
Professional Positions

- 08/2023- **Assistant Professor**, School of Languages and Cultures, Purdue University
- 08/2023- **Affiliate**, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Purdue University
- 01/2024- **Faculty Associate**, Center on Aging and the Life Course, Purdue University
- 2021-2023 **Research Scientist / Postdoctoral fellow**, Feinstein Institutes, Northwell Health
- 2015-2016 **Project Assistant**, HK Baptist University, HK Polytechnic University

Education

- 07/2021 **Ph.D. in Linguistics**, Michigan State University
Additional specialization: Cognitive Science
Dissertation: *Competition in Natural Language Meaning: The Case of Adjective Constructions in Mandarin Chinese and Beyond*
- 02/2015 **M.A. in Language Studies**, Hong Kong Baptist University
Thesis: *The Second Language Acquisition of the Mandarin Potential Complement Construction*

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

11. **Cong, Yan.** (2024). Second language learning of degree expressions: A computational approach. *Cambridge Natural Language Processing*. 1–23.
10. **Cong, Yan.** (2024). Manner implicatures in large language models. *Nature Scientific Reports*. 14, 29113.
9. Britton, James; **Cong, Yan**; Hsu, Yu-Yin; Chersoni, Emmanuele; and Blache, Philippe. (2024). On the Influence of Discourse Connectives on the Predictions of Humans and Language Models. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*. 18, 1363120.
8. **Cong, Yan.** (2024). Demystifying large language models in second language development research. *Computer Speech & Language*. 89, 101700.
7. **Cong, Yan.** (2024). AI Language Models: An Opportunity to Enhance Language Learning. *Informatics*. 11(3), 49.
6. **Cong, Yan**; LaCroix, Arianna N.; Lee, Jiyeon. (2024). Clinical efficacy of pre-trained large language models through the lens of aphasia. *Nature Scientific Reports*. 14, 15573.
5. Tang, Sunny X.; **Cong, Yan**; Mercep, Gwenyth; Bhatti, Mutahira; Serpe, Grace; Gromova, Valeria; Berretta, Sarah; John, Majnu; Liberman, Mark; Sinvani, Liron. (2023). Characterizing and Detecting Delirium with Clinical and Computational measures of Speech and Language Disturbance. *Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience*. 48(4), E255-E264.
4. Tang, Sunny X.; **Cong, Yan**; Nikzad, Amir; Mehta, Aarush; Cho, Sunghye; Hänsel, Katrin; Beretta, Sarah; Dhar, Aamina; Kane, John; Malhotra, Anil. (2022). Clinical and Computational Speech Measures are Associated with Social Cognition in Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders. *Schizophrenia research*. 259, 28-37.

3. Nikzad, Amir; **Cong, Yan**; Beretta, Sarah; Hänsel, Katrin; Cho, Sunghye; Pradhan, Sameer; Behbehani, Leily; DeSouza, Danielle; Liberman, Mark; Tang, Sunny X. (2022). Who Does What to Whom? Graph Representations of Action-Predication in Speech Relate to Psychopathological Dimensions of Psychosis. *Nature Schizophrenia*. 8, 58.
2. Tang, Sunny X; Hänsel, Katrin; **Cong, Yan**; Nikzad, Amir; Cho, Sunghye; Berretta, Sarah; Behbehani, Leily. (2022). Latent Factors of Speech and Language Disturbance and Relationships to Acoustic and Lexical Computational Features. *Schizophrenia Bulletin*. 49(Supplement_2), S93-S103.
1. **Cong, Yan**. (2022). Judge-dependence in Quality Nouns: A Semantic Analysis of the Mandarin Chinese “you NP” Structure. *Asian Language and Linguistics*. 2(2), 167-216.

