

LANGUAGE PRIZES 2020/2021

The prizes were set up in AY2009/2010 to honour the achievements of top students in the Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, German, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Tamil and Thai language programmes. These prizes are funded by donations. Awardees will be awarded cash prizes. The prizes aim to recognize top students who have performed consistently well and to encourage the students to continue with their language learning efforts. The Centre would like to congratulate the following students who have received the award for 2020/2021

S.A.T. Alsagoff Arabic Language Prize – Muhammad Syazwan B Mohamed S



Being awarded the S.A.T Alsagoff Arabic Language Prize represents an incredible honour in my journey towards appreciating the beautiful Arabic Language. In the beginning, successfully completing the six levels of the course was honestly beyond my imagination. Given the rigour of the course coupled with the subtleties inherent in the language, my experience pursuing the learning of Arabic was certainly not without its challenges.

Nonetheless, under the caring tutelage of Ustaz Muzzammil and Ustaz Omar, I constantly discovered a strong passion to learn and know more about the language, a mere reflection of my two aforementioned teachers' love for the language as well as the teaching of it.

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With that in mind, I firstly dedicate this prize to Ustaz Muzzammil and Ustaz Omar for opening my eyes and mind to a language and a culture previously unknown to me. I also dedicate this prize to my classmates in the Arabic Language course, without whom, my learning would undoubtedly be less engaging and meaningful. Last but certainly not the least, I dedicate this prize to my loved ones for always believing in me in all my endeavours.

CLS Bahasa Indonesia Language Prize – Ian Wu Ling En



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I am humbled to be awarded the Language Prize in Bahasa Indonesia. The programme in BI has been a very enriching and unforgettable experience for me. In a jovial and inclusive classroom, my classmates and I were introduced to a variety of environments that have improved our linguistic, cultural, and social understanding of Bahasa Indonesia. My teachers have been excellent, very patient, and extremely knowledgeable, sharing with us many aspects of the language through texts, cultural immersion, stories, films, novels, and field trips. It has been a fun experience for me and I would definitely recommend students to take up learning Bahasa Indonesia! In closing, I would like to thank my teachers Ibu Liana, Ibu Indrianti, Ibu Johanna, and Ibu Lucia, as well as my classmates who have made this a truly meaningful learning journey for everyone.



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**Ng Kim Choon CLS Chinese Language Prize
– Nakkiran Sukumaran**

I am deeply honoured and pleasantly surprised to receive this language prize. The path to this award was difficult. Many hours were spent every week to improve my grammar and vocabulary skills, and I would not have been able to see this through without the help of my tutors and friends. I would firstly like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Chinese Language department. All my Chinese language tutors have been amazing, and under their tutelage, I am now able to converse in Chinese and read articles written in the language. I would also like to thank my friends who took time out of their schedules to help me with the language. Without their support and encouragement, I would not have come this far.

I started on my Chinese language journey without intending to progress to the advanced classes. What started as a desire to be able to engage in basic conversation became a serious conviction to achieve fluency. Despite having spent six semesters learning the language, I am aware that there is so much more for me to learn. Language learning is a life-long commitment, and I intend to continue learning and using the language whenever possible.



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**CLS German Language Prize
– Tham Sin Che**

I am deeply honoured to have been awarded this prize. I started picking up German in the first semester of my university life, curious to find out what is in this completely foreign language. Placing all my bid points into that 8 am German 1 class, I would never have guessed it would later turn out to be one of the best decisions I have ever made in my life. Since then, spending time in German has become a big hobby of mine as I continued with the language modules of higher levels.

I am beyond grateful for all the opportunities, experiences, connections, sense of accomplishment and joy German has brought me. I would like to sincerely thank my German lecturers for introducing to me the beauty of German, and for inspiring me to continue studying the language.

Looking back, learning German in NUS has been such an enjoyable and wonderful journey. I will never forget how much I looked forward to every German lecture, be it in FASS, UTown or online, and I would not have it any other way.



