by Subject ranked our Linguistics as No. 33 in the world, and Modern Languages as No. 28. This is a remarkable achievement for a young and diverse department. We have every reason to be proud and to celebrate.



More specifically, in areas such as theoretical linguistics, language acquisition and development, neuroscience of language and language disorders, bilingualism, and sign language studies, colleagues in the Linguistics section are widely recognized as leading researchers as well as excellent teachers. The Department also makes a fundamental contribution to humanities education by providing the opportunity for our students to study many foreign languages and cultures.

The Faculty will continue to support the Department's efforts at delivering impactful research, building cross-disciplinary collaborations, and enhancing its global engagement while remaining committed to innovative teaching and learning. I have every confidence that the next twenty years will bring even greater distinction to Linguistics and Modern Languages.

Message from the **Chairperson**



Professor PAN Victor Junnan

Professor and Chairperson

Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages

Pursuing The Truth: Two Decades and Beyond

The inception of the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) dates back to the year of 2004, marking the genesis of a distinguished academic unit. As the sands of time have sifted away over the course of two decades, the remarkable trajectory of our department has borne witness to an extraordinary metamorphosis. Evolving from the nascent stages of infancy, characterized by boundless curiosity and wide-eyed wonder, we have transcended those formative years to blossom into a resolute and sagacious entity that now traverses the hallowed halls of academia with unwavering confidence. According to the “Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)” report of 2020, released by HKSAR’s University Grants Committee (UGC) in May 2021, 55% of our research outcomes are “world-leading level” (four stars, the highest rating in the assessment), while 87% achieved “internationally excellent level” (three stars) and above, ranking the highest among all linguistics-related institutes in the city. In the assessment categories of “research impact” and “research environment,” our department was rated “world-leading” with a perfect score of 100%. In 2024, our Linguistics program ranked 33rd and our Modern Languages program ranked 28th in the QS World University Rankings. Over the past twenty years, we have proudly seen 2,200 students have successfully graduated from our department, including 484 undergraduates, 1,629 from two taught Master degree programmes, 54 from MPhil and 33 from PhD programme. We have been offering the world with high-caliber talents, while outstanding individuals are attracted to join us from around the globe in search of their own stage. How we have achieved such progress in twenty years!

Looking back, our accomplishments in Linguistic research are greatly recognized. We have consistently stood out in Hong Kong and earned our reputation across Asia, and we are rapidly ascending to the top ranks globally. Our theoretical research covers a wide range, including syntax, semantics, phonetics, phonology, language acquisition, etc. We tackle research topics that lead the field, making solid contributions to unraveling the mysteries around human language, often referred to as the “black box riddle.” Beyond the breakthroughs in foundational research, our interdisciplinary research has been spearheading the development of the field, with notable achievements in sign language linguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and among other areas. Several research centers and laboratories within our department have become internationally influential. Our faculty as well as students are frequently invited to present at our field’s most competitive conferences, and our research findings are regularly published in the most prestigious journals. Impressed by the high reputation of our research achievements in the academic community, colleagues from renowned institutes around the world are actively seeking collaborations with us.

Over the course of the past twenty years, we have steadfastly adhered to our unwavering dedication to the noble pursuit of pedagogy. We had only one undergraduate program and one graduate program when the department was founded, and now we offer a total of seven programs in linguistics, spanning from undergraduate to doctoral levels, as well as seven minor programs in modern languages, including Hong Kong Sign Language. We prioritize the cultivation

of our students. Our faculty members are known not only for their academic expertise but also for their inspiring teaching practice, which motivates the young generation to explore the world of linguistics. In addition to the rigorous curriculum design and academic advising, we spare no effort to provide our students with diverse learning opportunities, encouraging them to actively engage in scientific research and make real world impact, as well as pursue international exchanges. Our Modern Languages team has consistently attained the prestigious top position in Hong Kong's rankings for several consecutive years. Currently, our Modern Languages team offers an extensive array of language courses encompassing 11 different languages. Moreover, they also undertake the significant responsibility of facilitating student exchange programs organized at both the university and college levels. Our students, who remain at the core of our institution, represent our most invaluable asset as well as a profound source of pride. Today, graduates from the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at CUHK have made their success across the globe, engaging in various endeavors that contribute to the betterment of society. For instance, many of them have pursued careers in sign language services, speech therapy, and language education. Our students have been utilizing their expertise and passion to embody the ideal of giving back to the society as linguistic professionals, an ideal that deeply resonates with by all members in our field.

For an individual, the milestone of a 20th birthday symbolizes the departure from the secure haven of childhood and marks the commencement of an adventurous odyssey into the vast world. Likewise, the 20-year-old Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at CUHK has an invigorating youthful perspective and eagerly anticipates the pursuit of the future excellence. The toil and perseverance of the past have propelled us to this momentous threshold. On this auspicious occasion of its 20th anniversary, it is vital and empowered for this young institution to sketch out a blueprint of its own future.

Our paramount objective in linguistic research is to seek the genuine explanations for language mechanisms using scientific methods. Throughout the intellectual history, among philosophical luminaries such as Plato, Galileo and Descartes, and great minds like Darwin, Frege, and Chomsky, the fundamental query has persisted, "How can a finite being allow for language, which carries infinite possibilities?" In the second half of the 20th century, our understanding of this question has taken a significant leap forward. We have come to understand that the genetic determinants of our physiology bestow upon us the capacity to acquire languages, and the languages we possess are inevitably restrained by these biological attributes. We have realized that a genuine linguistic theory must go beyond explanatory adequacy to address three characteristics of human language: Universality, Learnability, and Evolvability. Should a linguistic theory successfully explain these three characteristics, it shall epitomize the utmost simplicity of language mechanisms and hence align with the scientific principle of "Occam's Razor." Linguists at CUHK endeavor to explore the essence of language, recognizing that the pursuit of the linguistic theories that provide genuine explanations as the pinnacle of our research.


In the field of linguistics, an enduring debate ensues between theory and methodology. Here, I would like to cast a spotlight upon one issue that plagues the linguistic community worldwide: the gap between experimental research on language and theoretical construction. Thus far, abstract theories have proven hard to direct experiment designs, while experimental data rarely lead to theoretical advancements. However, we remain optimistic that in time, with technological breakthroughs and the evolution of theories, we will traverse the dense fog that shrouds our path and finally arrive at an ideal juncture characterized by mutual affirmation and enrichment. Echoing Noam Chomsky's famous

words, the scientific spirit is about being “willing to be puzzled.” The theoretical scholars and empirical researchers in the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at CUHK wholeheartedly dedicate themselves to unraveling the complexities enshrined within the domain of language.

Meanwhile, the tenets of scientific methodology dictate our unwavering commitment to the pursuit of theories that possess robust explanatory prowess, transcending the realm of comprehensive descriptions. While it is undeniable that observations and descriptions of facts lay the groundwork for research, our intellectual pursuits extend far beyond mere surface-level examinations. We seek deeper universals. Whether manifested through traditional dialect surveys, reference grammars, or contemporary methodologies encompassing behavioral experiments and neuroimaging techniques, all forms of description must serve the overarching goal of bolstering explanatory theories. Failure to adhere to this principle would consign our effort to antiquated natural history. To safeguard against losing our bearings amidst the complexities of superficial phenomena, we must rely on robust theoretical frameworks as guiding compasses to approach and comprehend these perplexing enigmas. In essence, descriptions of phenomena serve the theories, and theories, in turn, will connect our observations of phenomena. Only by constructing theories, rather than simply documenting phenomena, can we distinguish truth from falsehood, and delve into the essence of the world.

In our forthcoming strategic endeavors, our department will allocate more resources and dedication to the study of Chinese languages while extending our reach to encompass projects that embrace the rich diversity of linguistic traditions. Our aspiration is to emerge as an epicenter facilitating communication and exchange between Chinese linguistic community and its international counterparts. We value the exploration and preservation of languages and dialects within China, and place great emphasis on collaborations with local scholars. Moreover, it is our firm belief that the pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of the universal underpinnings of human languages necessitates the profound examination of the languages and dialects within China. We seek to foster an enhanced platform of global scholarly dialogue, forging connections with erudite minds worldwide, thereby cultivating a symbiotic synergy between the study of Chinese languages and the grander endeavor pertaining to the exploration of universal grammar of human languages.

In our future pedagogical endeavors, we shall remain resolute in our commitment to nurturing high-quality linguistic talents for society. Our focus will be on cultivating a deep understanding of linguistic theories, ensuring our educational activities are imbued with depth and rigor. Theories will constitute the cornerstone of our academic programs, guaranteeing that our students develop a firm grasp of the fundamental principles and theories of linguistics. At the same time, we will strive to broaden the horizons of our pedagogical approach, integrating cutting-edge techniques from interdisciplinary fields, such as experimental methods, data analysis, and big language models. Our students will be better equipped with the requisite proficiency to effectively apply linguistic theories in real-world scenarios. and face the challenges of the digital age with great confidence. Moreover, we will augment our commitment to our students' scholarly growth by



expanding the availability of scholarships, research projects, and opportunities for overseas exchanges. As for modern language courses, we will continue to refine and elevate the quality of instruction and enrich the array of languages on offer, allowing students at CUHK unparalleled access to world-class foreign language teaching resources. In doing so, we forge our students' keys to unlock the treasures of diverse cultures across the globe, empowering them as truly global citizens.