Peer-Reviewed Conference Proceedings

10. **Cong, Yan**; Lee, Jiyeon; LaCroix, Arianna N. (2024) Leveraging pre-trained large language models for aphasia detection in English and Chinese speakers. In *Proceedings of the 6th Clinical Natural Language Processing Workshop (Clinical NLP)*. 238-245. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).
9. A, Pranav; **Cong, Yan**; Chersoni, Emmanuele; Hsu, Yu-Yin.; Lenci, Alessandro. (2024). Comparing Static and Contextual Distributional Semantic Models on Intrinsic Tasks: An Evaluation on Mandarin Chinese Datasets. In *Proceedings of the Joint International Conference on Computational Linguistics, Language Resources and Evaluation (LREC-COLING)*. 3610-3627. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).
8. **Cong, Yan**; Chersoni, Emmanuele; Hsu, Yu-Yin; Blache, Philippe. (2023). Investigating the Effect of Discourse Connectives on Transformer Surprisal: Language Models Understand Connectives, Even So They Are Surprised. In *Proceedings of the 6th Conference on Blackbox NLP*. 222-232. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).
7. **Cong, Yan**; Chersoni, Emmanuele; Hsu, Yu-Yin; Lenci, Alessandro. (2023). Are Language Models Sensitive to Semantic Attraction? A Study on Surprisal. In *Proceedings of the 12th Joint Conference on Lexical and Computational Semantics (*SEM)*. 141-148. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).
6. **Cong, Yan**. (2022). Psycholinguistic Diagnosis of Language Models’ Commonsense Reasoning. In *Proceedings of the First Workshop on Commonsense Representation and Reasoning (CSR)*. 17-22. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).
5. **Cong, Yan**. (2022). Pre-trained Language Models’ Interpretation of Evaluativity Implicature: Evidence from Gradable Adjectives Usage in Context. In *Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Understanding Implicit and Underspecified Language*. 1-7. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).
4. **Cong, Yan**; Ngonyani, Deo. (2022). A syntactic analysis of the co-occurrence of stative and passive in Kiswahili. In Sibanda, Galen; Ngonyani, Deo; Choti, Jonathan; Biersteker, Ann (eds.). *Descriptive and theoretical approaches to African linguistics*. 165-181.
3. Pandia, Lalchand; **Cong, Yan**; Ettinger, Allyson. (2021). Pragmatic competence of pre-trained language models through the lens of discourse connectives. In *Proceedings of the 25th Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning (CoNLL)*. 367-379. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).

2. **Cong, Yan.** (2019). The Non-canonical Argument Realization of Chinese Alternations. In *Proceedings of the 30th North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics (NACCL)*. 1, 82-99.
1. **Cong, Yan;** Wee, Lian-Hee; Huang, Chu-Ren. (2015). The Invertible Construction in Chinese. In *Proceedings of the 29th Pacific Asia Conference on Language, Information and Computation (PACLIC)*. 206–211. Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).

Peer-Reviewed Abstracts

- 2025 Issa, Elsayed and **Cong, Yan.** Elicited Imitation Revisited: an open-sourced package for assessing L2 speech. Accepted to *CALICO (Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium) Annual Conference*. (May 27-31, 2025; San Diego State University, CA).
- 2025 Fang, Shaohua; Li, Yue; **Cong, Yan.** Understanding Quantifier Scope with Large Language Models: How Many Children Climbed Trees? Accepted to *CLTA (The Chinese Language Teachers Association, USA, Inc.) Annual Conference*. (May 9-10, 2025; New York, NY.).
- 2024 Gautam, Sukrati; Yu, David J; **Cong, Yan.** Enhancing Resilience in Reservoir Management: Addressing Logical Interdependencies through Framework Using Large Language Models and Natural Language Processing. Accepted to *American Geophysical Union (AGU) Annual Meeting*. (December 9-13, 2024; Washington, D.C.).
- 2024 Issa, Elsayed; **Cong, Yan;** Scala, Carmela; Merschel, Lisa; Frattarola, Angela. Organizers: William, Jennifer; Fellin, Luciana. AI, NLP, and Computational Linguistics: Implications for Language Programs. Accepted to *Modern Language Association (MLA) Convention* (January 4-7, 2024; Philadelphia, PA).
- 2023 Nikzad, Amir H.; **Cong, Yan;** Berretta, Sarah; Behbehani, Leily; Pradhan, Sameer; Tang, Sunny X. Disorganization Disrupts the Core: Localizing Clinical Dimensions of Speech and Language Disturbance Within Clause Structure Using Multi-Layered Semantic Graph Analysis. Accepted to *the 62nd Annual Meeting of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology* (December 3-6, 2023; Tampa, FL).
- 2023 Tang, Sunny X.; Nikzad, Amir H.; Spilka, MJ; **Cong, Yan;** Behbehani, Leily; Berretta, Sarah; Kane, JM; Malhotra, AK. Linguistic risk score for schizophrenia: applying a polygenic risk approach to synthesize multivariate features from computational speech and language analysis. Accepted to *the 62nd Annual Meeting of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology* (December 3-6, 2023; Tampa, FL).
- 2022 **Cong, Yan;** Wolff, Phillip. *Annual Meeting of The Linguistic Society of America (LSA)*. Inferring markedness from semantic weight: An approach using the T5 language model. Washington, D.C.
- 2022 Nikzad, Amir; **Cong, Yan;** Hänsel, Katrin; Cho, Sunghye; Berretta, Sarah; Behbehani, Leily; Tang, Sunny X. *Annual Meeting of The Society of Biological Psychiatry (SOBP)*. Modeling cross-diagnostic speech disturbance with semantic and structural speech graphs. Virtual presentation.
- 2022 Hänsel, Katrin; Nikzad, Amir; **Cong, Yan;** Mehta, Aarush; Cho, Sunghye; Berretta, Sarah; Behbehani, Leily; Tang, Sunny X. *Annual Meeting of The Society of Biological Psychiatry (SOBP)*. Predicting general psychopathology with multi-modal speech and language features. Virtual presentation.