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**CLS Hindi Language Prize
– Divashini D/O Vinayagaran**

I am truly honoured and humbled to receive the CLS Hindi language prize. Learning a new language is challenging especially when one has no prior knowledge of it. Nevertheless, having a good support system to back up my interest really helped me.

For that, I would like to first thank my teachers, Sandhya-ji and Latika-ji for being understanding and encouraging all throughout the 4 semesters. Their efforts to make every lesson enjoyable with various engaging tasks and resources, as well as enriching with multifaceted discussions of the Indian culture are greatly appreciated. Focusing on progress more than results, they also create a safe space for us as students to make mistakes and learn from them effectively. I would also like to thank my friends in class for all their genuine help and support with special mention to Kasthuri for being in this with me for 3 semesters.

What is my biggest takeaway? I am motivated to continue practising Hindi for the rest of my life and am looking forward to watching Bollywood movies and grooving to the songs without relying on subtitles and translation. But more than that, I am grateful to have been part of the family which we had become over time, beyond the teacher-students-classmates dynamic and would hands down do it all over again!



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**Japanese Association, Singapore Prize AY2020/2021
- the best NUS student in Japanese Language from
theCentre for Language Studies – Tan Hong Wei**

I am deeply honoured to receive the Japanese Association, Singapore Prize.

Learning the Japanese Language at NUS had always been my most rewarding experience in university. The language courses, being fun and interactive, allowed me to connect with my fellow classmates and forged many friendships. It was a pleasant surprise to be able to learn the language effectively in a fun way together with people from various backgrounds.

Moreover, because of learning Japanese, I was able to participate in several exchange programmes in Japan, which offered rare opportunities which a holiday trip in Japan simply cannot provide. During the programmes, it was exciting to use Japanese conversationally all the time. While initially, it was rather challenging to attempt to hold extended discussions over a wide range of topics with the Japanese students, I felt a sense of achievement as this demonstrated I had achieved a certain level of mastery of the language.

Last but not least, the dedication that the Japanese language teachers have put into conducting the lessons, pushed me to excel even further. I would like to express my gratitude to all my Japanese language teachers, for



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their teachings and support throughout my Japanese language learning journey.
Thank you!

Japanese Association, Singapore Prize AY2020/2021 - the second best NUS student in Japanese Language from the Centre for Language Studies - Goh Tien Li, Zachary

It is incredibly humbling to have won this prize, and for it to come as I finish the journey from Japanese 1 to 6 that I began since my first year at NUS is a poetic ending. Japanese has been such a constant presence during my university life that it is a strange feeling not to be taking it anymore. I want to say a huge thanks to my main teachers throughout these 3 years: Walker-sensei and Chiba-sensei, and a special mention to Saito-sensei, who I had the privilege to be taught by for more than half of my modules. Winning this award means a lot as an affirmation of my efforts, but the real reward has been the amazing experiences along the way, as well as the experiences I will continue to have engaging with Japan and Japanese.



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CLS Korean Language Prize - Ronald Santoso

I am greatly honoured to receive CLS Korean Language Prize. While I vaguely know of the existence of the prize before, I have never worked specifically towards it and was pleasantly surprised to be awarded with such prize, especially since all my classmates were very fluent in the language and worked extremely hard for the class too.

I started my Korean language journey in NUS at Korean 1, not knowing even the Korean alphabets, and eventually progressed up to Korean 7, where I was introduced to terminologies in the field of economics and law. The journey was not all smooth sailing and picking up the confidence to speak up was very difficult. My exchange to South Korea after completing Korean 4 was a turning point, where I have no choice but to speak the language to survive, to socialise, and to immerse myself in the culture fully. Furthermore, my Korean 6 and 7 teachers were very patient and encouraging and I remembered that my speaking skills and confidence were boosted much during this period.