As the relentless passage of time swiftly carries us forward, a new chapter unfurls before us in this very moment. I, therefore, extend my heartfelt felicitations to the boundless prospects that lie ahead for our department. I have always believed that embracing the concept of “chasing infinity” is the best aspiration of youth. While life itself is confined by temporal constraints, the realm of knowledge remains boundless and limitless in its expanse. Hence, dedicating one's finite existence to the ceaseless pursuit of infinite knowledge encapsulates the epitome of romanticism and inspiration. I wish that our department shall embody the essence of such an intrepid seeker, fortified with unwavering courage to embark on an unyielding march toward its lofty ideals and an unrelenting quest for truth. In many years unfolding ahead, may it shine resplendently as an exemplar, casting an indelible impression upon the hearts and minds of future scholars who, like us, harbor an insatiable passion for unearthing the enigmatic secrets enshrined within the realm of language.

Happy 20th anniversary!

追求真理，廿載而期

2004年，香港中文大學成立了語言學及現代語言系。二十載筆路藍縷，四代人櫛風沐雨，我們學系從一個在懵懂中睜眼看世界的嬰兒，成長為在天地間健步挑大樑的成人。大學教育資助委員會2021年5月發表的2020年度「研究評審」報告顯示，本系55%的學術研究成果達到了「世界領先水平」（四星，為本次評審的最高級別），87%達到「世界領先水平」（四星）及「國際卓越水平」（三星），位列全港所有大專院校語言學及語言研究學科之首。本系在「研究影響」及「研究環境」兩項評核中，更是被評為百分之百「世界領先」。2024年本系語言學專業QS世界排名第33，現代語言第28。二十年間，我們成功培養了484位本科，1,629位修課式碩士，54位研究型碩士，和33位博士，向四海八方輸送了高水準的人才；吸引了全球的優秀人才來到香江之畔尋找自己的舞臺。二十年，逝者如斯夫！

回望這二十年，我們在語言學的學術研究上取得了有目共睹的成績。論及理論上的貢獻，在本港，我們連年一枝獨秀；在亞洲，我們同樣傲視群雄；在全球範圍內，我們正以一瞬千里的速度跨入最頂尖的行列。我們的理論研究覆蓋全面，囊括了句法、語義、語音、音系、語言獲得等核心領域；研究課題也立足學界前沿，為破解人類語言的黑匣子(black box)之謎持續作出扎實的貢獻。除了基礎研究的創新突破，我們跨學科研究的發展也勢頭迅猛，手語語言學、心理語言學、神經語言學等方向捷報頻傳，系內多個研究中心及實驗室已經成為有世界影響力的研究站點。我們師生的身影頻繁出現在國際頂級會議的現場，研究的成果屢見於行業內最權威的期刊，世界上各大知名高校的同行主動尋求與我們合作交流……這正體現了學界同仁對我們二十年間所取得的科研成就的高度認可。

二十年裏，我們對「教書育人」四個字的堅守始終如一。從最初僅有一個本科生項目，三個研究生項目，到如今橫跨本科到哲學博士共七個語言學學位課程，以及包括香港手語在內的七種現代語言輔修學位項目，我們堅持把對於學生的培養放在第一位。我們的教師團隊不僅學術造詣深厚，更言傳身教，引導後來者探索語言學的廣闊天地，也激發年輕人瞭解並體會現代語言的多樣性。在嚴謹負責的課程設置和研究指導之外，我們也竭力為學生提供豐富多樣的學習機會，鼓勵學生積極參與科研項目、社會實踐和國際交流，實現全面發展。我們的現代語言團隊連續多年排名全港第一，為數萬名中大學生提供了覆蓋11種語言的課程，並承擔校際和書院層面學生對外交流的重任。我們的學生永遠是我們最寶貴的財富和驕傲。如今，從中大語言學及現代語言系走出去的學生遍佈世界各地，從事着各種各樣有益於社會的工作，特別是很多學生選擇從事手語服務、言語治療、語言教育等行業，他們在用自己的專業和熱忱踐行中大語言學人以知識回報社會的理想抱負。二十歲生日，對一個人來說，是走出兒時的港灣，邁向廣闊世界的日子。二十歲的中大語言學及現代語言系，就是這樣一個對未來翹首以待的年輕人。過去的汗水換來了今天的新起點，在20歲的第一天，這個年輕人有必要，也有底氣去為未來的旅途繪出藍圖。

我們語言學研究的學術使命，是用科學的方法尋找對語言機制最本質的解釋。從柏拉圖，到伽利略和笛卡爾，再到達爾文，到弗雷格和喬姆斯基，哲人們追問：「吾生也有涯，而語言承載也無涯，何也？」從二十世紀後半葉始，我們對這個問題的理解有了質的飛躍。我們開始明白，是基因決定的生物特性使得人類生而具有獲得語言的能力；而人所能的語言，必然受限於這些生物特性本身的局限。我們開始明白，真正的語言學理論，必須做到超越解釋的充分性(Beyond Explanatory Adequacy)，才能回應人類語言的三個特性：普遍性(Universality)、可學性(Learnability)和進化性(Evolvability)。如果語言學理論能充分解釋這三個特性，那麼它一定會體現語言本身機制的極簡，也就符合科學所要求的「奧卡姆剃刀原則」。中大的語言學人將把探究語言的本質，建立能夠提供真正解釋(Genuine Explanation)的語言學理論，作為自己科研的終極追求。

語言學界關於理論與方法的爭鳴由來已久；對語言的實驗研究與理論構建之間還存在不小的距離。截至目前，深度的抽象理論難以確切地為實驗所驗證，而實驗的數據結果往往也不能直接促成理論的進展。但我們相信，假以時日，隨著技術的進步，隨著理論的更迭，我們必定能穿透層層迷霧，到達兩相印證、彼此促進的理想階段。正如喬姆斯基的名言，科學精神就是「willing to be puzzled」。中大語言學的理論學者和實證學者，都將為了這個目標不斷努力——我們樂意投身於解決語言的謎團。

科學的方法論要求我們追求理論的解釋性，而不僅僅停留在描寫的全面性。對事實的觀察描寫確實是研究的基礎，但我們的旨趣並不局限於此，而更要尋找深層的共性。一切的描寫，不論是傳統的方言志、語法書，還是現代的行為實驗、腦成像技術，都應該以服務解釋性理論為目的，否則就會淪為前現代的博物學。但凡我們想避免迷失在對繁雜表象的羅列枚舉之中，就必須帶著理論問題去發掘現象，帶著理論框架去總結現象，帶著理論思辨去理解現象。最終，對現象的描寫服務於理論，理論則串聯了對現象的觀察；唯有構建理論而非羅列現象，方能刪繁就簡，去偽存真，幫我們深入世界的本質。

未來的研究中，本系將立足中文，走向世界，成為溝通海內外語言學界的樞紐。一方面，我們重視對中國境內語言及方言的發掘與保護，重視同本土學者的交流，希望我們的研究紮根於中國本土的語言。另一方面，我們認為對人類語言共性與本質的研究，絕不可能脫離中國境內的近百種語言及方言而成立，希望增進與海外學者的爭鳴，從而實現研究中國本土語言與探索人類普遍語言本質的良性互動。我們學系地處香港，在溝通海內外上具有自己的優勢，我們將進一步強化與中國內地學界、亞洲學界、歐美學界的聯繫，在不斷提升自身國際影響力及鞏固業界先進地位的過程中，為各界同仁搭建更高質量的交流平臺，促成更多高層次的合作機會，造福海內外學者。

未來的教學中，本系將繼續為社會培養優質的語言學人才。我們會繼續保證教學的深度，絕不放鬆對核心理論的強調。我們將繼續把培養學生的理論素養作為教學的基點，確保學生對語言學基本原理和理論有良好的掌握，能分清理論和技術的體用之辯。同時，我們也會努力擴展教學的廣度，囊括實驗設計、數據分析和大語言模型等跨學科領域的前沿技術，以幫助學生更好地實踐語言學理論，從容應對數字時代的挑戰。我們也會為學生爭取更多獎助學金、科研項目以及海外交流的機會。在現代語言課程上，我們將繼續提高教學質量、豐富語言種類，讓中大學子享受世界第一流的外語教學資源，瞭解各地人文風情。

二十年時光荏苒，新路程始於當下，我想應該為我們學系的未來獻上自己的祝福了。我一直認為，「夸父逐日」是對一個年輕人最好的期許。我生也有涯，而知也無涯，那麼以有涯隨無涯，豈不是人世間最浪漫、最讓人心馳神往的事情麼？今天，我就把「夸父逐日」四個字送給中大語言學及現代語言系這個二十歲的年輕人，希望他能有了理想不斷跋涉的勇氣，希望他一往無前追逐光明的身影，在許多年以後，能成為後來者眼中另一輪耀眼的太陽。

二十歲生日快樂！



Message from **Visiting Professor**



Message from **Visiting Professor**



Professor Hilary CHAPPELL

Vice-Chancellor Visiting Professor (2023-24)

It has been an unalloyed pleasure to be given this opportunity to spend a year in the Linguistics and Modern Languages Department as a visiting professor (2023-2024) and be part of its 20th anniversary celebrations, a momentous year no less!

On the professional side of my visit, I have really enjoyed teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students alike to share my research findings and experience with them in the areas of my expertise in typology and Sinitic linguistics. The high academic standard of the students has been particularly impressive, only matched by their enthusiasm to learn and take part in the process of scientific inquiry. The training in linguistics given to the graduate students here undoubtedly makes them fully competitive at the international level; and having taught and carried out research over the past 40 years principally in Australia and France, but also in the USA and Germany, readily allows such a comparison to be reached.

