



香港中文大學  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

# A linguistics approach to Chinese poetic studies

**Date:** 13 March 2014 (Thursday)

**Time:** 4:30 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

**Venue:** Lecture Theatre 4, Lee Shau Kee Building (LSK LT4),  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**Speaker:**

**Prof. Hongming ZHANG**

Nankai University / University of Wisconsin-Madison

## Abstract:

Poetic prosody has been a point of discussion in both literature and linguistics. Both literary scholars and linguists are interested in this topic, since prosody as seen in poetry is indeed both literary and linguistic: certain sound properties in human language are utilized in creative literary architecture and result in distinctive patterns. While literary scholars often focus on the aesthetic beauty of the patterns or the poets' personal creations and choices, linguists direct their attention more towards researching the linguistic materials that build these patterns. Questions such as what linguistic elements are chosen to form the patterns, to what degree they are subject to creative literary manipulation, and what is universal or language-specific in the formation of the patterns in different poetic traditions around the world are all of interest to linguists, who believe that the answers to these questions bear significant importance on our understanding of language itself. I will approach the subject of this talk from the standpoint of linguists focusing on Chinese poetry. I will begin by defining poetic prosody, and will then discuss various building elements of Chinese poetic prosody, including rhythmic grouping, tonal assignment, and rhyming patterns. Afterwards I will distinguish between poetic prosody itself and the performance of metered texts, such as chanting, reciting, and singing. Finally, I will take a detailed look at tonal prosody and the nature of rhyming.

## Speaker:

Professor Hongming Zhang has been teaching at the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature of the University of Wisconsin-Madison since 1994, and is the director of the Chinese Language Program there. He received B.A. and M.A. in Chinese linguistics from Fudan University, and Ph.D. in linguistics from University of California at San Diego. Besides teaching at UW-Madison, he had also taught at Fudan University, San Diego Mesa College, National University of Singapore, and served Nankai University as Shiing-shen Chern Chair Professor and Honorary Director of Nankai Linguistics Institute. He was awarded as Changjiang Scholar Chair Professor by the Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China in 2009. His main interests lie in the interface theory of syntax-phonology, phonology, historical linguistics, dialectology, teaching Chinese as a foreign language, poetic prosody, and Chinese philology.

## ALL ARE WELCOME

### Enquiries

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