

# ROBERT XU

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<https://sites.google.com/view/robertxu>

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Variationist and interactional sociolinguistics

Phonetics, Speech science

Linguistic anthropology

Speech prosody

Gender and sexuality

Language and cognition

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

### OBERLIN COLLEGE

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology

25-26

### HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Associate, Department of Linguistics

25-26

Lecturer, Department of Linguistics

24-25

## EDUCATION

### PHD IN LINGUISTICS

2024

### STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Dissertation: Prosodic Packages and Social meaning

Committee: Penny Eckert, Rob Podesva, Andrew Wong, Nandi Sims

### MPHIL IN LINGUISTICS

2013

### THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG (CUHK)

Thesis: Cross-linguistic perception of intonation

### BA IN HUMANITIES

2008

### WUHAN UNIVERSITY

Thesis: Linguistic metaphor in the social context

## TRAINING

### LINGUISTICS SOCIETY OF AMERICAN SUMMER INSTITUTE

at University of Michigan

2013

at University of Chicago

2015

## SELECTED AWARDS

Laboratory Phonology Award for best student paper at New Ways of  
Analyzing Variation 50

2022

Stanford Center at Peking University Pre-Doctoral Fellowship

2019

Linguistic Society of America student abstract award (first place)

2019

Linguistic Society of America fellowship for LSA institute

2015

International Phonetics Association student award at Tonal Aspect of Language 2012	2012
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## PUBLICATIONS

1. <b>Xu, Robert</b> and Peggy Mok. Cross-linguistic perception of intonation in low-pass filtered speech by tone language speakers. <i>Journal of Chinese Linguistics</i> .	Accepted
2. <b>Xu, Robert</b> . He sounds like a bureaucrat: variation of voice quality in stylistic performances. In <i>Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America</i> . Denver, Colorado.	2023
3. <b>Xu, Robert</b> . Polyphonous and meaningful: pitch variation in stylistic performances. In <i>Penn Working Papers in Linguistics</i> (Vol. 29.2).	2023
4. <b>Xu, Robert</b> . On-going change of PIN/PEN vowels in California's Central Valley. In <i>Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences</i> . Melbourne, Australia.	2019
5. <b>Xu, Robert</b> . Placing social types through prosodic variation: an investigation of spatial meanings in Mainland China. In <i>Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America</i> . New York, NY.	2019
6. Mok, Peggy, Albert Lee, Jingwen Li, and <b>Robert Xu</b> . Orthographic effects on the perception and production of L2 Mandarin tones. <i>Speech Communication</i> . 101, 1-10.	2018
7. Mok, Peggy, <b>Robert Xu</b> , and Donghui Zuo. Bilingual speaker identification: Chinese and English. <i>International Journal of Speech, Language and Law</i> , 22, 57-77.	2015
8. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , & Peggy Mok. Cross-linguistic perception of Mandarin intonation. In <i>Proceedings of the 7th International Conferences on Speech Prosody</i> , 638-642. Dublin.	2014
9. Li, Jingwen, <b>Robert Xu</b> , & Peggy Mok. Effect of orthography on L2 production of Mandarin tones. In <i>Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Tonal Aspects of Languages</i> , 147-151. Nijmegen, Netherland.	2014
10. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , Jingwen Li. & Peggy Mok. The effect of orthography on L2 perception. In <i>Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Tonal Aspects of Languages</i> , 75-78. Nijmegen, Netherland.	2014
11. <b>Robert</b> , Donghui Zuo, and Peggy Mok. Speaker identity of Cantonese-English bilingual speakers. In <i>Proceedings of the 14th Australasian International Conference on Speech Science and Technology</i> . Sydney, Australia.	2012

12. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. Cross-linguistic perception of intonation by Mandarin and Cantonese listeners. In <i>Proceedings of the 6th International Conferences on Speech Prosody</i> , 99-102. Shanghai, China.	2012
13. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. Intonation perception of low-pass filtered speech in Mandarin and Cantonese. In <i>Proceedings of the 3rd International Symposium on Tonal Aspects of Language</i> . Nanjing, China.	2012
14. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. Final rising and global raising in Cantonese intonation. In <i>Proceedings of the 17th international Congress of Phonetic Sciences</i> , 2173-2176. Hong Kong.	2011
15. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. An experimental investigation into the F0 of high-rising tone change in Cantonese. In <i>Proceedings of the 9th Phonetics Conference of China</i> . Tianjin, China.	2010
16. Podesva, Robert J., Lewis Esposito, Chantal Gratton, Emily Lake, Daisy Leigh, Rob Voigt, and <b>Robert Xu</b> . Complicating the SO in social meaning: Interactional dimensions of gendered /s/ variation. To be submitted to <i>Language in Society</i> .	In Prep.
17. <b>Xu, Robert</b> . "It's not your turn yet": Timing variation is inherently dialogical. To be submitted to <i>Journal of Sociolinguistics</i> .	In Prep.
18. <b>Xu, Robert</b> . The stylistic use of pitch polyphony in social interaction. To be submitted to <i>Language</i> .	In Prep.
19. <b>Xu Robert</b> . Character type – the anchor of social meaning in a social-semiotic landscape. To be submitted to <i>Language in Society</i> .	In Prep.