Hong Kong is perfectly situated for any scholar who is working in sinology with its concentration of universities and proximity to mainland China, facilitating conference visits and fieldwork over the border. As a direct consequence, my visit to CUHK has provided many opportunities to present my research on Sinitic linguistics in a range of universities, including Sun Yat-sen, Fudan, Macau, Hunan, Zhejiang and Beijing Languages and Cultures University, and, of course, also at CUHK.

On the personal side of my visit, it has been extremely rewarding to meet up with colleagues at CUHK again whom I have known for many a long year, including Professors Virginia Yip, Thomas Lee, Sze Wing Tang and Bit Chee Kwok (the latter both in the Chinese Department), not to overlook the very nice coincidence to see a former, much younger, colleague from my research centre in Paris, the Centre of East Asian Linguistics (Centre de recherches linguistiques sur l'Asie orientale) now flourishing as the new Head of the department, Professor Victor Pan.

From the perspective of scientific and academic exchange, my year at CUHK has also seen the signing of a new collaboration between the CUHK and my institute in Paris, the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (Graduate School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences). This agreement provides for the bilateral exchange of PhD students and professors from any discipline. To celebrate this event, a doctoral workshop and a CUHK-EHESS Symposium on Language and Cultural Contact: Along the Frontiers of China, Ancient and Modern took place from 26-27 March 2024 with five participants from the EHESS present to give their talks alongside the CUHK speakers.

Looking at the Department from the standpoint of a visitor, I am certain it will continue to prosper and grow, given both the diverse and rich offerings of courses in different areas of linguistics, combined with the large choice of language studies. The perspectives on the directions and goals of the department are, moreover, clear and well-defined, all of which provides a strong learning framework for students.

I would like to end by saying how much I have appreciated the warm welcome by all during this year, faculty, staff and students alike, and the absolutely charming help on any matter, small or large, afforded by the secretaries and coordinators, Chris, Yvonne and Karmen, A-Miu's kind attentions, not to mention the prompt resolution of internet and software problems by the two computer technicians, Michael and Kinson. A special thanks goes to Chris Cheung for her unstinting help in finding accommodation for me in Hong Kong, even to the point of saving my skin with a nearly missed professorial appointment! Outside of work, I have really appreciated the astounding beauty of the nature reserves in Hong Kong with their panoramic vistas of the ocean and stunning fengshui. My colleague, Annette Frömel must be heartily thanked for introducing me to such delights. All these combined have really made for a very special and unforgettable year living in Hong Kong and working in the Linguistics Department at the CUHK! And I will undoubtedly miss sitting on the terrace of Tolo Café at Harmony overlooking the harbour and the wavelike chains of mountain ranges beyond, while talking shop with colleagues over a strong Italian cappuccino....and croissants.

Many congratulations to the members of the Department, past and present, for the successful establishment of Linguistics and Modern Languages as a full-fledged and flourishing department! May this continue for many more decades!



Messages from **Faculty**

Messages from **Faculty**



Professor MAI Ziyin

Associate Professor

Celebrating 10 years of growth together

I joined the Department as a postdoctoral fellow immediately after completing my Ph.D. degree at Cambridge in 2013. I remember vividly how I was welcomed into the Department on my first day and how we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Department in a banquet in 2014. It all feels like just yesterday.



My Cambridge bear arriving at my department office in G18 LKK, 2013

In the past ten years, there has been profound development and growth both in the department and myself. The department has achieved major breakthroughs and milestones on various fronts from teaching to research and social impact, and my own research has expanded substantially from second language acquisition to first and bilingual acquisition. I am very lucky to have met and worked with many incredibly talented and enthusiastic individuals in the department and through the department – they have become my mentors, friends and long-term collaborators. I am even luckier to be able to return to the department in 2023 so that I don't miss out on the upcoming 20th anniversary celebrations!



A meaningful moment of my career and personal life – three very important collaborators of mine in this photo: Professor Virginia Yip, Professor Xiangjun Deng, and Leo in my tummy, 2014

Messages from **Faculty**



Professor MOK Pik Ki Peggy

Professor

Associate Dean (Student Affairs) of Faculty of Arts

與學系一同成長


我雖然不是學系的創始成員之一，但在學系未成立之前已經上過Gladys, Virginia, Jiang Ping 的課，更有幸在學系成立的初期 (2006年) 正式加入成為一員，由 Instructor II (即現在的 Assistant Lecturer) 做起，就如廣東話的俗語所說，是「紅褲仔出身」。這十八年來我與學系一同成長，一方邊幫助學系發展（特別是在語音學和與本科課程有關的各方面），同時也讓學系塑造了我。我親眼見證著這十八年來學系如何成為「一條好漢」，在各方面的成就非凡，成為香港甚至整個亞洲的語言學重鎮，在世界上的排名也不斷上升，我很慶幸有份參與其中。系裏的老師對自己的專業充滿熱誠，經常都講到雙眼發光；系裏的行政同事，個個都盡忠職守，把事情辦得妥妥當當；系裏的學生和畢業生，能具體地把語言學的訓練實踐出來，在不同的行業裏繼續努力。今年學系慶祝成立二十週年，我祝願她百尺竿頭，更進一步，大家無忘初心，一同砥礪前行，讓中大語言學繼續發光發亮！

Messages from **Faculty**



Professor TANG Wai Lan Gladys

Research Professor
Founding Chairperson



My heartfelt congratulations to the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages on its 20th anniversary! As the founding Chairperson, I'm thrilled to witness the remarkable growth of one of the youngest departments in the Faculty of Arts. Over the past two decades, the department has fervently nurtured linguistics graduates who embody bilingual competency and multicultural awareness, aligning with the department's vision and mission from its inception.

From a humble number of five professors and five modern languages instructors, the department has been expanding in leaps and bounds, attracting many brilliant scholars and language professionals to join this vibrant research and teaching hub in Asia. Witnessing our efforts to build a strong department bearing fruits these years is gratifying. The department has seen countless high flyers in society who bear the name of CUHK-LIN, professors increasingly forging partnerships through local, regional and international collaborations in research, unfailing support from embassies and consulates, and remarkable social impact underscored by research findings.

As the Director of The Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies, I am most thankful to the department and the university for their support to the centre since its establishment in 2003. The centre now serves as the pioneered hub for sign linguistics research and Deaf training in Asia. It has lived up to its mission of nurturing young scholars by organizing postgraduate, undergraduate, and sub-degree training in sign linguistics, sign language teaching, sign interpretation, and deaf education. It is exciting and rewarding to see the research efforts and training outputs being recognized locally and globally, contributing to raising people's awareness of the need to build an inclusive culture in society with a visible language.


With the department's impressive track record and the dedication of its faculty and students, I am confident that it will continue to thrive, innovate, and push the boundaries of knowledge in the years to come.

Messages from **Faculty**



Professor Virginia YIP

Professor
Former Chairperson



It is a great pleasure to congratulate the department on the occasion of our 20th anniversary. As a member of the department who has seen the birth and growth of the department over the last two decades, I am delighted that we have grown and achieved many milestones along the way.

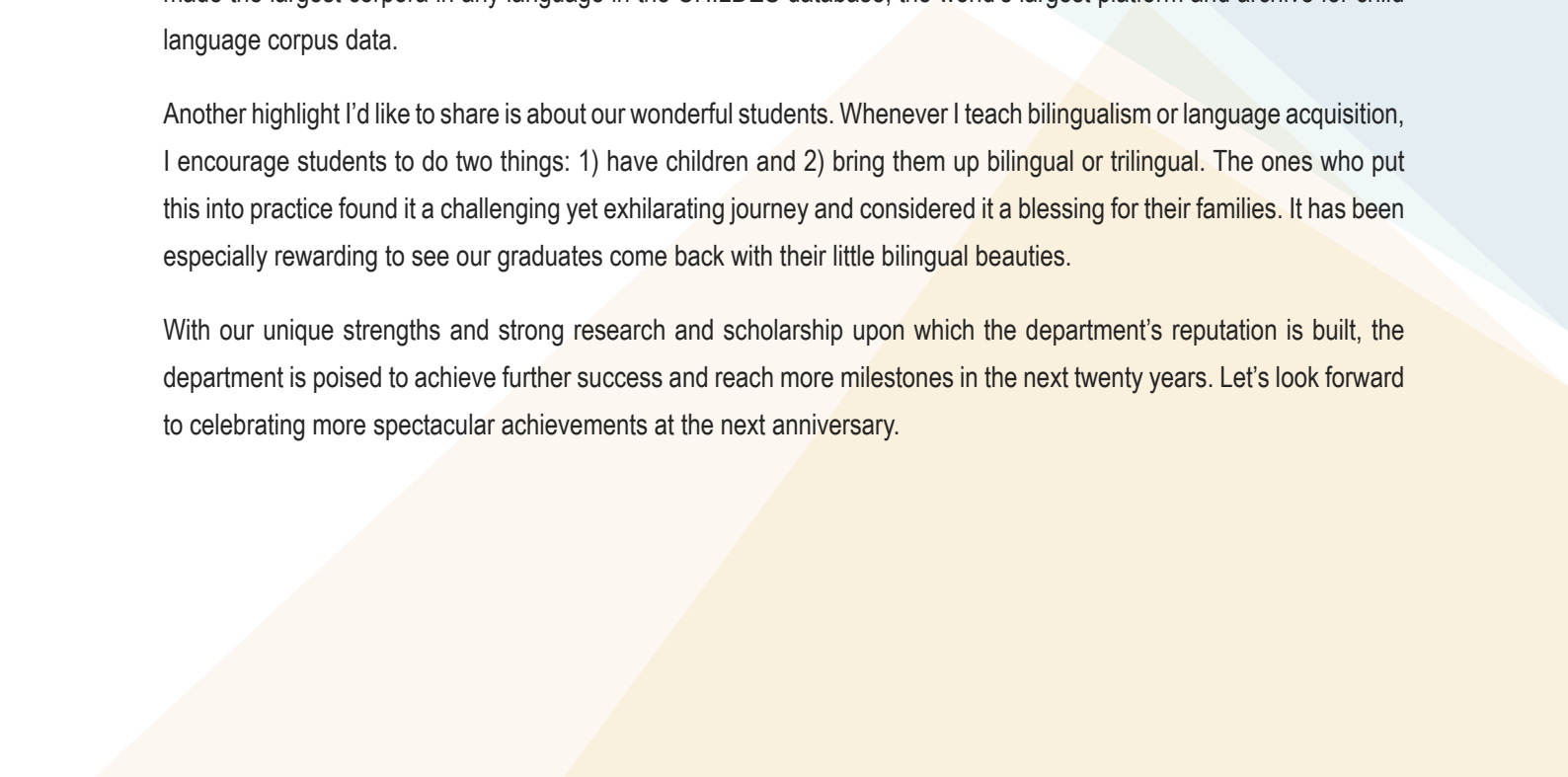
The department is blessed to have recruited a number of brilliant young scholars in recent years to serve as faculty members, diversifying and expanding the research expertise and agenda of the discipline of linguistics, anchored in theoretical and empirical approaches with a strong interdisciplinary focus. This is where the future of linguistics lies. The programmes we offer benefit considerably from the diversity of research conducted by faculty members with enriched course offerings, integrating research and teaching. It is the concerted effort and dedication of faculty, students and staff that have supported the department's phenomenal growth and development.