Korean classes were something I have always enjoyed, to the point that I would jokingly declare my second major in Korean Studies. Lessons were never boring, and I would always look forward to the class, even if it is in the early morning or in the evening. I have also made some long-lasting friendships from the classes, whom I still keep in touch with up to this point in time. I would like to thank CLS for the opportunity to learn Korean, and all the Korean teachers in NUS who have passionately prepared for a class that is enriching and enjoyable for the students.



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**CLS Malay Language Prize
– Ngee Zi Xuan, Deon**

I am honoured to receive the CLS Malay Language Prize. Upon entering university, I saw the Centre for Language Studies as an opportunity for me to learn about new languages and cultures while also allowing me to put my unrestricted electives into good use. Though I started learning languages for practical reasons, I eventually stayed on this journey for the entirety of my undergraduate life because I grew fascinated by the intricacies of a given language, be it in its formal or colloquial form. An example of this would be how we often find it difficult to translate certain words into English - because there simply isn't a good way to.

Regrettably, interaction in class had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as our classes shifted online. However, it was heartwarming to see the CLS team push forward nonetheless to ensure minimal disruptions to our language classes. In these trying times, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Cikgu Aishah and Cikgu Sew who - in their own quirky ways - instilled love and appreciation in me for one of our nation's official languages that we live alongside every day. Terima kasih banyak!



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**CLS Tamil Language Prize
– Ho Zhen Kit**

I am very grateful and honoured to have been given this award. I wish to offer my sincere thanks and gratitude to Mrs Saba who spent so much time and effort in helping us to develop our vocabulary and understanding of Tamil. Without her guidance, I would not have attained the level of understanding and interest in Tamil that I have now.

When I first began, I never imagined reaching this level of proficiency in Tamil and it was only possible with the help of Mrs Saba in encouraging us to speak and to not be afraid to make mistakes. Her passion to not only teach us the language, but also to expose us to the culture and daily conversation topics in Tamil, made it very fun to pick up Tamil. I especially enjoyed the projects that we did and learning about different Tamil songs.

I would also like to thank my encouraging friends in both Tamil 1 and Tamil 2. The friendly environment and friendly competition pushed us to improve our Tamil and made class much more fun.

	<p>Ultimately, the knowledge that I learnt will always stay with me. Being able to interact with friends in Tamil and read and understand signs and announcements in Tamil is a great joy!</p>
 <p>FASS AWARDS RECIPIENT 2021</p>	<p>CLS Thai Language Prize – Tan Wei Hui, Joanna</p> <p>I am extremely honoured and grateful to have been awarded this prize - looking back on my journey in learning the Thai language from the beginning of my university education all the way up till now, choosing to enrol in the Thai programme was, without exaggeration, the best decision that I made in NUS.</p> <p>From linguistic skills to knowledge about the Thai culture, the programme has truly opened my eyes and broadened my perspectives. The valuable opportunities that I have gained within the programme and outside of it would never have happened had I not taken the step to learn the language. To say that the Thai language programme has enriched my life would be an understatement - it has left an indelible mark on the way I think, feel, and act.</p> <p>My journey in the Thai programme would never have been as enjoyable as it had been if not for the wonderful and knowledgeable ajarns that have taught me along the way - Ajarn Sasiwimol, Ajarn Tukta, Ajarn Pornwipa, Ajarn Weena, and Ajarn Titima - and all the other ajarns that I have managed to cross paths with during events such as Loy Krathong and Songkran. Their passion for their own language and culture, as well as their warmth and sense of hospitality, overflowed into their lessons abundantly. Without doubt, it is this infectious passion and love for the Thai culture that made me (and the rest of my coursemates, I am sure) constantly excited about what we learnt in class as well as curious about the knowledge we picked up outside of it.</p> <p>And so, for all of the love, joy, warmth, and passion that have been so freely shared with me over the past years in the Thai programme, and for all the wonderful people and opportunities that I have crossed paths with thanks to the very same group of ajarns, I would like to say a huge thank you, truly, from the bottom of my heart.</p>