



Department of
Linguistics and Modern Languages
語言學及現代語言系

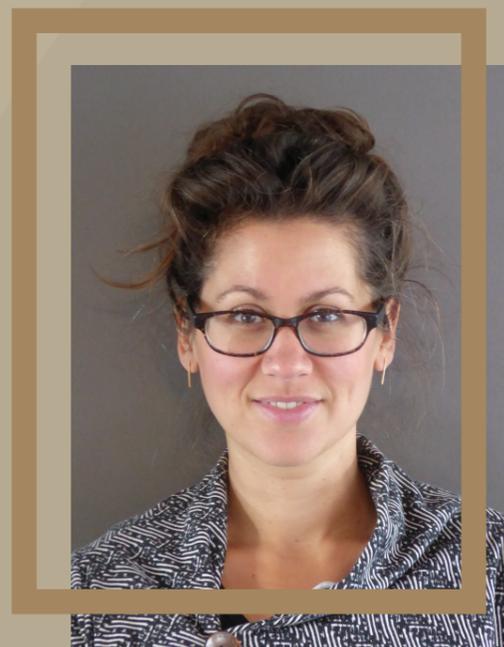
Using Experiments to Investigate Typological Universals in Syntax and Morphology

Prof. Jennifer CULBERTSON
University of Edinburgh

Date: February 21, 2023 (Tuesday)

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

***Seminar will be conducted via ZOOM**



Prior registration is required

The Zoom Meeting details will be provided on February 20, 2023

Abstract

A foundational goal of linguistics has been to understand why languages look the way they do. We know that languages are shaped by a range of forces, from limitations on our cognitive system, to cognition-external facts about language history. But attempts to determine exactly how each of these forces might drive specific features of language have been historically contentious. In this talk, I highlight my own approach, which uses artificial language experiments to link individual-level biases to cross-linguistic trends in language structure, i.e., typological universals. Using word and morpheme order as case studies, I will show how a range of different paradigms and learner populations allow us to make progress on this crucial issue in the cognitive science of language.

Speaker

Prof. Culbertson received her PhD in Cognitive Science from the Johns Hopkins University in 2010, was a postdoctoral fellow in Brain & Behavioral Sciences at the University of Rochester, and is currently Professor of Experimental Linguistics in the Centre for Language Evolution at the University of Edinburgh. Her work focuses on understanding how features of our cognitive system, prior experience, and features of the linguistic input we receive shape that languages we learn and use. To do this, she uses experimental methods, in particular artificial language learning, and computational models. She is currently the PI on an European Research Council Starting Grant, "Syntax shaped by cognition: transforming theories of syntax through laboratory experiments."

All are Welcome

Enquiries

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