Central to the mission of the department is the nurturing of future scholars. I am pleased to have supervised and mentored postdoctoral fellows, undergraduate/M.A./Ph.D. students and interns in the Childhood Bilingualism Research Centre. Some of them have become thriving scholars in their own right while others have been successful in pursuing their professional careers. I cherish the monumental moments when they shared the joy and excitement of getting job offers, admission offers or achieving other milestones in their career.

I am thankful that a number of brilliant students and young scholars have been working with me and Professor Maggie Mai on projects investigating bilingual and trilingual children in homeland and heritage contexts and producing newly available corpora documenting their early language development. According to Brian MacWhinney, Director of the CHILDES archive, the newly available contribution of the Child Heritage Chinese Corpus, Hong Kong Mandarin-English bilingual Corpus and the Beijing Child Mandarin Corpus will break the record for the CUHK team that has already made the largest corpora in any language in the CHILDES database, the world's largest platform and archive for child language corpus data.

Another highlight I'd like to share is about our wonderful students. Whenever I teach bilingualism or language acquisition, I encourage students to do two things: 1) have children and 2) bring them up bilingual or trilingual. The ones who put this into practice found it a challenging yet exhilarating journey and considered it a blessing for their families. It has been especially rewarding to see our graduates come back with their little bilingual beauties.

With our unique strengths and strong research and scholarship upon which the department's reputation is built, the department is poised to achieve further success and reach more milestones in the next twenty years. Let's look forward to celebrating more spectacular achievements at the next anniversary.



Messages from **Faculty**



FRÖMEL Annette Josefa Maria

Senior Lecturer - German Programme
Former Deputy Head of Modern Languages

Once upon a time, to be exact: 20 years ago, there was a newly established Kingdom on a beautiful hill which was dedicated to the teaching of Linguistics and Modern Languages.

This was the time when a young lecturer from a country far, far away also joined and was overwhelmed with joy as she got her dream job. She worked under the Prince Dr. Wannagat, who ruled over the German Minor and the French Minor Prince Dr. Philip Fung. The new Kingdom was ruled by its queen, Professor Gladys Tang.



The Queen and the Princes were keen to expand the territories of Modern Languages. Luckily, the Spanish Government agreed to help in the form of an AECID Lectureship program, which sponsored a Spanish teacher and helped to establish a Spanish Minor in 2008.



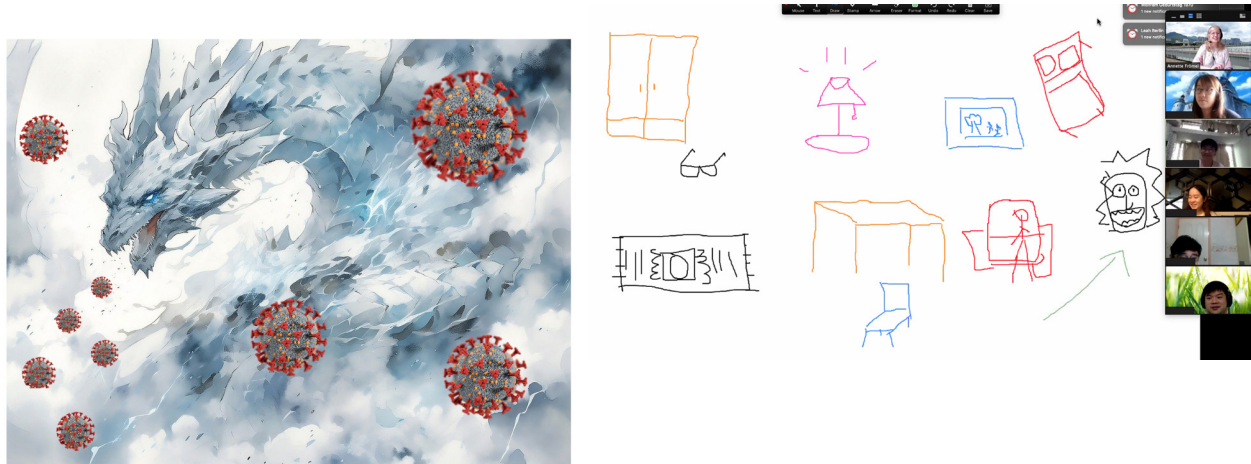
A fourth territory was explored, and Korean became a Minor in 2009. The queen also drew wise people from Arabia, Thailand, and Russia to provide electives. Even a special area, HK Sign Language was added, and this grew and grew so that it is now a main territory, same as the territory for Linguistics and called Major.

The children in the Kingdom loved their home and its colorful territory and cultures. They took flights and soared up to Language levels of A2 and even above, explored paths where they could enjoy made-up stories and dramas, learn about customs, listen to songs, see films and attend colorful events where they clapped, sang and ate and enjoyed liquids such as yellow drinks with white crowns.



Many years passed by, and different Queens and Kings came and went. The children grew and excelled in various activities. They won goblets and made their Kingdom proud. One example is Leäh Cheung, who won the prize in 2011 for making the most beautiful and meaningful sounds in the Germanic Language. She was then allowed to travel to the Venice of the North, which is also called Dresden. She liked it so much there, that she decided to stay!

But then the fierce Corona Dragon came out to the beautiful hill and alarmed and terrorized the whole hill and the surrounding Kingdoms of the whole round sphere where the children and their families lived. The Dragon brought his army of crown-shaped soldiers, and the King, the Princes and the children were terrified to death and went into hiding. They only peeked at each other through square boxes and tried their best to engage in flying up to level A2, listen, read and learn. But in their small boxes they were unable to touch, smell and hug and they all missed each other dearly.



Then the children of the whole sphere united in their fight of the dragon, even though the tiny soldiers kept eluding them. But finally, strong knights and noblewomen in various countries had sharpened their swords enough and the Dragon and his army were pushed back.

And all the children, Kings, Queens, Princes, and Princesses left their square boxes. They laughed and cried and touched and sang and celebrated. They continued to pursue the study of important languages and cultures and invited



And when contact with Lêah was possible again, it was found that she helped the army against the Dragon and worked in a land, far far away at the palace of BioNTech in the city Mainz of the Germanic Country.


And many big festivals were held, and everyone rejoiced and talked and laughed. And they lived happily ever after.

Messages from **Faculty**



MUNSCH Louis Jean

Modern Languages Coordinator
Lecturer - French Programme



2015-16 — this is the year of my arrival at CUHK, I have been teaching for almost a decade in the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages as a French lecturer in the French Programme. Since the start of my career at CUHK, my colleagues from the French Programme and myself taught more than 9000 enrolled students. Even though I have been teaching many courses and countless students, luckily, thanks to the renewed interest and curiosity from our CUHK students in the French culture and language, I still keep intact my enthusiasm to teach and to make students discover the beauty, richness and also complexity of my language, French. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all the students who made the challenging but I think very rewarding decision to join the French programme, engaging in a learning adventure most oftentimes with at first very little knowledge about what they were engaging themselves into.

What my teaching experience in CUHK taught me the most, is to continuously keep an open mind, taking into account the students' feedback, the necessity of questioning my own teaching practice and adapting it always to ever new and changing teaching situations. Having had for instance the opportunity to study Cantonese helped me also to reflect on how to understand better the language learning process through the student's perspective. It can be very challenging to keep up to the student's high expectation in the quite difficult process which is language learning. But I think that the key is to have an altruistic behaviour — students will always perceive and appreciate a teacher's dedication to his work.

What I remember most from those years teaching French, is that it can be so rewarding: sensing the student's contentment with their learning experience in class, dismissing the class seeing all students with a smile on their face, seeing the students receptive and interested, witnessing the impressive progress in learning of students in their performances during assessments. All those signs are very motivating and encouraging to me. When I find myself teaching again in a higher level a student whom I first taught in level 1, who is planning to minor in French, who is interested in studying in France for the summer intensive courses, it feels like a mission to trigger an interest in French language and culture from the student's first course accomplished. Coaching students with my colleague to join the French Speech Competition, seeing the extent of their talent, finally leading, several times, the students to win a prize, have also been a memorable experience.

