



Department of
Linguistics and Modern Languages

語言學及現代語言系

The Agile Lexicon

Prof. Gareth GASKELL

University of York

Date: April 9, 2024 (Tuesday)

Time: 4:30pm - 6:15pm (Hong Kong Time, UTC +8)

Venue: Room 306, Lee Shau Kee Building,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong



Abstract

In this talk I will challenge the notion that the mental lexicon is like a dictionary in that it embodies a static collection of knowledge accumulated over the years. Instead, the mental lexicon needs to be adaptable and flexible, incorporating new material swiftly, and adjusting expectations when placed in different circumstances. I will argue that rapid episodic learning, memory consolidation during sleep and combining knowledge across multiple domains all have a role to play in supporting the agile lexicon. In its strongest form, my account proposes that every linguistic interaction a person has is the basis of a new associative memory that can then be consolidated over sleep if it is not first lost through interference. These episodic memories can then influence subsequent linguistic experience, alongside more crystallised linguistic knowledge. I will discuss recent evidence that tests this kind of account.

Speaker

Gareth Gaskell studied Experimental Psychology at Cambridge University, before moving on to a PhD in Psycholinguistics at Birkbeck College, University of London. He continued as a postdoctoral researcher at Birkbeck, before joining the scientific staff at the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit in Cambridge. Gareth moved to the Psychology Department in York in 1999 and is now a Professor of Psychology. He has strong interests in psycholinguistics, cognition, language development, developmental disorders, memory and sleep, and he set up the Sleep, Language and Memory (SLAM) lab at York. He has served as action editor for several journals including Journal of Memory and Language, and he is currently a grant assessment panel member for the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). He was awarded the 21st Experimental Psychology Society Mid-Career Award for his contribution to Experimental Psychology.

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