

Sherry Yong Chen

Department of Linguistics & Philosophy
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
32 Vassar Street
Cambridge MA 02139

✉ sychen@mit.edu
🌐 <https://sherrychen.org>
🔗 ID: linguistsherry
🐦 @linguistsherry

Areas of interest

Broad Computational/Experimental/Theoretical Semantics and Pragmatics
Narrow Language modeling, Sentence comprehension, real-time processing
Presupposition, Numerosity, Degree, intensification
Negation, Event, Distributivity, Scope ambiguity

Education

DEGREE-SEEKING PROGRAMS

- 2017- **PhD in Linguistics**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- MIT Presidential Fellow
 - Registration advisor: Prof Danny Fox
- 2015-2017 **M.Phil in General Linguistics** (Distinction), University of Oxford
- George Wolf Prize for Best Performance in MPhil/MSt in Linguistics
 - Thesis: Processing Tenses for the Living and the Dead
 - Advisor: Dr E. Matthew Husband
- 2012-2015 **B.A in General Linguistics** (summa cum laude), University of Hong Kong
- Undergraduate Research Fellow
 - Prize in Linguistics

NON-DEGREE STUDIES

- 2019 Summer DGfS Summer School (XPrag.de Priority Program), Humboldt-University zu Berlin.
- 2018 Summer North American Summer School on Logic, Language, and Information (NASSLLI), Computational Linguistics track. Carnegie Mellon University.
- 2017 Summer Advanced Core Training in Linguistics Summer School (ACTL). University College London.
- 2016 Autumn Oxford Autumn School in Cognitive Neuroscience. University of Oxford.
- 2016 Summer The 13th China Linguistics Summer Institute. Fudan University, Shanghai.
- 2013 Autumn Overseas Exchange Program. University of Melbourne.

Research experiences

- 2019 Summer Research Assistant, XPrag.de , ZAS BERLIN
• PIs: Uli Sauerland & Bob van Tiel
• Project: Modelling the Use of Quantifiers in Typical and Atypical Speakers Probabilistically (MUQTASP)
- 2017- Graduate Affiliate, Computational Psycholinguistics Lab, MIT
• PI: Prof Roger Levy
• Project: Psycholinguistic approaches to the evaluation of language models
- 2017- Graduate Student, Language Acquisition Lab, MIT
• PIs: Prof Athulya Aravind & Prof Martin Hackl
• Project: Comprehension of conjunction in child language
- 2015-2017 Graduate Student, Language and Brain Lab, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
• PIs: Dr E. Matthew Husband & Prof Aditi Lahiri
• Projects: Presupposition and memory mechanism; Processing of tense; Decomposition of Chinese compound characters
- 2015 Summer Research Assistant, Language Processing Lab, UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
• PI: Dr Heeju Hwang
• Project: Syntactic and semantic properties of pronoun use in Cantonese
- 2014 Summer Research Intern, Developmental Psychology Lab, UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
• PI: Prof Terry Au
• Project: Phonological representation and early literacy in Chinese
- 2013 Summer Research Assistant, Department of Linguistics, UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
• PI: Prof Umberto Ansaldo
• Project: Complexity and simplicity in isolating languages

Publications

BOOK CHAPTERS

- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Decomposing event in real-time: Putting the pieces (back) together. To appear in C. Cummins & N. Katsos (Eds), *Handbook of Experimental Semantics and Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

ARTICLES & PROCEEDINGS

- In prep Kobayashi, F. H. & **Chen, S. Y.** Ways of decomposing events: Structural differences between adverbial and adnominal distributive numerals. *Proceedings of the 55th Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS55)*.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Zero degrees: numerosity, intensification & negative polarity. *Proceedings of the 54th Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS54)*.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Comprehending anaphoric presuppositions involves memory retrieval too. *Proceedings of the LSA 92nd Annual Meeting*, 3(44), 1-11.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Contradictory (Forward) Lifetime Effects and the Non-Future Tense in Mandarin Chinese. *Proceedings of the LSA 92nd Annual Meeting*, 3(6), 1-14.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Movement Constraints on the Relative Order of Double Topics in Mandarin Chinese. In R. Maddeaux (Ed.), *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics* (Vol 38).

2014 **Chen, S. Y.** From OMG to TMD – Internet and Pinyin Acronyms in Mandarin Chinese. *Language@Internet*, Vol 11, article 3.