Over the years, similarly to all my Modern Languages colleagues, I experienced several challenges: the online teaching during the pandemic, the creation of a one unit online French course, the exploration of new technology, the necessity to adapt and create new assessments, the use of social media for promotion of the courses... At first it all seemed quite hard to achieve but luckily thanks to a good working environment and especially to good teamwork with my colleagues, all of it eventually went very smoothly. Good teamwork and communication, I learned during those years at CUHK, are really essential to overcome challenges and be successful. As the Modern Languages Coordinator, I wish in that way to make our minor programmes, French, German, Korean, Spanish and Hong Kong Sign Language, grow and live on, continuing to propose successfully our elective courses such as Arabic, Italian, Russian and Thai.


Messages from **Retired Faculty**



Professor GU Yang

Master, Diligentia College

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen



As one of the original members involved in the establishment of the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, I take great pride in celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Even though I have moved on from the Department, my connection to its advancement and achievements remains strong. Carrying with me the entrepreneurial spirit of the Department, I have embarked on the exciting endeavour of establishing our University's new campus in Shenzhen. Observing the department's academic expansion and thriving research endeavours has been truly fulfilling. As an early member of the Department, I am filled with nostalgia and appreciation for the Department's transformation from its humble beginnings to the esteemed institution it is today.

Please let me extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you who have contributed to shaping the Department into what it is today. Your dedication, passion, and hard work have undoubtedly paved the way for the excellence and innovation that define the Department.

As we mark this significant milestone, I look back with fond memories and look forward with hope and excitement for the future of the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages. May it continue to thrive and make a lasting impact in the realm of academia for years to come.

Messages from **Retired Faculty**



Professor William Shiyuan WANG

*Chair Professor, Hong Kong Polytechnic University;
Professor Emeritus, University of California at Berkeley;
Honorary Professor, Peking University;
Academician, Academia Sinica*

My connection with the Chinese University of Hong Kong began many, many decades ago, at the invitation of Professor 周法高. I still remember vividly he and his wife picked me up in Kowloon, and we rode north in an ancient train that burned coal and puffed black smoke. Over the years I have been invited by Professor 張日昇 to visit the Chinese Department, by Professor 喬健 to visit the Anthropology Department, and by Professor 陳善偉 to guest teach Natural Language Processing in the Department of Translation.

In 2004, a longer appointment was arranged for me by Professor 程伯中, in the Department of Electronic Engineering, and membership in the Digital Signal Processing Laboratory. P.C. was an erstwhile tennis partner, a long time friend, and a wonderful colleague. I also became affiliated with the Center for East Asian Studies, as well as the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages.

Although my wide-ranging curiosity led me into contact with all the above colleagues in several fields, my central interest has always been on language per se, having taught linguistics for 30+ years at the University of California at Berkeley. With the logistic support of Professor 楊綱凱, who was then Vice-Provost, I moved the Journal of Chinese Linguistics, which I had founded in 1973, from Berkeley to the Chinese University; Professor Virginia Yip was to become one of its editors. I particularly enjoyed my interactions with friends in the Department of Linguistics, discussing Grammar with Thomas Lee, Sign Language with Gladys Tang, Childhood Bilingualism with Virginia Yip.

I was especially delighted to have supported Virginia in her effort to lure Patrick Wong to Hong Kong. He is an outstanding scholar in the neuroscience and psychology of language, whose work had impressed me many years earlier. The Brain and Mind Institute that he founded shortly after he joined the Chinese University of Hong Kong exemplifies the best in multidisciplinary research, and has greatly enhanced Hong Kong's international visibility in the language sciences.

Even though I have largely moved away, I am still officially affiliated with your Department of Electronic Engineering, especially its Digital Signal Processing Laboratory. Occasionally I come to use your excellent library facilities, and enjoy a meal at one of the many fine restaurants on your beautiful campus. CUHK will long remain in my heart as the home of many of my fondest memories. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to reminisce, and to congratulate as the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages prepares to celebrate its 20th anniversary this year. With you at its helm, I wish the Department the very best for many, many more years to come.

Messages from **Retired Faculty**



KUNEGEL LEE Hyon Sou Catherine

Former Lecturer - French Programme
Former Modern Languages Coordinator

The first time I set foot in the department was in January 2004. I was very impressed by the beauty of the campus, the lively atmosphere and the students being eager to learn French. Little did I know then that I would spend the next 20 years of my life teaching French in the department, and that I would spend some of the most precious and important years of my life here.

I have witnessed the development and growth of the Modern Languages section over this long period. In this sense, I am very grateful to the department for inviting me to write this article.

Across the years, the Modern Languages Section has put all its energy into expanding the family, introducing at first Korean and Thai courses as well as the minor programme in Spanish in 2006, then Hong Kong sign language in 2007, finally the minor program in Korean and Arabic courses in 2012. Hong Kong Sign Language has also become a minor program in 2020-21 with a rapidly growing number of students.

What progress we've made in 20 years!

One of the most beautiful encounters I've had was with Kenny, who enrolled in my French course and, with the help of a sign language interpreter, worked hard to learn French. His pertinent questions on French grammar showed his curiosity about the language and amazed me. He became a teacher and now teaches Hong Kong Sign Language in our department! I well remember the moments of great pleasure when our students who took part in the French Speech competitions won first prizes. In the German and Korean programmes, our students also won first prizes in inter-university speech competitions, demonstrating the high quality of language teaching in the Modern Language programmes.

When I think of the French Music Festival that took place at the end of the summer session in a fun atmosphere, I can still feel the joy of rehearsing the songs and choreographies in preparation and singing along with the students on stage.

Our department celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. It's a great age! During this time, we've carried out a lot of joint and individual projects and we've gained a lot of experience and expertise in our field.

However, the covid pandemic and the sudden need to teach languages online have had a considerable impact on the way students think and learn foreign languages.

Today, we face the challenge of developing teaching methodologies to better adapt to the changes, of providing a new motivation to learn foreign languages and of energizing our classroom with high-performance tools that enable us to create innovative in-class activities.

Now that I am a few months away from retirement, I cherish a lot the wonderful encounters I've made throughout my years in our department: the graduates who come to visit me from time to time, my Modern Languages colleagues as well as my general office colleagues.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the department and wish it a "Happy 20th Anniversary"!

Messages from **Retired Faculty**



Professor Ulrich WANNAGAT

Adjunct Assistant Professor
Former Head of Modern Languages

Congratulations to the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at the Chinese University of Hong Kong on reaching its remarkable 20th anniversary milestone!

Throughout these two decades of excellence, the department has continuously exemplified a commitment to fostering linguistic and cultural understanding. The Modern Languages section offers a diverse array of languages having extended its expertise from three minor programmes and two electives in 2004 to seven minor programmes and four electives in 2024. Offering French, German, Korean, Spanish, Hong Kong Sign Language, Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese as minor programmes and Arabic, Italian, Russian and Thai as electives, the department has played a pivotal role in nurturing multilingualism and cross-cultural communication.

All these accomplishments can only be achieved through a dedicated team. During the last two decades the number of full-time faculty in Modern Languages has more than doubled from seven to fifteen. They are supported by long-serving part-time lecturers. What has impressed me most during my time in the department is the strong dedication of my colleagues to their students and to the promotion of their languages and cultures. It has been a great pleasure to work with such talented and enthusiastic colleagues and to follow the rapid development of our language programmes. I have fond memories of our annual staff retreats, team building activities and joint projects. Particularly touching for me was the surprise party travelling on a historical tram that my Modern Languages colleagues organized for my retirement 10 years ago.

As we celebrate this significant occasion, I would like to applaud the dedication of the faculty, students, and alumni who have contributed to the department's success. May the next 20 years be filled with continued growth, innovation, and impactful contributions to the field of linguistics and modern languages.

Warmest congratulations once again to this important anniversary!

Messages from **Current Students**

Qi Zeyao

B.A. Programme in Linguistics

Pamika THONGPICHAI

B.A. Programme in Linguistics

TAM Regan Elysse

B.A. Programme in Linguistics

WONG Chun Lai

MPhil Programme in Linguistics

HU Chenghao

PhD Programme in Linguistics

ZHAO Wenjing

PhD Programme in Linguistics

Embarking on my journey as a student in the Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics program at The Chinese University of Hong Kong has been a transformative experience. From engaging in stimulating discussions on phonetics to unraveling the complexities of syntax, every moment has deepened my passion for the intricate world of language.

CUHK has provided me with a nurturing environment where academic excellence meets cultural diversity. The vibrant campus life, enriched with a myriad of extracurricular activities and opportunities for personal growth, has truly shaped me into a well-rounded individual. From participating in seminars to volunteering in faculty activities, every moment has been a stepping stone towards self-discovery and holistic development.

Qi Zeyao

B.A. Programme in Linguistics





Pamika THONGPICHAI

B.A. Programme in Linguistics

Studying linguistics at CUHK is not only enjoyable but also offers a unique opportunity to explore the diverse areas where language plays a role. From spoken to sign, from the mind to the society.

As someone who had always been a language conservative and a hardcore fan of the royal society, my perspective gradually changed to becoming more understanding after joining the program. Growing up in a monolingual community, I once believed that multilingualism was only a path to elitism, dismissing the value of studying languages other than English, or even passing down heritage language to younger generations. However, these misconceptions about language were thoughtfully addressed in courses offered by the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages. Courses like

BMBL1001 Introduction to Sign Language and Bimodal Bilingualism, along with LING3201 Sociolinguistics, played a significant role in opening my mind to the beauty of language differences across regions and generations.

