

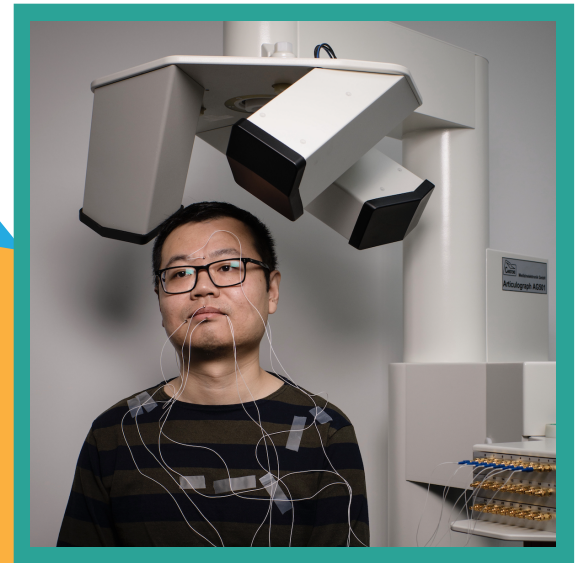
Department of
Linguistics and Modern Languages

語言學及現代語言系

Speech Rhythm: An Epiphenomenon or A Substrate?

Prof. HE Lei
Fudan University

Date: October 15, 2024 (Tuesday)
Time: 4:30pm - 6:15pm (Hong Kong Time, UTC +8)
Venue: Room 101, Leung Kau Kui Building,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



Abstract

Research on speech rhythm is arguably one of the most controversial areas in phonetics and speech sciences. Since the early 20th century, phoneticians have observed two major types of rhythmicity in languages. In the early 21st century, with the advent of easier spectrographic analysis, various "rhythm metrics" were introduced, based on the duration of vocalic and consonantal segments in the speech signal, in an attempt to classify languages into distinct rhythm types. This approach gained significant popularity, but about a decade later, researchers increasingly recognized that it failed to capture the true essence of rhythm. I argue that the study of speech rhythm must be both ontologically valid and methodologically sound. In this talk, I will (1) briefly review the history of speech rhythm research, (2) explain why rhythm serves as a foundational substrate in speech, and (3) present the approaches I have developed over the past five years, including ongoing work.

Speaker

Dr. Lei He is a full-time research scientist at the associate professor level at the Institute of Modern Languages and Linguistics, Fudan University, Shanghai. Before joining Fudan, he served as a group leader in phonetics and speech sciences at the University of Zurich, where he was the principal investigator for several projects funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and the University of Zurich. His research primarily focuses on individual differences and pathological characteristics in the temporal aspects of speech production. In particular, he aims to develop more effective methods for characterizing rhythmicity in speech and to investigate the role of rhythm in language communication.

All Are Welcome

Enquiries

Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, CUHK.
Tel: (852)3943 7911 Fax: (852)2603 7755 E-mail: lin@cuhk.edu.hk