BOOK REVIEWS

2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Book review for *Pragmatic aspects of scalar modifiers: at the semantics-pragmatics interface*, by Osamu Sawada. *Journal of Linguistics*.

2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Book review for *The Oxford Handbook of Pragmatics*, edited by Yan Huang, Oxford University Press. Solicited by the LINGUIST List.

Manuscripts

WORK IN PROGRESS

Draft **Chen, S. Y.** Deriving *wh*-correlatives via *wh*-movement in Mandarin Chinese

In prep **Chen, S. Y.** & Kobayashi, F. H. A unified semantics for distributive numerals in Mandarin and beyond

In prep **Chen, S. Y.** & Kenstowicz, M. Tone sandhi patterns and the tonal domain in Longyou Wu

In prep Huang, N. & **Chen, S. Y.** The syntax and semantics of Chinese (non-)future tense

THESIS & PAPERS

2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Processing Tenses for the Living and the Dead: A Psycholinguistic Investigation of Lifetime Effects in Tensed and “Tenseless” Languages. MPhil thesis, the University of Oxford.

2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Covert (Universal) Quantification: A Generalised Quantifier Theory Analysis of *-men*. Option B Paper for Semantics, the University of Oxford.

2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Double Topicalisation, Syntax Does Constrain! Movement Constraints on the Relative Order of Chinese Double Topics. Option B Paper for Syntax, the University of Oxford.

2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Phonological Activation of Semantic Radicals in Chinese Compound Characters: The Time Course of Sublexical Decomposition. Option B Paper for Psycholinguistics, the University of Oxford.

Posters & presentations

PEER-REVIEWED TALKS

2019 Kobayashi, F. H. & **Chen, S. Y.** Ways of decomposing events: Structural differences between adnominal and adverbial distributive numerals. Talk given at the 55th Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS55). May 16-18, 2019. Chicago, IL.

2018 Kobayashi, F. H. & **Chen, S. Y.** Ways of decomposing events: a unified semantics for adnominal and adverbial distributive numerals. Talk given at the Southern New England Workshop on Semantics (SNEWS). December 2, 2018, Amherst, USA.

2018 **Chen, S. Y.** From *zero* to bigger things: numerosity, intensification, and NPI licensing. Talk given at the 54th Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS54). April 26-28, 2018.

Chicago, IL.

- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** Combining Theoretical and Experimental Approaches to Tense in Mandarin Chinese. Talk accepted at the 30th North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics (NACCL30). March 9-11, 2018. Ohio, USA. (cancelled)
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Non-Future Tense in Mandarin Chinese: Evidence from Contradictory (Forward) Lifetime Effects. Talk given at the *Tenselessness* Workshop. October 5-6 2017. London, UK.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** New Solution to an Old Puzzle: Syntactic Approach to Manner/Result Complementarity Explains the Structural Effects in Novel Verb Learning. Talk given at the Cambridge vP Workshop. June 19, 2017. Cambridge, UK.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Syntactic Constraints on Chinese Double Topicalisation: Locality and PCC Effects. Talk given at the Language at the University of Essex Postgraduate Conference (LangUE). June 15, 2017. Essex, UK.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Double Topicalisation, Syntax Does Constrain! Talk given at Edinburgh Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference (LEL). May 29-31, 2017. Edinburgh, UK.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Movement Constraints on Double Topicalisation in Mandarin Chinese. Talk given at Manchester Forum in Linguistics. April 29-30, 2017. Manchester, UK.

