

Research Topics for NUS-MOE HSSR 2022

SUBJECT: CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
C1-1	Communicating COVID-19 in Singapore Chinese media	This project explores communication during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic in Singapore Chinese media. There are various aspects of communication which students can explore, one of which is the use of conceptual metaphors according to the Lakoffian framework.
C1-2	Linguistic analyses of Chinese advertising	This project aims to conduct a linguistic analysis of Chinese advertisements <u>either</u> from a thematically distinct category (e.g. female cosmetics advertisements) <u>or</u> from different thematically distinct categories (e.g. non-commercial advertising vs. commercial advertising), to identify and examine the most commonly used linguistic means employed in advertising as well as to reveal the connection between the advertising language used and advertising objectives. A diachronic perspective can also be employed in this project.
C1-3	The language of <i>Hong Lou Meng</i> (Dream of the Red Chamber, 红楼梦)	<i>Hong Lou Meng</i> (Dream of the Red Chamber) was written sometime in the middle of the 18th Century during the Qing dynasty. Though it displays linguistic characteristics of the written vernacular Chinese (白話) of that period, it also retains classical Chinese (文言) elements. This project aims to study this phenomenon through an analysis of specific grammatical construction(s) or/and function words. Some examples are (1) the use of the vernacular <i>gei</i> 給 and classical <i>yu</i> 與 in ditransitive constructions; and (2) the use of vernacular the <i>zai</i> 在 and the classical <i>yu</i> 于/於 in locative constructions.

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Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
C1-4	The language of <i>Lianhe Zaobao</i> (联合早报), <i>Lianhe Wanbao</i> (联合晚报) & <i>Shin Min Daily News</i> (新明日报)	Based on the information provided on the Singapore Press Holdings website, these three Chinese newspapers have different editorial orientations and are targeted at different groups of readers. This project aims to study the language in these Chinese newspapers to reveal any connection between the use of linguistic devices and editorial objectives.
C1-5	Chinese dialects as heritage languages in Singapore	<p>This project focuses on issues related to one of the following aspects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the linguistic properties of heritage languages in Singapore b. variation and change within these Singapore heritage languages and heritage speaker communities c. the acquisition and maintenance of Singapore heritage languages across the lifespan d. community-wide and individual language contact and language shift <p><i>Special Requirement: For aspects a and b, it will be helpful if students are proficient in a dialect.</i></p>
C2	Translating Tang and Song Dynasty Poetry 唐宋诗的英译	<p>Tang and Song poetry is often considered the peak of Chinese classical poetry, and in the past centuries, there have been many people from diverse backgrounds attempting to translate them into English. Select one poet, such as Li Bai, Du Fu, or Su Shi, and look at which poems of the poet have been translated. Identify a few most-frequently translated poems, and based on your understanding of the pieces, compare and analyse the translation strategies used by different translators.</p> <p>唐宋诗被视作中国古典诗歌的巅峰，近百年来有很多翻译尝试。选择其中一位诗人（如李白、苏轼），看看他有哪些诗歌得到翻译，并找出其中一些最受关注的诗作，在自己理解的基础上，对比分析不同英译的翻译策略。</p>

Research Topics for NUS-MOE HSSR 2022

SUBJECT: ECONOMICS

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
E1	Game theory and its applications to real-life examples	<p>Game theory is a mathematical toolbox to analyse strategic interaction among multiple decision makers. It provides a common language for seemingly different economic models such as oligopoly, public goods and externalities, price discrimination, moral hazard and adverse selection.</p> <p>Student will have to apply their knowledge of game theory for this research. He/she will go through a standard textbook on game theory (such as Martin J. Osborne's <i>An Introduction to Game Theory</i>). Secondly, he/she will need to apply the textbook knowledge to at least one real-life example of his/her interest by representing it as a formal game and computing its Nash equilibrium (or its appropriate refinements) thoroughly. The essay should mainly focus on the second component; student do not need to explain general game-theoretic concepts in detail.</p>
E2	Private sector provision of infrastructure	<p>When is it sensible to task the private sector to build and manage public infrastructure, such as roads, rail, and stadiums? Since the 1980s there has been an increasing wave of so-called public-private partnerships in infrastructure. Aimed at harnessing the competitive efficiencies of the private sector, these arrangements have had mixed success. The student will examine cases and data to uncover useful principles and pitfalls to avoid. The project may be general or specific to certain sectors.</p>

