



TGIF 11 (Sem2, AY2019-20): The NTU Linguist Chat Room Seminars

February 14 – Ng Bee Chin (NTU, LMS)

Tell-tale signs of communication problems – A perspective from CAT
CAT (Communication Accommodation Theory) predicts that speakers consciously or unconsciously converge or diverge from their conversation partners for a variety of reasons. It is argued that one key reason for convergence ((approximating the speech styles of the person you are speaking to) is to establish positive affect. This study explores if convergence actually leads to better communication? The interactional data of nine dyads provide emergent evidence for the interaction between convergence, divergence and effective communication which speakers themselves may not even be aware of.

March 13 – Lee Jun Wen (NTU, LMS)

Exploring the curious relationship between Colloquial Singapore English *hor* and *ah*

In this talk, I focus on two Colloquial Singapore English particles – *hor* and *ah* – both of which can be pronounced with either a rising or falling pitch contour, and show how some of their functions overlap. Interestingly, some of the overlapping functions occur when *hor* and *ah* are pronounced with different pitch contours while other overlapping functions occur when the particles are pronounced with similar pitch contours. In addition, I argue that how the two particles behave with speech acts such as questions and directives suggest certain possibilities for characterising their semantics in future research.

March 27 – Mark Seilhamer (NIE, ELL)

Citizen sociolinguists weigh in on municipal soundscapes: The case of Mandarin Chinese station announcements on trains in Singapore

This talk revisits the SMRT Mandarin station name announcement kerfuffle of 2012, presenting analyses of the situation that appeared in blogs, Internet discussion forums, and letters to newspapers. The citizen sociolinguists penning these analyses discussed an array of sociolinguistic issues and problematized the notion of proper names being labelled as being in any particular language, highlighting the fact that sociolinguistics is indeed now a public participatory discipline.

April 24 – Ahn Hyejeong (NTU, LCC)

Pyongyang-centric North Korean English Textbooks: “We had a great time”

English proficiency is viewed as an important tool to advance North Korea’s scientific and technological skills. However, little is known about English education in North Korea, one of the most reclusive societies in the world. This study examines three latest national junior middle English textbooks as part of Kim Jong Un’s educational reform.

Talks start at 3:30 pm
Location announced closer to the date

The TGIF seminar series is proudly organised by
the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies, HSS