PEER-REVIEWED POSTERS

- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Comprehending the presupposition of too: the effects of distance and interference. Poster presented at the 32nd Annual *CUNY* Conference on Human Sentence Processing. March 29 - 31, 2019. Boulder, CO.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.**, L. Rosenstein & M. Hackl. Facilitation effects of QUD and event type on negative sentences. Poster presented at the 32nd Annual *CUNY* Conference on Human Sentence Processing. March 29 - 31, 2019. Boulder, CO.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** & Kobayashi, F. H. Locality and distance distributivity: Mandarin reduplicated numerals at the syntax-semantics interface. Poster presented at the NASSLLI Student Session. June 23-29, 2018, Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Modelling Memory Retrieval Processes with Drift Diffusion. Poster presented at the 31st Annual *CUNY* Conference on Human Sentence Processing. March 15-17, 2018. Davis, CA.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Comprehending anaphoric presuppositions involves memory retrieval *too*. Poster presented at the LSA 92nd Annual Meeting. January 4-7, 2018. Salt Lake City, UT.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Contradictory (Forward) Lifetime Effects and the Non-Future Tense in Mandarin Chinese. Poster presented at the LSA 92nd Annual Meeting. January 4-7, 2018. Salt Lake City, UT.
- 2017 Mills, A. C. & **Chen, S. Y.** Simplicity and complexity in the production of manner/result meanings: a preliminary investigation. Poster presented at MIT Workshop on *Simplicity in Grammar Learning*. September 23, 2017. Cambridge, MA.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Memory in the processing of anaphoric presuppositions. Poster presented at the 23rd Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing Conference (AMLaP). September 7-9, 2017. Lancaster, UK.
- 2016 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Processing Tenses for the Living and the Dead: Evidence from Self-Paced Reading. Poster presented at the 22nd Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing Conference (AMLaP). September 1-3 2016. Bilbao, Spain.

INVITED TALKS

- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Comprehending *and*: Development Path of English Conjunction in Child Language. Talk to be given at Language and Cognition (LangCog). Language Development Lab (SnedLab). Harvard University, USA.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Memory retrieval processes of the anaphoric presupposition trigger *too*. Talk to be given at the Psycholinguistics Colloquium. the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** The linguistics of *one, two, three*. Talk given at Language and Computation (CompLang). MIT, USA. **Chen, S. Y.** Resolving scope ambiguity under degree questions. Talk given at Experimental Syntax Semantics Lab, November 16 2018, MIT, USA.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** Anaphoricity, Presuppositions, and Memory Retrieval Processes. Talk given at Experimental Syntax & Semantics Lab, February 2018, MIT, USA.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Double topicalization, I find really interesting. Talk given at Syntax Square. October 24, 2017. MIT, USA.
- 2016 **Chen, S. Y.** Processing Tenses for the Living and the Dead: A Cross-linguistic Investigation of Lifetime Effects. Talk given at Oxford Linguistics Graduate Workshop. October 18, 2016. Oxford, UK.

PUBLIC TALKS

- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** New Understanding of Temporal Interpretations in the Chinese Language. Talk given at the 2017 China Oxford Scholars' Speaker Event. May 12, 2017. Oxford, UK.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** As Time Goes by: Understanding Time in Language and Cognition. Talk given at Lincoln College Lord Florey Talk Series. March 17, 2017. Oxford, UK.

Honors, awards & scholarships

- 2017-2018 Walter A. Rosenblith Presidential Graduate Fellowship, MIT
- 2016-2017 George Wolf Prize (Best Performance in MPhil/MSt in Linguistics), University of Oxford
- 2016-2017 Lincoln College Crewe Graduate Scholarship, University of Oxford
- 2016-2017 Oxford China Simon Li Scholarship, China Oxford Scholarship Fund (COSF)
- 2015-2016 Lincoln College North American Alumni Graduate Award, University of Oxford
- 2015 University Postgraduate Scholarship, University of Hong Kong (declined)
- 2014-2015 Prize in Linguistics, University of Hong Kong
- 2014-2015 Macmillan Prize in Language and Communication, University of Hong Kong
- 2014-2015 Chan Kai Ming Prize (Best performance in Faculty of Arts), University of Hong Kong
- 2014-2015 Kam Louie Arts Centenary Prize, University of Hong Kong
- 2013-2015 Sir Man Kam Lo/Jardine Scholarship, University of Hong Kong
- 2013-2014 Reaching Out Award, the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund
- 2013-2014 Kai Chong Tong Scholarship, University of Hong Kong
- 2012-2015 Dean's Honour List, Faculty of Arts, University of Hong Kong
- 2012-2015 Foundation Scholarship for Outstanding Students, University of Hong Kong
- 2012-2013 Hua Cheng Chinese Culture Scholarship, University of Hong Kong
- 2012-2013 Ho Fook Prize (best performance among first-year B.A), University of Hong Kong

Fundings & grants

INTERNAL FUNDINGS

- 2019 Summer Angelika R Howard Memorial Fund
2018 Summer Japan Fund for Linguistic Research
2017-2022 MIT Linguistics & Philosophy Graduate Fundings