Research Topics for NUS-MOE HSSR 2022

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
G1	Transnational migration in global cities	Transnational migration highlights that migrants' experiences and challenges of living in global cities are shaped by their multi-scalar connections between the sending country and the receiving country, e.g. being part of a transnational family, affiliations to transnational communities, holding dual citizenship. Students can examine themes related to migrant spaces in a global city, transnational migrants' everyday lives in a global city, or how migrants experience the city differently from non-migrants. Students are encouraged to consider how migrant experiences are shaped by the intersection of other social identities such as being an elderly female migrant.
G2	Do we still have floodplains for large Asian rivers?	River floodplains, formed through complex interactions of fluvial processes, are among the most dynamic landforms. However, they are also among the most threatened landscapes (Tockner and Stanford ¹ , 2002). Most of these floodplains have been cut off by human activities, e.g. through the construction of embankments, and by being occupied for various uses, especially for large Asian rivers. The aims of this project are to quantify and evaluate the present state of floodplains along large Asian rivers (the Yellow River, the Yangtze River, the Mekong River, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra etc.) using <i>Google Earth</i> .
G3-1	Tourism in Singapore	Students can explore any topic relating to tourism and tourism development in Singapore. An understanding of tourism policies in Singapore and landscape changes/development will be a good start for this topic. The focus should also be on how tourism can help address sustainable urban development goals and overall liveability of its residents. Simple site observations, interviews with relevant people (e.g. tourism planners, business operators, local visitors and international tourists), and the use of secondary data will be expected in the project.

¹ Tockner, K., & Stanford, J. A. (2002). Riverine flood plains: present state and future trends. *Environmental conservation*, 29(3), 308-330.

Research Topics for NUS-MOE HSSR 2022

SUBJECT: GEOGRAPHY

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
G3-2	Urban Conservation and/or Development in Singapore	Students can explore any topic relating to urbanisation in Singapore. In particular, the research can focus on heritage conservation (e.g. historic ethnic districts and neighbourhoods): What brought about the conservation and how do people feel about the process? The focus can also be on how urban conservation addresses sustainable urban development goals and improves the overall liveability of its residents. Simple site observations, interviews with relevant people (e.g. tourism planners, business operators, local visitors and international tourists), and the use of secondary data will be expected in the project.
G4-1	The significance of food security (production and consumption) in Singapore on ideas about urban sustainable development	Singapore as a global city-state is heavily reliant upon imports of food stuffs and natural resources from many parts of the world. What is meant by food security? Has there been innovations leading to more locally sourced food?
G4-2	Geographies of plastic matter and plastic activism along Singapore's coastal fringes	How do we conceive of plastic matter in our environments? Plastic matter is global, transnational, and local. Its presence is particularly obvious along recreational coastal fringes and parks. What are the geographies of plastic waste? Why is plastic so embedded in our coastal landscapes? What sorts of social action and agency efforts are there to prevent, minimise, reduce, or remove plastic in coastal areas?

Research Topics for NUS-MOE HSSR 2022

SUBJECT: HISTORY

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
H1-1	Economic development: Singapore and early industrialization in the 1960s – 1980s	This topic explores Singapore’s shift to an industrial economy in the 1960s – 1980s. Students may choose to focus on a key industry such as the maritime industry, or on the role of advisors in shaping Singapore’s economic development in the 1960s – 1980s.
H1-2	ASEAN and the South China Sea	This topic prompts students to explore the history of ASEAN’s involvement/role in mediating intra-ASEAN tensions and/or tensions between Southeast Asian countries and China relating to the contested waters of the South China Sea.
H2-1	History of a firm, preferably an American multinational, in Singapore during the first decade of the city-state’s independence	This project seeks to place the history of business & capitalism in independent Singapore in the broad context of the USA’s role in the growth of the global economy or the economic, political or social history of Singapore. The focus is on American multinational firms (choose one), as they would grow to become one of the largest investors in the city-state. The project studies the reasons for their decisions to locate to Singapore, the nature of their local operations, their markets, their attitudes toward local regulations & culture, corporate-labour relations, their ethos & corporate culture, the transference or localisation of their ethos & corporate culture, and/or their relationship with the state. This topic broadly cuts across the themes of Paper 1 (how the hot wars in Asia affected Multi-National Corporations’ decisions to invest in the region) & Paper 2 (how the regional economic environment shaped Singapore’s economic policies).
H2-2	The Cold War & Southeast Asia	Students can propose any topic about the great power rivalry or great powers’ search for allies in Southeast Asia during the Cold War, and how that affected developments in one Southeast Asian state (excluding the states in Indochina) or ASEAN. For instance, students can choose to focus on the intervention of one Cold War power in a Southeast Asian state and the political, economic or social outcomes of such an intervention. Students can also choose how great power dynamics affected a Southeast Asian state’s or ASEAN’s diplomatic relations or economic ties with a great power.