## INVITED TALKS

1. Understanding the social meaning of speech prosody. Speech Prosody Special Interest Group Lecture Series.	2024
2. Prosodic packages and social meaning. University of Texas at El Paso.	2024
3. Prosodic packages and social meaning: the stylistic performances of character types in Beijing. East Asian Linguistics Workshop. Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Stanford University.	2023
4. Exploring prosodic variability of character types in Mainland Mandarin. East Asian Linguistics Workshop. Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Stanford University.	2015

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

1. **Xu, Robert.** "Meet my demands because I'm a baby": stylistic packages and their interdiscursivity. The 99th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic society of America, Philadelphia. Pennsylvania. 2025
2. **Xu, Robert.** "They embody bureaucrat": how character types anchor social meaning for the construction of personae. New Way of Analyzing Variation 52, Miami Beach, Florida. 2024
3. **Xu, Robert.** Tone-intonation interaction in sociolinguistic style. The 36th North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics, Claremont, California. 2024
4. **Xu, Robert.** Where prosodic features come together: phrasal boundary as a critical site for stylistic expression. The 98th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic society of America, New York, NY. 2024
5. **Xu, Robert.** "The Bureaucrat", "the Neighborhood Grandma", and "the Childish Girl": uncovering the social meaning of stylistic timing variation. New Way of Analyzing Variation 51, Queens, New York. 2023
6. **Xu, Robert.** He sounds like a bureaucrat: variation of voice quality in stylistic performances. The 97th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic society of America, Denver, Colorado. 2023
7. **Xu, Robert.** Polyphonous and meaningful: pitch variation in stylistic performances. New Way of Analyzing Variation 50, San Jose, California. 2022
8. Esposito Lewis, and **Robert Xu.** Affect and iconicity: cross-linguistic similarities in the meaning of syllable lengthening. New Way of Analyzing Variation 48, Eugene, Oregon. 2019
9. **Xu, Robert.** On-going change of PIN/PEN vowels in California's Central Valley. The 18th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences. Melbourne, Australia. 2019
10. **Xu, Robert.** Placing social types through prosodic variation: an investigation of spatial meanings in Mainland China. The 93rd Annual Meeting of the Linguistic society of America, New York, NY. 2019
11. Hilton, Katherine, Sunwoo Jeong, and **Robert Xu.** A phonetic and pragmatic analysis of *um* and *uh* in conversation. The 91st Annual Meeting of the Linguistic society of America, Austin, TX. 2017
12. Podesva, Robert J., Daniel Galbraith, Sunwoo Jeong, Sharese King, Bonnie Krejci, Kate Lindsey, Teresa Pratt, Simon Todd, Casey Wong, and **Robert Xu.** A sociophonetic study of /l/- darkening among latina/o and European Americans in Bakersfield, California. American Dialect Society Annual Meeting. Washington, D.C. 2016

13. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Patrick Callier. Exploring prosodic variability of character types in Mainland Mandarin. NWAV-AP4. Chiayi, Taiwan.	2016
14. Mok, Peggy, Guo Li, and <b>Robert Xu</b> . Revisiting Cantonese tone change ( <i>pinjam</i> ). International Conference on Yue Dialects. The Chinese University of Hong Kong.	2015
15. <b>Xu, Robert</b> & Peggy Mok. Cross-linguistic perception of Mandarin intonation. Speech Prosody 7. Dublin, Ireland.	2014
16. Li, Jingwen, <b>Robert Xu</b> , & Peggy Mok. Effect of orthography on L2 production of Mandarin tones. The 4th International Symposium on Tonal Aspects of Languages. Nijmegen, Netherland.	2014
17. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , Jingwen Li. & Peggy Mok. The effect of orthography on L2 perception. The 4th International Symposium on Tonal Aspects of Languages. Nijmegen, Netherland.	2014
18. Mok, Peggy, Lan Chen, Jingwen Li, <b>Robert Xu</b> , and Him Cheung. Cross modal association between colors and vowels in a tone language. British Association of Academic Phoneticians Colloquium (BAAP). Oxford, UK.	2014
19. Mok, Peggy, Alan Yu, Donghui Zuo, and <b>Robert Xu</b> . Cross-linguistic priming effects in the Chinese-English bilingual mental lexicon. The 9th International Symposium on Bilingualism. Singapore.	2013
20. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. Intonation perception of low-pass filtered speech in Mandarin and Cantonese. The 3rd International Symposium on Tonal Aspects of Language. Nanjing, China.	2012
21. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. Cross-linguistic perception of intonation by Mandarin and Cantonese listeners. The 6th International Conferences on Speech Prosody. Shanghai, China.	2012
22. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , Donghui Zuo, and Peggy Mok. Speaker identity of Cantonese-English bilingual speakers. The 14th Australasian International Conference on Speech Science and Technology. Sydney, Australia.	2012
23. Zhang, Yanhui, Peggy Mok, and <b>Robert Xu</b> . Jyutping dictation tutor. Teaching and Learning Innovation Expo. The Chinese University of Hong Kong.	2012
24. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. Final rising and global raising in Cantonese intonation. The 17th international Congress of Phonetic Sciences. Hong Kong.	2011