EXTERNAL TRAVEL GRANTS

- 2018 Summer Travel & Housing scholarships, North American Summer School in Logic, Language Information (NASSLLI), CMU
2015-2017 Faculty of Linguistics, Philology & Phonetics Student Travel Grant, University of Oxford
2015-2017 Lincoln College Graduate Research Fund, University of Oxford
2015-2016 Santander Academic Travel Awards
2013-2014 Worldwide Scholarship for Outgoing Exchange Students, University of Hong Kong

Professional services

ORGANIZING

- 2019 Organizing committee, the 50th *North East Linguistic Society Conference* (NELS50). MIT.
2019 Chair, the 6th *Semantics of African, Asian, and Austronesian Languages* (Triple A). MIT
2018-2019 Organizer, *MIT Linguistics Colloquim*. MIT.
2018 Student committee, the 28th *Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference* (SALT28). MIT.
2018 Organizing committee, the 14th *Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics* (WAFL14). MIT.
2017- Member, *Committee on the Status of Women in Linguistics*, Linguistic Society of America
2016-2017 Co-organizer, *Oxford China Studies Postgraduate Research Seminars Series*. China Centre, University of Oxford
2015 Spring Organizer, *Achieving Excellence in Undergraduate Academic Writing Workshop*. University Libraries & HKU Journal of Undergraduate Humanities, University of Hong Kong

REVIEWING

- 2019 the 8th biennial Experimental Pragmatics Conference (XPrag2019)
2018 the 14th *Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics* (WAFL14)
2018 NASSLLI Student Session
2018 Discourse, Context & Media
2017- The Undergraduate Awards

TEACHING

- 2019 Fall *Kaufman Teaching Certificate Program*, MIT
2018 Fall Teaching Assistant, *Introduction to Linguistics* (24.900), MIT (Rating: 6.6/7.0)

SUPERVISION

- 2019 Annika Walker, UROP Research Assistant at Language Acquisition Lab, MIT Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program
- 2018 Amanda Wright & Anya Keomurjian, UROP Research Assistant at the Experimental Syntax-Semantics Lab, MIT Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program

EDITING & PUBLISHING

- 2017-2018 Student Staff, *MIT Working Papers in Linguistics*.
- 2016 Spring Section Editor, *The Oxford Student*
- 2014-2015 Editor & Initiator, *Publishing Insights*
- 2013-2015 Initiator & Editor in Chief, *HKU Journal of Undergraduate Humanities*. Faculty of Arts, University of Hong Kong
- 2013-2014 Editorial Coordinator, *Australian Innovation*

Outreach

- 2017-2018 Marker, United Kingdom Linguistics Olympiad
- 2017 Spring Linguistic Consultant for Language Landscape & LinguaMania, Ashmolean Museum
- 2016-2017 Publicity Manager, Oxford Linguistics Society
- 2015 Spring Marketing Intern, Hong Kong University Press
- 2014-2015 Translator, TED Open Translation Project
- 2013-2015 Equal Opportunity Ambassador, University of Hong Kong
- 2013 Autumn Fundraiser, Student Appeal, University of Melbourne

Membership

- 2016- Linguistic Society of America (LSA)
- 2016-2017 Linguistic Association of Great Britain (LAGB)
- 2015-2017 Oxford Linguistics Society
- 2012-2015 Hong Kong University Linguistics Society

Skills

LANGUAGES

English: full professional proficiency

- Undergraduate & postgraduate degrees taught and assessed in English
- GRE Analytical Writing: 5.5/6.0, 98% (Taken on 22/08/2016)
- IELTS score: 8.5/9.0 (Taken on 13/12/2014)

Mandarin & Wu Chinese: bilingual/native proficiency

Cantonese: working proficiency

Spanish, German, Brazilian Portuguese: Beginner

COMPUTATIONAL & ANALYTICAL

Programming: R, Python, JavaScript (inc. WebPPL)

Language Models: Transformers, LSTMs, RNNs, SRILM (n -grams), GloVe, word2vec

Corpora: CLAN, CHILDES, NLTK, COCA

Experimental: Data Viewer, E-Prime, E-Run, Experiment Builder, Eyelink, IbexFarm, PenController

Sound: Praat, Audacity

Others: L^AT_EX, Wikitext, InDesign, Photoshop