Research Topics for NUS-MOE HSSR 2022

SUBJECT: LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
L1-1	Twentieth Century Literature	Students can explore any significant author, topic or critical issue in Anglophone literature of the twentieth century. Literary works can be drawn from the modernist period in the early decades of the twentieth century or from the postmodern period after World War 2. Students may also work on contemporary writing that has emerged in our current era of globalisation. Possible authors for study include Conrad, Joyce, Woolf, Eliot, Fitzgerald, Beckett, Pinter, Coetzee, Ishiguro and Toni Morrison.
L1-2	The fiction of J. M. Coetzee	J. M. Coetzee's writing is intensely political as it is profoundly ethical and captivatingly aesthetic. Students are welcome to explore any aspect of Coetzee's writing and can draw on works in any phase of his <i>oeuvre</i> (early, middle or late; South African, "Australian," or global). Possible novels for study include <i>Waiting for the Barbarians</i> , <i>Foe</i> , <i>Disgrace</i> , <i>Elizabeth Costello</i> and <i>Slow Man</i> .

Research Topics for NUS-MOE HSSR 2022

SUBJECT: MALAY LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
M1-1	Malay Writers: Social thought and contributions	<p>The focus on this research is to document, analyse and evaluate the role and contribution of leading Malay writers (in Singapore/Malaysia/Brunei) with the aim of highlighting the significance of their ideas in the context of contending ideas in Malay discourses. Critical analysis of their ideas will be the main emphasis for the research.</p> <p><i>Special Requirement: Students need to be proficient in both Malay/Bahasa Indonesia and English.</i></p>
M1-2	Leading figures in Malay language studies and research	<p>The focus of this research is to document, analyse and evaluate the role and contribution of leading figures in Malay Language studies and research (in Singapore/Malaysia/Brunei) with the aim of highlighting the significance of their ideas in the context of language planning and politics of language in contemporary Malay society. Critical analysis of their ideas will be the main emphasis for the research.</p> <p><i>Special Requirement: Students need to be proficient in both Malay/Bahasa Indonesia and English.</i></p>
M1-3	Cultural arts and heritage of Singapore Malays and the Malay World	<p>The focus on this research is to document, analyse and evaluate the Malay cultural arts and heritage that have evolved and developed in Singapore, and its connection to the Malay World. These can include performative, visual and musical art forms. The aim is to not only look at the content and aims of the selected cultural arts but also to delineate how these have been supported and sustained. An appreciative survey and discussion will be the main thrust of this research.</p> <p><i>Special Requirement: Students need to be proficient in both Malay/Bahasa Indonesia and English.</i></p>

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Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
M2-1	Interrogating the supernatural in Malay society and culture	<p>Using selected Malay literary texts and folklore, colonial writings, as well as horror films, students are invited to explore and analyse the role and representations of the supernatural and its relationship to the social, cultural, political and historical conditions that shape and organise Malay society.</p> <p><i>Special Requirement: Students need to be proficient in both Malay/Bahasa Indonesia and English.</i></p>
M2-2	Food and Malay cultural heritage in Singapore	<p>Beyond its biological and health functions, food is an important cultural medium that is related to group norms, values, identity and belonging. It also plays a pivotal part as meaningful cultural heritage markers for different communities. Students are invited to critically examine Malay food and food practices ('foodways') in Singapore society and how these are related to heritage making and the construction of Malay identity and culture.</p> <p><i>Special Requirement: Students need to be proficient in both Malay/Bahasa Indonesia and English.</i></p>

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SUBJECT: MALAY LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Topic No	Proposed Research Topic	Write-up
M3-1	Malay women artists in Singapore – Experiences of art making and gaining recognition and reputation	<p>Through focusing on either an artist or a group of artists in a particular period, this research explores the experiences of women artists in terms of their creative process, how they garner their reputation, and their contributions to society. The range of art forms for this research includes visual (e.g. paintings, textile, ceramics, sculpture, wood carving etc.) and performance (theatre and dance).</p> <p><i>Special Requirement: Students need to be proficient in both Malay/Bahasa Indonesia and English.</i></p>
M3-2	Malay cultural heritage – practices and preservation	<p>Through covering both the tangible and intangible heritage of Malays, this research looks at the everyday lived experiences of cultural practices as well as at the efforts of individuals and institutions to promote and preserve these practices.</p> <p><i>Special Requirement: Students need to be proficient in both Malay/Bahasa Indonesia and English.</i></p>