

# 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

## 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

- 2015-2017 • Project: Comprehension of English conjunction in child language  
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

- 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 **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)*, Vol 1, pp.101-110.
- 2020 **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)*, pp.91-104
- 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

### ORGANIZATIONAL

2020	Committee member, the LSA <i>Committee on Ethnic Diversity in Linguistics</i> (CEDL).
2019	Organizing committee, the 50th <i>North East Linguistic Society Conference</i> (NELS50). MIT.
2019	Chair, the 6th <i>Semantics of African, Asian, and Austronesian Languages</i> (Triple A). MIT
2018-2019	Organizer, <i>MIT Linguistics Colloquium</i> . MIT.
2018	Student committee, the 28th <i>Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference</i> (SALT28). MIT.
2018	Organizing committee, the 14th <i>Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics</i> (WAFL14). MIT.
2017-	Member, <i>Committee on the Status of Women in Linguistics</i> , Linguistic Society of America
2016-2017	Co-organizer, <i>Oxford China Studies Postgraduate Research Seminars Series</i> . China Centre, University of Oxford
2015 Spring	Organizer, <i>Achieving Excellence in Undergraduate Academic Writing Workshop</i> . 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 *Subject Design Teaching Certificate Program*, MIT Teaching + Learning Lab
- 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 Apostoia. 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

## 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.

## 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: L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, Wikitext, InDesign, Photoshop