



**Yajun Liu**

Developmental Linguistics  
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## EDUCATION

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### Georgia Institute of Technology, US

Present

Online Master of Science in Computer Science

Prerequisite courses: Data Structures and Algorithms; Machine Learning;

Advanced Learning Algorithms; Introduction to Neural Networks and PyTorch

### University of Edinburgh, UK

December 2025

Ph.D. in Developmental Linguistics

### University of Edinburgh, UK

August 2020

Master of Science in Developmental Linguistics

### Soochow University, China

June 2018

Master of Translation and Interpreting

### Henan University, China

June 2016

Bachelor of Arts in English

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Published

Liu, Y., Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (in press). Mandarin bilingual speakers undergoing attrition produce more explicit referring expressions. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*. [Link](#).

Liu, Y., Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (2025). Beyond Crosslinguistic Influence: Mandarin Speakers with Exposure to Null-subject Languages Nonetheless Use Fewer Null Pronouns in Mandarin. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, 47, 878–884. [Link](#).

### Under Review / Preprint

Liu, Y., Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (under review). Do bilinguals avoid ambiguity or minimise processing effort? Insights from an online eye-tracking study in spoken Mandarin. *Journal of Memory and Language*. [Manuscript](#).

Liu, Y., Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (Preprint). Do bilinguals avoid ambiguity? An experimental study of lexical ambiguity in spoken Mandarin. [PsyArXiv](#).

Zhang, H., Liu, Y., Mroczkowski, M., Przybycien, K., & Sorace, A. (unpublished report). Learning and Teaching Mandarin in Scotland. [Manuscript](#).

## TUTORING EXPERIENCE

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### School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Edinburgh

Present

- Computational Sociology  
*mathematical models; supervised machine learning*

### School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, University of Edinburgh

May 2025

- Simulating Language  
*Bayesian modeling; Rational Speech Act*
- Introduction to Cognitive Science  
*Python basics*
- Online Experiments for Language Scientists  
*jsPsych, WebGazer, JavaScript*
- Data Analysis for Psychology in R  
*Frequentist regression models*

## CO-SUPERVISION EXPERIENCE

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### MSc dissertation project in Evolution of Language & Cognition

March–August 2024

Co-supervisor

- Project title: Reference production under cognitive load in bilingual speakers
- supervised experimental design, online experiment set-up and data collection; advised on data analysis and interpretation

## SIDE PROJECT

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### Learning and Teaching Mandarin in Scotland

December 2022–December 2023

Research Assistant

- coordinated collaboration among Bilingualism Matters, Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools (CISS) and Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT)
- coordinated 11 primary and secondary schools across Scotland; designed questionnaires; conducted interviews with pupils and teachers; performed quantitative and qualitative analysis and prepared the report

### SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

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**Liu, Y.**, Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (2025). Beyond crosslinguistic influence: Mandarin speakers with exposure to null-subject languages nonetheless use fewer null pronouns in Mandarin. Talk presented at *The 47th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, San Francisco, US, August 2025. .

**Liu, Y.**, Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (2025). A desire to avoid ambiguity or ease processing? Insights from an experimental study of lexical ambiguity in spoken Mandarin using online eye-tracking. Poster presented at *The 47th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, San Francisco, US, August 2025. [CogSci Poster](#).

**Liu, Y.**, Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (2024). Mandarin bilingual speakers undergoing attrition produce more explicit referring expressions (more data). Poster presented at *The 30th Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing (AMLaP)*, University of Edinburgh, UK, September 2024. [AMLaP Poster](#).

**Liu, Y.**, Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (2024). Mandarin bilingual speakers undergoing attrition produce more explicit referring expressions. Poster presented at *The 37th Human Sentence Processing Conference (HSP)*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, US, May 2024. [HSP Poster](#).

**Liu, Y.**, Luo, Q., Sorace, A., & Smith, K. (2022). Exploring the role of communicative interaction in L1 attrition: Evidence from null and overt subjects in an artificial language. Poster presented at *The Bilingualism Matters Research Symposium*, Edinburgh, UK, October 2022. [BMRS Poster](#).

### ACADEMIC SERVICE

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#### University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK

Admin, Centre for Language Evolution	May 2023–May 2025
Volunteer, The 30th Architecture and Mechanisms of Language Processing	January 2024–September 2024
Co-organiser, Annual Retreat Trip of Centre for Language Evolution	May 2023–May 2024
Chair, Bilingualism Research Group	January 2022–September 2023
Deputy Chair, The 29th Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference	September 2022–June 2023
Plenaries & Workshops Coordinator, The 28th Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference	September 2021–June 2022