- 2021 **Cong, Yan**; Buccola, Brian. *The 45th annual Penn Linguistics Conference (PLC)*. Alternatives and symmetry in non-scalar implicature: The case of Mandarin adjective constructions. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- 2021 Hänsel, Katrin; Cho, Sunghye; Berretta, Sarah; Mehta, Aarush; Nikzad, Amir; Guo, Jessica; **Cong, Yan**; Pradhan, Sameer; Fiumara, James; Liberman, Mark; Tang, Sunny X. *The 60th Annual meeting of American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP)*. Associative dysregulation and impaired expressivity in schizophrenia: Latent structures of clinical and automated speech analysis features. Virtual presentation.
- 2019 Smith, Kaylin; Ma, Ye; **Cong, Yan**; Beretta, Alan. *The Psycholinguistics in Iceland—Parsing and Prediction (PiPP)*. Interactions between syntax and semantics: The semantic P600, University of Iceland. Reykjavík, Iceland.
- 2019 Smith, Kaylin; Ma, Ye; **Cong, Yan**; Beretta, Alan. *The 32nd CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. Semantic attraction in sentence processing. University of Colorado Boulder. Boulder, Colorado.
- 2019 **Cong, Yan**. *The Linguistic Society of America Linguistics Institute (LSA)*. Information structure and the depth of language processing: a pilot study. University of California at Davis. California.
- 2019 **Cong, Yan**. *International Workshop on Degrees and Grammar: An East Asian Perspective*. A subjective analysis of the Mandarin ‘you’ structure. Nanjing University, China.
- 2018 **Cong, Yan**. *The Annual Conference of the Chinese Language Teachers Association (CLTA)*. The non-canonical argument realization of the Chinese alternations. Washington, D.C.
- 2018 **Cong, Yan**. *The 12th Arizona Linguistics Circle (ALC)*. Rethinking the implicit argument in Kiswahili. University of Arizona. Tucson, Arizona.
- 2018 **Cong, Yan**. *The 2nd Crete Linguistics Summer School (CreteLing)*. A preliminary semantic analysis of predicates of taste in Chinese. University of Crete. Greece.
- 2017 Parrish, Alicia; Kelley, Patrick; Smith, Kaylin; **Cong, Yan**; Beretta, Alan. *Annual Meeting of The Society for the Neurobiology of Language (SNL)*. Prosodic lengthening and boundary prediction in nominal compounds: An ERP study. Baltimore, Maryland.
- 2017 **Cong, Yan**. *The Linguistic Society of America Linguistics Institute (LSA)*. T1 and T0 Sandhi in Tongliao Mandarin: an OT approach. University of Kentucky. Lexington, Kentucky.
- 2016 **Cong, Yan**. *The 28th North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics (NACCL)*. Markedness theory and the acquisition of the Mandarin potential complement construction. Brigham Young University. Salt Lake City, Utah.

Invited Talks

- 2024 **Cong, Yan**. *Leveraging AI in Language Learning*. College of Liberal Arts Research Academy (CLARA) Research Day. Purdue University.
- 2024 **Cong, Yan**. *Natural language processing and its implications in medicine and education*. Purdue System Thinkers (PurSysT) Research Colloquiums. Purdue University.
- 2024 **Cong, Yan**. *Language Understanding in Humans and AI*. Symposium: Current Ideas in Artificial Intelligence. The 50th Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy & Psychology. Purdue University.

