

Sherry Yong Chen

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Areas of interest

Broad Experimental/Theoretical/Computational Semantics and Pragmatics
Narrow Sentence comprehension, formal semantics, language modelling
Presuppositions & implicatures, numerals, degrees, events
Scope, Questions, Tense & Aspect

Education

DEGREE-SEEKING PROGRAMS

- 2017- **PhD in Linguistics**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- MIT Presidential Fellow
 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Fellow, MIT Graduate Student Council
- 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, Prize in Language and Communication

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 Internship Program), ZAS BERLIN
• PIs: Bob van Tiel & Uli Sauerland
• Project: Modelling the Use of Quantifiers in Typical and Atypical Speakers Probabilistically (MUQTASP)
- 2017- Graduate Affiliate, Computational Psycholinguistics Lab, MIT
• PI: Roger Levy
• Project: Psycholinguistic approaches to the evaluation of language models
- 2017- Graduate Student, Language Acquisition Lab, MIT
• PIs: Athulya Aravind & Martin Hackl
• Project: Comprehension of English conjunction in child language
- 2015-2017 Graduate Student, Language and Brain Lab, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
• PIs: E. Matthew Husband & 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: Heeju Hwang
• Project: Syntactic and semantic properties of pronoun use in Cantonese
- 2014 Summer Research Intern, Developmental Psychology Lab, UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
• PI: Terry Au
• Project: Phonological representation and early literacy in Chinese
- 2013 Summer Research Assistant, Department of Linguistics, UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
• PI: 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. In C. Cummins & N. Katsos (Eds), *Handbook of Experimental Semantics and Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

ARTICLES & PROCEEDINGS

- In prep **Chen, S. Y.** Deriving *Wh*-Correlatives in Mandarin Chinese: *Wh*-movement and (Island) Identity. *Proceedings of the 50th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS 50)*.
- Forthcoming **Chen, S. Y.**, Kobayashi, F. H., Koring, L., Bill, C., Rosenstein, L. & Hackl, M. Comprehending *and*: Developmental Path of English Conjunction in Child Language. *Proceedings of the 44th Boston University Conference on Language Development (BUCLD44)*.
- Forthcoming 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)*.
- 2020 Hu, J., **Chen, S. Y.**, Levy, R. A closer look at the performance of neural language models on reflexive anaphor licensing. *Proceedings of the Society for Computation in Linguistics (SCiL)* (pp. 382-392). ACL Anthology.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** *Zero* degrees: numerosity, intensification & negative polarity. In E. Ronai, L.

Stigliano, and Y. Sun (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 54th Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society* (pp. 53-68). CLS.

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*, 55(3), pp. 681-685.

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

Manuscripts

In prep **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Distance and illusory licensing in the memory retrieval of anaphoric presupposition.

In prep **Chen, S. Y.** & Kenstowicz, M. Tones and tone sandhi in Longyou Wu.

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

Talks & posters

PEER-REVIEWED TALKS

2020 Hu, J., **Chen, S. Y.**, Levy, R. A closer look at the performance of neural language models on reflexive anaphor licensing. Talk given at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Computation in Linguistics (SCiL). January 2-5, 2020. New Orleans, USA.

2019 Kobayashi, F. H. & **S. Y. Chen** 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, USA.

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, USA.

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

2020 Kobayashi, F. H. & **Chen, S. Y.** Quantifying over thematic roles: Mandarin distributive numerals and reciprocals. Poster presented at the 43rd Generative Linguistics in the Old World (GLOW), March 31 - April 3, 2020. Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Germany.

2020 **Chen, S. Y.** & Husband, E. M. Illusory Licensing from Inaccessible Antecedents in Presuppositional Dependency. Poster presented at the 33rd Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing. March 19 - 21, 2020. Amherst, MA.

2020 **Chen, S. Y.** & van Tiel, B. "Every Horse didn't Jump over the Fence": Scope Ambiguity via Pragmatic Reasoning. Poster presented at the 33rd Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing. March 19 - 21, 2020. Amherst, MA.

