

Zhendong Liu

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Department of Linguistics, GFS 301

University of Southern California

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Education

- 2022 – Present
(expected 2027) **University of Southern California** – Los Angeles, CA
PhD in Linguistics
- 2022 – 2024 **University of Southern California** – Los Angeles, CA
MA in Linguistics
Thesis (MA screening paper) : *Cyclic movement and phonologically-conditioned chain resolution: A new look at Swahili relative clauses*
Committee: Travis Major (Chair); Zuzanna Fuchs; Andrew Simpson; Vicki Carstens
- 2020 – 2022 **University of Rochester** – Rochester, NY
MS in Computational Linguistics
- 2016 – 2020 **University of Rochester** – Rochester, NY
BS in Computer Science
BA in Linguistics

Publications

- 2025 Liu, Zhendong. [The semantic composition of event counting expressions within nominals in Mandarin Chinese](#). *Proceedings of the 35th meeting of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT-35)*.
- 2024 Liu, Zhendong. [Cyclic movement and chain resolution in Swahili relative clauses](#). *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America 9 (1)*: 5707.
- 2023 Liu, Zhendong. [A unified operator movement analysis for Adverbial Clauses and Relative Clauses in Swahili](#). In Ash Asudeh, ed., *University of Rochester Working Papers in the Language Sciences 9*: 31–54.

Invited Talks

- Jun. 2026 普通话“动量词”与“名量词”的句法语义平行性分析及其理论意义
(*A parallel syntax-semantic analysis of “verbal classifiers” and “nominal classifiers” in Mandarin Chinese and its theoretical implications*)
Hunan University, Changsha, China

Conference Presentations

- Aug. 2026
(upcoming) *Ordering operations on an all-powerful C*
[Poster](#) at [SICOGG-28](#): The 28th Seoul International Conference on Generative Grammar, Daejeon, Korea
- Jun. 2026 *nP-phasality and a subtle sign of successive cyclicity in colloquial Lhasa Tibetan*
[Talk](#) at [TEAL-15](#): 15th International Workshop on Theoretical East Asian Linguistics, Hong Kong, China
- Mar. 2026 *A temporal analysis of two evidentials in Rngaba Amdo Tibetan (joint work with Lang Gaji)*
[Talk](#) at [GLOW in Asia 2026](#) The 2nd Workshop for Young Scholars, Nagoya, Japan
- Nov 2025 *Poly-functional phrasal nominalizers in Lhasa Tibetan*
[Talk](#) at [SCAMS-5](#): The 5th Southern California Annual Meeting on Syntax, Pomona, CA
- May 2025 *The semantic composition of event counting expressions within nominals in Mandarin Chinese*
[Poster](#) at [SALT-35](#): The 35th meeting of Semantics and Linguistic Theory, Cambridge, MA
- Mar. 2025 *Reconsidering the constituency in semelfactive event counting expressions in Mandarin Chinese*
[Poster](#) at [TEAL-14](#): The Workshop on Theoretical East Asian Linguistics 14, Los Angeles, CA
- Jan. 2024 *Cyclic movement and copy deletion in Swahili relative clauses*
[Talk](#) at 2024 Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting, New York City, NY
- Nov. 2023 *Explaining the relative marker distribution in Swahili relative clauses*
[Talk](#) at [SCAMS-3](#): The third Southern California Annual Meeting on Syntax, Pomona, CA

Fieldwork

- 2025 4 weeks of in-situ Fieldwork on Lhasa Tibetan in Lhasa.
- 2020-2023 Continuous elicitations on Swahili.

Teaching Assistance experience

LING 275: Language and Mind, University of Southern California
LING 115: Language and Society, University of Southern California
LING 285: Human Language and Technology, University of Southern California
LING 225/425: Introduction to Semantic Analysis, University of Rochester
[CSC 242: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence](#), University of Rochester
[CSC 173: Computation and Formal Systems](#), University of Rochester

Scholarships and awards

2025	USC Linguistics Research Development Award: \$1288.27
2025	USC Graduate School Travel/Research Award: \$1500
2025	USC 2025 Summer East Asian Studies Center Graduate Fellowship: \$1000
2022	Provost's fellowship, University of Southern California
2016 – 2020	Dean's Scholarship, University of Rochester

Knowledge & Skills

Languages

Mandarin (native), English (proficient)

Research Languages

Lhasa Tibetan, Rngaba Amdo Tibetan, Swahili

Programming languages

Proficient in: Python, Java, C

Softwares

Elan, Praat

(updated July 2026)