- 2024 **Cong, Yan.** *Computational approach to linguistic biomarkers in aging.* Colloquium series. Center on Aging and the Life Course (CALC), Purdue University.
- 2023 **Cong, Yan.** *Large language models and their implications in text analysis.* Round table on *STEM in Asia*. Department of History, Purdue University.
- 2023 **Cong, Yan.** *Exploring L2 Writing Proficiency via LLMs Metrics: a Preliminary Study.* Invited talk for *LINGTalk*. Department of Linguistics, Purdue University.
- 2023 **Cong, Yan.** *Using large language models to measure fluency.* Advanced Methods at Purdue (AMAP) in the behavioral, health, and social sciences. Purdue University.
- 2023 **Cong, Yan; Nikzad, Amir; Tang, Sunny X.** *Multi-modal computational speech and language features for assessing psychiatric conditions.* The University of Maryland.
- 2023 **Cong, Yan; Hänsel, Katrin; Nikzad, Amir; Tang, Sunny X.** *Investigating novel NLP approaches for measuring speech disturbances in psychosis.* The Functional Neuroimaging and Bioinformatics Lab. McLean, Harvard Medical School Affiliate.
- 2022 **Cong, Yan** and Tang, Sunny X. *The 6th Annual Technology in Psychiatry Summit.* Leveraging state-of-the-art transformer language models to measure speech disturbance in schizophrenia. Harvard Medical School, Mclean Hospital.
- 2021 **Cong, Yan.** *Formal Linguistics and Philosophy (FLaP).* What we don't say matters. The Hong Kong Baptist University, Department of English.

Fellowships, Funds, and Awards

- 2024 **Systems Fellows Award**, Purdue Systems Collaboratory, Purdue University.
- 2024 **Internal fund**, Faculty Research Development Award.
Seed grant for NIH proposal *Leveraging large language models for aphasia detection and prediction in older adults*. Center on Aging and the Life Course (CALC), Purdue University. \$10,000
- 2023 **Internal fund**, ASPIRE Research Enhancement Grant.
Travel for *Modern Language Association (MLA) Annual Convention*. College of Liberal Arts, Purdue University. \$1,550
- 2023 **Internal fund**, Start-up funds.
College of Liberal Arts, Purdue University. \$40,000
- 2023 **Educational Advancement Award**, *Advancing Women in Science and Medicine (AWSM)*
Computational approach to speech biomarkers in bilingual immigrants with schizophrenia. Northwell health. \$5,000
- 2022 **Educational Advancement Award**, *Advancing Women in Science and Medicine (AWSM)*
Computational linguistics can predict psychiatric diagnoses and outcome. Northwell health. \$5,000
- 2020 **Dissertation Completion Fellowship**
MSU Graduate School \$10,000
- 06/2018 **Student Fellowship**, North American Summer School on Logic, Language, and Information (NASSLLI), at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Carnegie Mellon University \$500
- 2017-2020 **Summer Support Fellowship**
MSU Department of Linguistics and Languages \$4,500

- 2015 **Best Paper Award**, *The 29th Pacific Asia Conference on Language, Information and Computation*, The invertible construction in Chinese. Shanghai Jiaotong University, China

Teaching

- Undergrad
- LC490-LING398: Language Learning and AI, Purdue (2024-present)
 - SCLA102: Cornerstone - Critical thinking and communication, Purdue (2023-present)
 - LIN401: Introduction to Linguistics, MSU (2017-2021)
 - CHS101, CHS102, CHS411: Chinese language, MSU (2016-2017)
- Grad
- LING598-LC596: Statistical Modeling in Linguistics II, Purdue (2025-present)
 - LING598-LC596: Statistical Modeling in Linguistics, Purdue (2023-present)

Advising

- 01/2024 – Psycholinguistics Ph.D committee member
present ○ Yue Li; Jingying Hu.
- 05/2024 – Computer and Information Technology Ph.D committee member
present ○ Yifei Hu; Damin Zhang.
- 07/2024 – Purdue Systems Collaboratory (Civil Engineering) Fellow advisor
present ○ Sukrati Gautam.
- 12/2024 – Speech and Language Pathology Ph.D committee member
present ○ Peng Zhang.

Service to the Profession

- 2024-present Editorial Board Member: *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, Springer Nature portfolio (HSS).
- 2024-present Program Committee and Reviewer: *The 31st International Conference on Computational Linguistics* (COLING).
- 2022-present Reviewer: *The Association for Computational Linguistics* (ACL Rolling Review).
- 2023-present Ad hoc Reviewer: *Health Informatics Journal*, *Nature Scientific Reports*, *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology (AJSLP)*, *npj Mental Health*, *Advance science*, *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research (JSLHR)*.
- 2020-2021 Reviewer: *Association of Contemporary African Linguistics* (ACAL).

Service to Purdue University

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| Member | Graduate admissions subcommittee. | since Fall 2024 |
| Member | CLA Ross-Lynn Postdoctoral Fellow review subcommittee. | for Fall 2024 |
| Organizer | Purdue Computational Linguistics Lab. | since Fall 2023 |

January 1, 2025