



Department of
Linguistics and Modern Languages

語言學及現代語言系

Bimodal Bilingual Language Processing: Insights into Linguistic Theory and Cognitive Mechanisms

Dr. ZHAO Wenjing
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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

The study of bimodal bilingualism, where individuals are fluent in both spoken and sign languages, offers valuable insights across various disciplines, including linguistics, psychology, cognition, neuroscience, etc. In this talk, I will explore the application of the Prosodic Model (Brentari, 1998) to the analysis of Hong Kong Sign Language (HKSL) handshapes and examine its realization in sign language perception among deaf and hearing bimodal bilinguals. Further, I argue that deaf bimodal bilinguals exhibit dual language processing and demonstrate cross-language activation of spoken phonology during sign language processing. Evidence from eye-movement behavior during sign language tasks supports this claim. Additionally, deaf bimodal bilinguals with a higher degree of bilingualism present different patterns of cross-language activation and phonological awareness skills compared to those with a lower level of bilingualism, suggesting a more integrated lexico-semantic language system. Finally, the acquisition of a language in a visual-gestural modality not only influences the organization of linguistic representations but also offers potential cognitive benefits, particularly among the aging population. These findings have important implications for sign language research, bimodal bilingual processing, and deaf education.

Speaker

Dr. ZHAO Wenjing is a research associate at the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies. She received B.A. in English Translation from Beijing International Studies University and M.A. in Linguistics from The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). She completed her doctoral studies in linguistics at CUHK last December. Her research focuses on bimodal bilingualism, exploring areas such as bimodal bilingual language processing, sign language acquisition, the cognitive benefits of learning sign language, and deaf education. She also works as an HKSL interpreter, offering her expertise to support the local deaf community.

All Are Welcome

Enquiries

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