Linguistics at CUHK not only equips you with knowledge in the field but also trains its students to think critically when it comes to language-related issues, which is also helpful when dealing with areas like education, cultural preservation, human rights, etc.

Overall, I can confidently tell you that this is an excellent place for linguistics enthusiasts like me, and regardless of how you end up here, you will surely gain something valuable from the experience :)

TAM Regan Elysse

B.A. Programme in Linguistics

Although I'm only in Year 1, CUHK's B.A. in Linguistics has opened my eyes to a whole world of study! Every course — Phonetics, Phonology, Syntax, or Grammar — deepens and enhances my understanding of every aspect of language. I love the dedication of all my professors, and appreciate that they are always ready to answer questions, whether those questions be about the course content, or my own areas of interest beyond the curriculum. Furthermore, the diversity and versatility of CUHK's Linguistics courses is something that I'm really looking forward to exploring in the future. Since the courses are organized into "areas" depending on their subject matter, it gives me the opportunity to discover what I'm most interested in within the field, while simultaneously providing a well-rounded education in

broader linguistics. I also love that the curriculum doesn't just focus on English: there is plenty of study into Cantonese, Mandarin, and other Sinitic varieties, which is something I likely wouldn't see in programmes in my home country of Canada. I feel that I'm able to better appreciate the diversity and ingenuity of human languages through the classes I take! I'm excited for future opportunities with the department as I pursue this field further into specialised realms like multilingualism, language acquisition, and sign linguistics — all specialties of CUHK's Linguistics Department!



WONG Chun Lai

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics

“What does linguistics study?” This must be one of the most frequently asked questions, probably second only to “how many languages do you speak?” It appears deceptively simple, but crafting a concise yet meaningful response can be difficult. Recently, however, I’ve come up with a pretty nice explanation — maybe a little nerdy, but romantic. Allow me to share it with you.

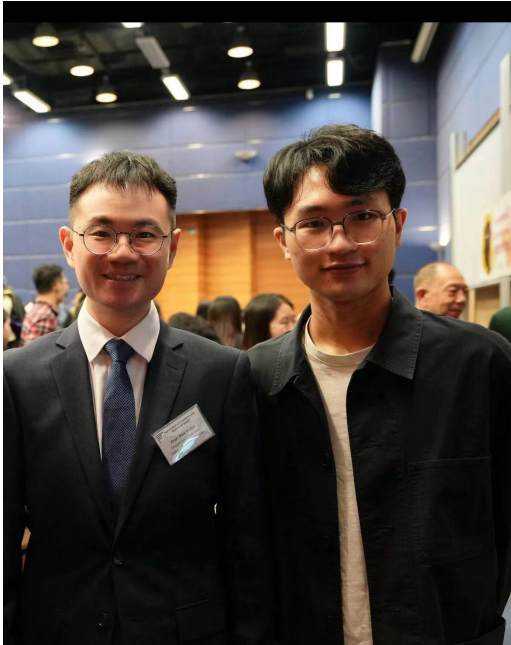
“Consider this: while the observable universe contains around 10^{80} atoms — vast yet finite — human language, governed by grammar, possesses the remarkable ability to generate not just more sentences, but in fact, an infinite number of sentences. Language serves as a mechanism for humans to attain infiniteness, and what I study is precisely how we human utilise such mechanism.”



It’s pretty clear that every word in the paragraph resonates with the essence of “yes, I am a generative syntactician.” Indeed, I’m currently pursuing my M.Phil. studies in CUHK Linguistics, focusing on Formal Linguistics in Chinese. Specifically, I am delving into the essence of Chinese adjectives and the reduplication mechanism in the Chinese language.

My journey with CUHK Linguistics began as a passionate freshman, and gradually evolved into a dedicated pursuit of research. From the beginning of my undergraduate studies to completing my own independent research thesis, each step has been invaluable and fruitful. It is not only about attending classes and acquiring knowledge, but also about the friendships I have cultivated here, the guidance from professors, the experience of framing research questions and collecting data, and the opportunities of serving as the vice president of the student society of the department. I am deeply grateful for all that CUHK Linguistics has provided me.

Now as an M.Phil. student, my experiences in undergraduate studies at CUHK Linguistics have facilitated a smooth transition, and I quickly adapted to the rhythm of my M.Phil. studies. Now I can delve into my own research interests and also have the opportunity to serve as a teaching assistant, allowing me to accumulate valuable teaching experience. Allow me to express my gratitude to Professor Lawrence Cheung, who is my academic advisor, undergraduate thesis supervisor, and M.Phil. supervisor. His guidance and appreciation have been invaluable to me. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at CUHK for making all these possible. I wish my department a Happy 20th Anniversary and continued success in becoming a leading center of linguistic excellence.



HU Chenghao

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics

After completing my master's study at University College London, I was fortunate to join the family of CUHK and especially the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages as a Ph.D. student under the International Joint Supervision of Ph.D. Students scheme. During my time studying Linguistics in the U.K., I had heard of CUHK's great reputation in Linguistics studies for its continuous exploration of the latest theoretical developments and its inclusiveness for students with various research interests.

Since joining, I have witnessed the dedication of our faculty, who considerably provide me and my peers not only knowledge but also guidance on research and even future career paths, from which I have greatly benefited. Moreover, I am touched by the support and warmth brought by our staff, who tirelessly work to ensure the smooth operation of the whole department like an organized and accurate machine. It is not just the academic experience that makes this department special; it's the sense of community that permeates every aspect of our shared journey.

As we prepare to celebrate this milestone, I feel a sense of pride in being a part of the future. Here's to the next 20 years and beyond — to new accomplishments and new opportunities for growth. Happy anniversary to our incredible department!

ZHAO Wenjing

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages is not only a milestone but also a moment for reflection and appreciation. Transitioning from an M.A. graduate to a Ph.D. student upon returning to the department after years, I've been struck by the vibrant intellectual community it has cultivated. Engaging with fellow students, professors, and researchers who share a passion for language has enriched my understanding of Linguistics in ways I never imagined. Over the past decade, there has been a significant expansion in perspectives, methodologies, and research interests, particularly in psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics, while maintaining its forte in formal linguistics. I'm also fortunate enough to see the emergence of numerous deaf graduates. It is a testament to the transformative power of inclusivity and dedicated support systems.

I enjoyed the lectures and talks delivered by esteemed professors and visiting scholars. I've also had the opportunity to be involved in fascinating research projects that led me to a journey of discovery and growth. The support and guidance of my supervisors, mentors, and colleagues have been indispensable in shaping my research trajectory and refining my scholarly skills. Inter-disciplinary collaborations, exchange opportunities, and close connections to local associations have facilitated me in both personal and professional development, empowering me to contribute meaningfully to a larger community.

Beyond academia, the sense of camaraderie and friendship I've gained here has been a source of support, strength, and inspiration, especially during challenging times. Some of my peers, both junior and senior, have become friends in life. I'm also deeply grateful for the dedication of all administrative staff, whose unwavering support has been invaluable. Thanks to everyone who I ever met here. Looking ahead, I'm excited to continue growing together with the department in the face of new challenges and opportunities. Happy 20th Birthday! Cheers!



Celebrating with fellow peers after passing the qualifying exam



Doing HKSL interpretation for sign linguistics training to Deaf M.A. students



Giving commissioned training talk to staff at the CAS

Messages from Alumni

LO Fai Chau Gordon

B.A. Programme in Linguistics (2017)

CHAN Yin Yam Candy

B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies (2022)

SIT Po Kwan

B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies (2023)

HUI Hiu Lam Jessica

B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies (2024)

SUNG Leung Sing

B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies (2024)

WONG Suet Ying Heidi

B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies (2024)

CAI Weisi

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2010)

ZHOU Kang

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2010)

HU Yunyi

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2013)

YANG Yike

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2013)

GU Jianzhi

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2024)

KAN Ka Ho Arthur

M.A. in Linguistics (2018)

CHEN Chuqiao

M.A. in Linguistics (2024)

QIN Zhen Quentin

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2012)

LAI Yan Ki Jacky

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2015)

WONG Hok Yuen Oscar

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2018)

WEI Xiao

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2020)

LI Qun

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics (2020)

CHEN Shuwen

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics (2021)

HASLETT David Andrew

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics (2024)

LO Fai Chau Gordon

B.A. Programme in Linguistics (2017)

Through the pivotal formative years with lifelong friends

A rewarding undergraduate experience entails two things: growth and memories, and I managed to discover both in my formative years at CUHK Linguistics.

Thanks to the in-depth academic training at CUHK Linguistics, I gained a solid language foundation that empowered me to perform well in an editorial career. Reflecting upon my undergraduate academic experiences, I am always grateful for the chance to compose an undergraduate thesis with experimental data from secondary school students and for the experience to work at the Language Acquisition Laboratory. Such vital qualities as patience, organization, detail-mindedness and resilience had taken root when I was a student and flourished as my professional career began. Without these experiences, I would not have become the confident and conscientious editor as I am today.

Extra-curricular pursuits with classmates formed an important part of my four-year student life. Popularly known as a compact discipline in the Faculty of Arts, the Linguistics department is home to the closest circle of friends I have met. The tangible support we offered each other not only carried us through intensive academic studies, but it also



Strong bonds forged between companions with shared memories



Meticulous work attitude nurtured from rigorous academic experiences

bore witness to some of the most memorable experiences we shared in our youthful years. Our mutual reminiscence of anecdotes from student society activities, orientation camps, and college events will always have a special place in our hearts.