2020 **Chen, S. Y.**, Kobayashi, F. H., Koring, L., Bill, C., Rosenstein, L., & Hackl, M. Comprehension of Conjunction by English-speaking Adults and Children. Poster presented at the 33rd Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing. March 19 - 21, 2020. Amherst, MA.

2019 Kobayashi, F. H., **S. Y. Chen**, L. Rosenstein & M. Hackl. Comprehending *and*: Development Path of English Conjunction in Child Language. Poster presented at the 44th Boston University Conference on Language Development BULCD. Nov 7-10, 2019. Boston, MA.

2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Deriving Wh-Correlatives in Mandarin Chinese: Wh-movement and (Island) Identity. Poster presented at the 50th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS50). Oct 24-27, 2019. Boston, MA.

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.**, Rosenstein, L., & Hackl, M. 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.** & Kobayashi, F. H. Comprehending *and*: Lessons from Children's Understanding of English Conjunction. Talk given at the annual Language Acquisition Workshop in New England (LAWNE), MIT. November 17, 2019.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Comprehending *and*: Developmental Path of English Conjunction in Child Language. Talk given at Language and Cognition (LangCog). Language Development Lab (Sned-Lab), Department of Psychology, Harvard University. October 22, 2019.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Memory Retrieval in the Processing of Anaphoric Presupposition Dependencies. Talk given at the Psycholinguistics Colloquium, Berlin School of Mind and Brain, the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. July 8, 2019.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** Processing Lifetime Effects in Tensed and Tenseless Languages. Talk given at the Psycholinguistics Colloquium, Institut für deutsche Sprache und Linguistik, the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. July 8, 2019.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** The Linguistics of *One, Two, Three*. Talk given at Language and Computation (CompLang). MIT. Feb 21, 2019.

INTERNAL TALKS

- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** & Michael Kenstowicz. Longyou (Wu) Tones and Tone Sandhi. Talk given at Phonology Circle, MIT. November 18, 2019.
- 2019 **Chen, S. Y.** & Kobayashi, F. H. Comprehending *and*: Developmental Path of English Conjunction in Child Language. Talk given at Language Acquisition Lab, MIT. October 18, 2019.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** Resolving scope ambiguity under degree questions. Talk given at Experimental Syntax & Semantics Lab, MIT. November 16 2018.
- 2018 **Chen, S. Y.** Anaphoricity, Presuppositions, and Memory Retrieval Processes. Talk given at Experimental Syntax & Semantics Lab, MIT. February 23 2018.
- 2017 **Chen, S. Y.** Double topicalization, I find really interesting. Talk given at Syntax Square, MIT. October 24, 2017.

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

- 2019 Student Travel Award, the 32nd CUNY Human Sentence Processing Conference, University of Colorado
- 2018 Full scholarships, North American Summer School in Logic, Language Information (NASS-LLI), 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, Santander & University of Oxford
- 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
2017-2019 The Undergraduate Awards

TEACHING

- 2020 Summer TA for *Introduction to Semantics* (Cleo Condoravdi), CreteLing Summer School
2020 Summer Supporting TA for *Introduction to Syntax* (Kyle Johnson), CreteLing Summer School
2020 Spring TA for *Language Acquisition* (24.904; Athulya Aravind), MIT
2018 Fall TA for *Introduction to Linguistics* (24.900; Adam Albright), MIT (Rating: 6.6/7.0)

SUPERVISION

- 2019 Annika Walker, Audrey Powers, Ella Apostoiaie. Undergraduate RAs at Language Acquisition Lab, MIT Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.
2018 Amanda Wright & Anya Keomurjian, Undergraduate RAs at the Experimental Syntax-Semantics Lab, MIT Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.

EDITING & PUBLISHING

- 2019- Editor, *Whamit!* (weekly newsletter at MIT Linguistics).
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, IbxFarm, PenController

Sound: Praat, Audacity

Others: \LaTeX , Wikitext, InDesign, Photoshop