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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| 25. <b>Xu, Robert</b> , and Peggy Mok. An experimental investigation into the F0 of high-rising tone change in Cantonese. The 9th Phonetics Conference of China. Tianjin, China. | 2010 |
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### VOICE OF CALIFORNIA PROJECT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| Project manager                                     | 15-16 |
| Fieldworker (Sacramento, Salinas, Redlands, Amador) | 14-19 |

### INTERACTIONAL SOCIOPHONETICS LAB STANFORD UNIVERSITY

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| Data collection, Transcription, Corpus management | 14-19 |
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### RESEARCH ASSISTANT

#### THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

- |                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| <b>PI: Gloria Zhang</b> | 12-14 |
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Projects in language learning, teaching, and psycholinguistics

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| <b>PI: Peggy Mok</b> | 11-12 |
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Projects in phonetics, psycholinguistics, and bilingualism

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|---------------------------|------|
| <b>PI: Candice Cheung</b> | 2009 |
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Project in syntax

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### AS INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD

I designed and taught the following courses and managed teaching teams.

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|--------------------------------------|----------|------|
| Language, Structure, and Cognition   | Harvard  | 2025 |
| Speech Prosody                       |          | 2025 |
| Language and Society                 |          | 2024 |
| Senior Writing Workshop              |          | 2024 |
| TA training Workshop (co-instructor) | Stanford | 2020 |
| Sociophonetics                       |          | 2019 |

### AS TEACHING ASSISTANT

I led sections, taught guest lectures, graded, and supervised students' projects.

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|---------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Language in Society             | Stanford | 18,22,24 |
| Minds and Machines              |          | 21,22,23 |
| Phonetics                       |          | 20,23    |
| Language, Gender, and Sexuality |          | 2022     |
| Language and Gender             |          | 2018     |
| Introduction to Linguistics     |          | 2016     |

	Phonetics I	CUHK	2010
	Special topics in linguistics: Phonetics		2010
	Foundations in Phonetics and Phonology		2009
	Understanding Fiction Intertextually	Wuhan	2007
	Western Literature		2007
ADVISING EXPERIENCE	Primo Lagaso Goldberg (Advisor, Senior thesis)	Harvard '25	
	Alice Wang (Committee, General paper)	BA, Linguistics and Folklore Harvard, PhD student	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICE	<b>CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION</b>		
	Organizing Committee, New Ways of Analyzing Variation 50		2022
	<b>MENTORSHIP AND STUDENT SERVICE, STANFORD</b>		
	Grad mentor, Cal-Bridge Summer Research Internship Program		2023
	Coordinator, Humanist at Large, Stanford Career Education		2023
	Facilitator, Design Your Stanford, Stanford Life Design Lab		2021
	Admission Committee, Stanford Pre-Collegial Institute		2019
	Coordinator, Graduate Student Program Board		2019
	Council member, Graduate student humanities advisory council		15-16
	<b>DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE, STANFORD LINGUISTICS</b>		
	Colloquium committee		19-20
	Organizer, SocioLunch (Weekly sociolinguistics meeting)		18-19
	Colloquium committee		16-17
	Lab committee		19-20
	Social committee		15-16
	<b>PEER REVIEWER</b>		
	Linguistic Vanguard		2023
	New Ways of Analyzing Variation 50		2023
	International Congress of Phonetic Sciences		2023
SKILLS	<b>LANGUAGE</b>		
	(Near) native: Mandarin, English, Cantonese		
	Coursework: French, Taiwanese, Thai, Hong Kong Sign Language		
PROFESSIONAL	<b>TECHNICAL</b>		
	Praat, ELAN, R, JAVA, Python, C++, E-Prime, Eye tracking		
	Linguistics Society of America (LSA)		

## MEMBERSHIP

International Phonetics Association (IPA)  
The Association for Laboratory Phonology (LabPhon)  
American Anthropological Association (AAA)  
Linguistics Society of Hong Kong (LSHK)  
Speech Prosody Special Interest Group (SIG)