CHAN Yin Yam Candy

B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies (2022)

I experienced my biggest personal growth during my days studying Bimodal Bilingual Studies. The unique combination of linguistic skills in General Linguistics and Sign Linguistics has been instrumental in shaping my proficiency in both spoken and sign languages. The programme has also taught me valuable lessons about the power of diverse human communication and the cultural understanding within the deaf community.



I am particularly proud to have joined the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies after my graduation. I have had the opportunity to be part of a cross-country project that brought together hearing and deaf team members from diverse linguistic backgrounds in Asia-Pacific countries. The skills I honed in BMBL have been contributing to supporting my work. Specifically, I am able to use sign language to communicate with deaf researchers from different countries, as many of them are familiar with Hong Kong Sign Language (HKSL) as part of their training in Hong Kong. Even when they use sign language from their own country, I can easily adapt to their signing. I credit my beloved deaf teachers



and professors who taught me HKSL and sign linguistics, helping me establish a solid foundation in sign language and sign linguistics.

Every time I communicate with the deaf researchers using their sign languages, I am once again impressed and amazed by the communication through hands. This feeling takes me back to my first class of HKSL, where I realized that despite coming from different communities and using different languages, both hearing and deaf individuals

can overcome language barriers and come together through sign language. The concrete and iconic features of sign language make the description feel like presenting a story. This particular characteristic makes it easier for me to understand other sign languages besides HKSL, so my communications with the foreign deaf researchers are very smooth.

In conclusion, I am grateful for the knowledge and experiences gained through the BMBL programme. The lessons I learned during my time of study continue to profoundly influence my career path and personal development. I am incredibly excited for what the future holds!

SIT Po Kwan

B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies (2023)

A poignant moment during my first year of study sparked my ambition to become a speech therapist. Our lecturer shared a video of a man with Broca's aphasia, witnessing his struggle with speech production and frustration. This experience ignited a deep desire within me to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to help individuals like him. It became the driving force behind my unwavering determination to pursue a career in speech therapy.

Studying in the BMBL program has been an invaluable opportunity that fills me with immense delight. The comprehensive curriculum has enriched my understanding of deafness and Hong Kong Sign Language, setting a solid path for my dream of working as a speech therapist in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) field.

I am grateful to the professors and lecturers who have played an instrumental role in guiding me towards my goal. They have not only imparted knowledge but also acted as dedicated companions in my pursuit of learning.



HUI Hiu Lam Jessica

*B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies
(2024)*

When asked about my choice of bachelor's degree, I often attribute it to my interest rather than any calculated decision. My fascination with the deaf community and sign language led me to pursue this course, where I was privileged to interact with deaf teachers and students. The presence of sign language interpreters during classes and our visits to a primary school with an SLCO program provided a real-life application of the theories and concepts we were learning. I recognize the need to continually practice sign language and expand my vocabulary to facilitate more productive conversations. The teachers were not only knowledgeable but also empathetic in their approach, making the learning process enjoyable and inspiring on the importance of accessibility. Their passion for teaching and commitment to the deaf community was evident, and they fostered an inclusive environment where there were no barriers between the deaf and the hearing. I am grateful for the enriching experience of studying Bimodal Bilingual studies at CUHK.



SUNG Leung Sing

*B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies
(2024)*

Happy 20th Anniversary! Thanks to all teaching and non-teaching staff for your dedicated effort to operate the department! Without your continuous support, BMBL could not have been carried out its missions for the 4th consecutive year.

As a senior student, it was a decade ago when I was a full-time student. It goes without saying that adapting to the pace as a full-time university student as well as the requirements of the ongoing academic field is never a piece of cake. Yet, the department provides us with training in a holistic approach to cater for the needs of both the spoken and sign communities in different social settings, such as education and welfare.

Learning is learning. Lectures, tutorials and the corresponding readings, assignments, presentations and quizzes, etc. are one thing after the other. While some may be overwhelmed with such workload, as a language lover, it is fun! Especially when the readings substantiate what we have learnt!

‘How fun could it be? Isn’t it boring to know something you have already mastered?’

NO! In fact, knowing Hong Kong Sign Language (HKSL) that I am used to in an academic approach is definitely an eye-opener. Not only is reading fun, but also the analysis of HKSL in such a detailed manner in the academic field. Never have I realised how sign languages are theorised even as a native user!

As a member of the BMBL family, I would like to take this chance to show my gratitude to the department for everything they have done to contribute to the academic field so that knowledge will never vanish into thin air and therefore more parties will benefit from its contribution.



WONG Suet Ying Heidi

*B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies
(2024)*



I was born deaf and cannot hear even the passing-by airplane sound. I live in a silent world. Luckily I joined the sign-bilingual and co-enrollment education program since childhood. I learned with the help of sign language. I benefited from fair education with equal chances to join various activities. I have grown up with my normal hearing peer and always being loved and care for. With years of hard work, I entered The Chinese University of Hong Kong to study in the B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies in 2022. It is always my dream to study in this

school and to walk through the pathway to become a teacher in the future.

My initial worries about the difficulties of learning disappeared when I noted that sign language interpretation and note-taking are provided in the teaching sessions. With such tremendous support, I can understand well the content of the lectures. I can join in the tutorial classes and express my views freely. I regard myself part of the family and never feel walking alone.

With exposure to different subjects in the programme, I have acquired knowledge on various language-related issues. All hearing teaching staff who by themselves not familiar with sign language always try their best to help. No matter how hard is the communication process, they are very patient to explain to me on every details. My classmates are just wonderful and very willing to accompany me to sail through the rough sea! During the journey, we enjoy not just the friendship gathered, but also the bidirectional improvement in our knowledge base, especially on sign language.

I always enjoy studying in the B.A. Programme in Bimodal Bilingual Studies and I will continue in the pursuit of my future career of teaching in the area of special education needs.

CAI Weisi

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2010)

This year marks my fourteenth year of teaching, spanning both Brown University and UC Berkeley. Reflecting on my journey, I am astonished to realize that what I gained from the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at The Chinese University of Hong Kong extends far beyond the knowledge of phonetics, syntax, semantics, and language acquisition. More importantly, every professor's words and deeds have subtly influenced me, shaping me into a competent higher education educator. Whenever I stand at the lectern, I am filled with enthusiasm and energy, ready to impart knowledge to students, inspired by the example set by my professors at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. When I sit in the office to address students' questions, I provide comprehensive and patient responses, mirroring the approach of my professors at CUHK. Whenever students seek my assistance with recommendation letters or references, I gladly agree, guided by the support I received from my professors at CUHK. I deeply acknowledge that my current role as a beloved teacher at UC Berkeley is indebted to the education I received from the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at CUHK!



ZHOU Kang

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2010)

In 2009, I began my journey at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, pursuing a master's degree in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition. This experience laid the foundation for my career, leading to a position as a visiting lecturer at Brown University, through a collaboration between the two institutions. Currently, I hold the position of Chinese Lecturer within the Global Languages Department at MIT, a role that truly reflects my passion for teaching and the significant impact of my educational background at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.



I am deeply grateful for my valuable learning experience in the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, which has benefited me for a lifetime. The experience was enriched not only by the profound knowledge of the professors but also by their inclusive, open-minded approach to teaching, which encouraged and inspired students to explore and question. A memorable moment that still resonates with me was a discussion with Professor Yang Gu on a subway ride, where she engaged me in a lively conversation on Chinese syntax, challenging me to think critically about the underlying rules governing language phenomena. This moment highlighted the essence of effective teaching: the ability to pose questions that ignite curiosity and drive deep intellectual engagement.

I offer my sincere thanks to all my professors and mentors at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Their support has been incredibly important, and their influence on me will endure forever.

HU Yunyi

*M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language
Acquisition (2013)*

As the years have swiftly passed since I graduated from the esteemed CUHK Linguistics Department, the knowledge I acquired continues to shape my career journey. The Linguistics courses I undertook during my time there have proven to be invaluable in my current work as a speech therapist. They encompassed a rich tapestry of understanding, including the intricacies of child language acquisition, phonetics and phonology, syntax, and semantics. These foundations, laid by my dedicated teachers, empower me to navigate the complexities of language assessment and treatment with unwavering confidence and precision.

Among the many lessons I received, one profound statement echoes within me even today. It was Professor Gu Yang who imparted these words of wisdom: “You must think like a detective.” This mindset has become an integral part of my professional approach. As I don the role of a speech therapist, I understand the significance of gathering information meticulously from clients, caregivers, and collaborating professionals. Just as a detective pieces together clues to unravel a mystery, I integrate this wealth of data with my assessment results, allowing me to deliver accurate diagnoses and craft tailored treatment plans. Professor Gu Yang’s guidance continues to resonate, a compass that leads me towards excellence in my practice.

The gratitude I hold for the faculty of the CUHK Linguistic Department knows no bounds. Their unwavering dedication and fervor in teaching have left an indelible mark on my professional path. Their commitment to academic inquiry and scholarly pursuits has not only enriched their own expertise but has also inspired me to embrace a lifelong journey of learning and professional growth.

YANG Yike

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2013)

I am Yike Yang, an MACLA alumnus from the 2012-13 cohort. The M.A. programme in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition laid a solid foundation for my career and personal growth, sparking my curiosity in Linguistics and ultimately leading me to pursue a Ph.D. in this field. Currently, I am an Assistant Professor at Hong Kong Shue Yan University, where I embark on the fulfilling journey of imparting knowledge and teaching linguistics to students. I carry with me the intellectual rigour that was instilled in me during my time in the M.A. programme, which continues to shape my approach to teaching and research.



GU Jianzhi

M.A. in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition (2024)

若讓我選一個詞來總結在本系修讀語言學的時光，那大概是探索。這一年，我修讀了語言學不同分支的課程，參觀了實驗室，嘗試使用語言能力量表，開展了小小的專題研究，這對我來說都是新的嘗試，新的體驗。同時，濃厚的學術氛圍亦讓我有幸參加各類語言學講座開拓視野，參加圖書館的工作坊學習技能，旁聽課程汲取跨學科知識，探索了更多的可能。在探索的路上，老師們引導我們思考語言現象，受益於此，我發掘了自己的研究興趣，並嘗試研究。這是在探索中成長的一年，雖然忙碌，卻收穫滿滿。十分幸運能夠在本系學習，祝願本系的明天更加美好！

KAN Ka Ho Arthur

M.A. in Linguistics (2018)

It is with immense honor and joy that I received an invitation to contribute to the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages' 20th Anniversary e-booklet. Congratulations on this significant milestone! My journey with the department commenced with apprehension as I applied for the M.A. degree, uncertain of acceptance. However, it evolved into a transformative experience, from graduation to employment within the department, culminating in a remarkable opportunity to pursue further studies abroad.



I am deeply grateful for the enriching experiences I had during my time at CUHK. Many of my classmates and project collaborators have evolved into cherished friends, and my former mentors have become valued research collaborators. The M.A. program provided me with a robust theoretical foundation and facilitated the development of an extensive academic network. CUHK's curriculum, characterized by its academic rigor and supportive mentors, has played a pivotal role in shaping not only my academic journey but also that of countless other alumni.

The guidance and mentorship offered by the department are truly invaluable. Engaging in intellectually stimulating conversations while also receiving genuine inquiries about our well-being fostered a sense of academic camaraderie that I will forever cherish. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunities and support extended to me by the department.

As the department prepares to embark on a new chapter, I am filled with excitement and anticipation. I extend my heartfelt wishes for continued success and prosperity in the future endeavors of the department!

CHEN Chuqiao

M.A. in Linguistics (2024)

在經歷過就業和創業的磨礪後，再進入校園的心境大有不同。藉此系裡20週年紀念日，想分享的感受是：生命體驗有時比成績與成就更不可多得，我會長久銘記在此的學習與生活。也祝願老師同學們日後常有美妙純粹的生命體驗。



QIN Zhen Quentin

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2012)

我在學術圈已經摸爬滾打了十幾年，而這一切的起點便是中大語言學及現代語言系。尤記得2008年第一次來到中大校園時，被它的一花一木和山海美景所吸引。也忘不了第一次坐在莫碧琪教授的語音學課堂上好奇而激動的心情。此時此刻我工作的校園雖然也有山有海，可還是忍不住隔三差五回中大去踏春觀鳥。現在我也在教授一門語音學課程，上課時不自覺地就會回想起我在中大學習語音學的情景，不上課時也會回中大聽系裡組織的講座。原來語言學及現代語言系已經成為我心裡的故鄉，我學術道路的指路明燈。無論我走多遠，都會不自覺回到那個的“起點”。春天要到了，寫到這裡我又想回中大校園去看那滿上開遍的杜鵑花和飛舞的小白腰雨燕了。



LAI Yan Ki Jacky

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2015)

Time flies! The department is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Back then, I was a student, and now, I am a teacher. I would like to thank all the people who taught me something about linguistics at CUHK, including Candice Cheung, Lawrence Cheung, Yang Gu, Ping Jiang, Thomas Lee, and Virginia Yip. In one way or another, they provided me with a solid foundation for doing advanced syntactic and semantic research. The department had so much to offer, even when I was already a straight A Linguistics student before joining the MPhil programme. There was just so much to learn. So, Happy Birthday! I hope the department will achieve new heights in the many years to come.



WONG Hok Yuen Oscar

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2018)

Congratulations to CU-LIN on its 20th anniversary!

This department has definitely been an important place where I have grown up and begun my professional journey. Starting out as a math student, I was fascinated by all the thought-provoking discussions on language when attending Professor Gladys Tang's and Professor Yang Gu's introductory courses, which led me to decide to join this department. During my undergraduate and postgraduate studies here, the professors were dedicated to delivering amazing lectures with the most advanced and practical knowledge. All the rigorous training has nurtured me to become a thoughtful person, driving me to become an educator who inspires others and helps them achieve their dreams.



I can still vividly remember the days and nights spent cramming for exams and writing papers, as well as the valuable opportunities I had when I went on kindergarten visits to collect child language data under the supervision of Professor Thomas Lee. I also recall the exciting trips when a group of us travelled to mainland China to document minority languages for the fieldwork courses, and the inspiring moments when I had numerous formal and informal research meetings with my master's supervisor, Professor Lawrence Cheung, and other great minds here. Each of these memories holds immense value for me.

Throughout my time in this department, I have been fortunate to meet many remarkable people, including all the professors, teachers, research and administrative staff, and my fellow undergraduate and postgraduate classmates, to whom I am deeply indebted in my life. Without your company, encouragement, and guidance, I would not be the person I am today. Thank you, CULIN!

May I express my heartfelt wishes for CULIN's prosperous development in the future, rejoicing in its celebrations of future milestones.

WEI Xiao

M.Phil. Programme in Linguistics (2020)

Having spent a decade immersed in the vibrant academic environment of the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, I am deeply grateful for the invaluable experiences and steadfast encouragement I have received. Throughout my M.Phil. programme, I found myself surrounded by a community of peers, administrative staff, and dedicated faculty members who consistently nurtured and encouraged my academic pursuits. In particular, I am indebted to Professor Gladys Tang and Professor Felix Sze for their invaluable guidance and unwavering support, which laid the foundation for my journey into sign language research. Additionally, my involvement with the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies, a research hub within the department, provided me with a nurturing environment akin to a loving family. They not only served as my sign language models and research participants but also became cherished friends and confidants. Though my time within the department may have been brief, the memories forged are indelible. As the department celebrates its 20th anniversary, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for continued success and growth in the years to come.



LI Qun

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics (2020)

Time flies, and the LIN department celebrates its 20th anniversary. From M.Phil. to RA, and then to Ph.D., the department has been my home for the most crucial ten years. It not only provided me with profound expertise but also cultivated my critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The careful guidance of professors and the exchange of ideas with fellow students have allowed me to discover my passion in the academic field, transforming from a student to a teacher. And last summer, I brought my students back to CUHK.



Countless days and nights, from PGH1 to Leung Kau Kui Building or to Academic Building No.2, I have met many friends who have accompanied me on this journey of growth. The days of mutual support and collective efforts are still among the most precious treasures of my life. Sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Tang, who has nurtured me over the past decade. I still remember numerous instances of discussing the thesis with her, missing meal times, sharing meals at her place, and even having discussions while she drove.

Here's to the memories we've created, the challenges we've overcome, and the successes that lie ahead. Happy 20th anniversary to our LIN family, and may it become even better with time!

CHEN Shuwen

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics (2021)

Time has flown by, and it is astonishing to realize that a decade has passed since I began my Linguistics journey at The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2013. In September of that year, I started the M.A. in Linguistics programme. During the one-year program, I had the privilege of attending the lectures taught by the esteemed professors such as Professor Gu Yang, Professor Gladys Tang, Professor Peggy Mok, Dr. Fu, and others. This exposure allowed me, as a newcomer to Linguistics, to quickly comprehend various fields within the discipline.



Following this, I was fortunate enough to enter the M.Phil.-Ph.D. programme under the mentorship of Professor Peggy Mok. She introduced me to the captivating realm of phonetic science, and her guidance and encouragement were instrumental in shaping my academic path. Her unwavering zeal for research has remained a steadfast beacon of inspiration throughout my journey. Our M.Phil.-Ph.D. program not only required us to delve deeply into our own research areas but also encouraged comprehensive learning across various Linguistic domains. This holistic approach laid a sturdy foundation upon which my academic pursuits could flourish. For example, Professor Patrick Wong delivered the best lecture ever on research methodology, which laid a solid foundation for my research career. I will never forget attending his Neurolinguistics class, where he exemplified how clear and inspiring a class can be. It was in Professor Virginia Yip's classroom where I was systematically introduced to Bilingualism. This triggered my interest in bilingual issues, especially in bilingual speech production and perception. Furthermore, I was provided with the opportunities to broaden my horizons abroad during my studies. Through the CUHK Global Scholarship Programme for Research Excellence, I had the chance to be a visiting student at Haskins Laboratories at Yale University.

After graduation, I spent a year as a Lecturer at CUHK-Shenzhen before embarking on a new chapter in Beijing, where I currently serve as an Assistant Researcher at the Institute of Linguistics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Reflecting on my academic odyssey, I am profoundly indebted to the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages for providing a fertile ground for intellectual growth. My time here has not only served as a launching pad for my academic career but has also bestowed upon me a treasury of invaluable experiences and enduring friendships. I wish the Department of Linguistics continued success in the next 20 years!

HASLETT David Andrew

Ph.D. Programme in Linguistics (2024)

One of the most important lessons I've learned in Professor Cai's Language Processing Lab is that collaboration is essential to high-quality academic work. Lab members share skills and ideas, increasing each other's theoretical and methodological toolkits. For example, lab members conduct eye-tracking and brain-imaging experiments, probe language models and artificial intelligence in computer simulations, and crucially, apply those techniques to questions about the nature of language processing. Thanks to this set of skills and knowledge base, I've been able to publish research in academic journals and present it at international conferences, making connections that present new opportunities for collaboration. I look forward to learning from new colleagues after I graduate, and I'm glad that my first collaborators come from CUHK.







語言學及現代語言系
Department of Linguistics and
Modern Languages