

# LANGUAGE PRIZES 2022/2023

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 – Nur Irdina Binte Iskandar**



I am deeply honoured and grateful to receive the S.A.T. Alsagoff Arabic Language Prize.

I could not have gotten this award without Ustaz Omar and Ustaz Muzzammil. Their patience, kindness and understanding have immensely helped me throughout all six levels of the Arabic language course.

Competing all six levels of the language sounded impossible at first. But after each level, my interest and passion for the language deepened. I completed each level wanting to learn more!

I would also like to thank my classmates for the memorable and meaningful journey embarked together. It has been a rewarding experience and one that I won't forget!

## **Ng Kim Choon CLS Chinese Language Prize – Pricillia Sungarda**



I am really grateful to receive this award. However, winning this award was just a nice bonus in addition to my enriching experience learning Chinese language in NUS. As an Indonesian Chinese, I first started studying Chinese seriously when I came to Singapore to study. Through learning Chinese, I gained a better understanding of my heritage and unlocked a whole new world of culture and media.

When I first started learning Chinese, I remember struggling the most with writing! With the guidance of Chen Laoshi, I was able to learn the foundations of Chinese language and grammar. Chen Laoshi helped build my confidence in Chinese through her patience and interactive teaching methods - combining tests, games, presentations and reports!

From writing basic sentences to writing full-length essays, I am happy with the progress I have made.

To those of you still thinking about taking a language course at CLS, I would encourage you to just give it a try! You will be amazed by the many opportunities unlocked by learning a new language.



**CLS German Language Prize  
– Ryan Tan Yu Kit**

Learning a new language gave me a chance to speak to others – from different faculties, different cultures, and different backgrounds. Of course, I am glad to have come out of the course with a decent grasp of the German language.

But I cherish most of all the cultivation of great patience and care, to ensure that as little meaning as possible is lost. The desire to say no more and no less than what you mean prompts a detailed examination of one's own beliefs and commitments. A desire for similar fidelity in understanding the learned language prompts a similarly detailed examination. These are all-natural instincts.

But learning a new language is one of the best ways to start noticing them, for the possibility of being misunderstood looms largest in this context.

.



**CLS Hindi Language Prize  
– Roni Basak**

I am deeply honoured to receive the esteemed Best Student in Hindi Language Prize, AY 2022-2023, from the Centre for Language Studies. This achievement represents the culmination of an unforgettable journey of learning Hindi, which has become an integral part of my life.

My fascination with Hindi began long before my university days, but it was the exceptional opportunity provided by NUS that truly allowed me to blossom in this linguistic and cultural exploration. I am incredibly grateful to Dr Sandhya Singh for her unwavering guidance and support throughout my linguistic exploration. Her passion for teaching and dedication to her students have been a constant source of inspiration. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to my fellow classmates for their camaraderie and collaborative spirit, enriching my learning experience in immeasurable ways. Together, we have navigated the intricacies of the language, celebrated each other's progress, and created cherished memories that will remain with me forever.

Language studies have emphasized the significance of intercultural communication, and I believe that learning Hindi has equipped me with a valuable tool to foster mutual understanding in today's interconnected world. This award serves as a reminder to continue striving for excellence in my linguistic pursuits and to cherish the impact of language on our lives. I am committed to carrying the spirit of learning and appreciation with me as I embark on new adventures beyond my university life.

**Japanese Association, Singapore Prize AY2020/2021  
- the best NUS student in Japanese Language from  
the Centre for Language Studies – Kay Yeung**



I am deeply honoured to receive the Japanese Association Singapore Prize for AY2022/23. Studying Japanese at NUS has helped me further my passion for the Japanese language and culture.

I am thankful for the various opportunities to apply my skills, including the exchange sessions with Japanese students and my recent graduation trip to Japan, where I met many cute deer in Nara. I am also very grateful for the teachers (especially Morita Sensei and Nagami Sensei) and friends I have met along the way.

Thank you for always encouraging me and making this journey so enjoyable. To my juniors who are currently taking or interested in taking Japanese language classes, enjoy yourselves, be consistent in your learning, and I wish you all the best!

**Japanese Association, Singapore Prize AY2020/2021  
- the second best NUS student in Japanese  
Language from the Centre for Language Studies –  
Clement Ng Zi Qian**



I am very honored to be the recipient of the Japanese Association, Singapore Prize. To be honest, I did not expect myself to be able to achieve this award when there are many more excellent students in the Japanese Language classes.

Japanese classes, despite being 6 hours weekly, served as a breather from my more challenging major's classes. The interactions in class, the daily sense of satisfaction from learning something new in the language, all of these served as motivations for me to pursue higher level Japanese language despite the rising difficulty every semester. It was pleasant learning the Japanese language with various people from different backgrounds.

Finally, I would like to thank my teachers for their amazing teaching over the past 3 years, especially Morita-sensei, who has been teaching me for 4 semesters straight. Their hard work at making the class engaging and interesting, made the tedious work of learning a language, something fun and anticipated for weekly. Despite having finished my education at NUS, the skills I obtained will surely continue to remain useful in my future interactions with the Japanese language.





**CLS Korean Language Prize  
– Rachel Tan Hui Hong**

Taking language modules in NUS is something I always recommend to my friends because it was one of the best decisions I made in school. As cliché as it sounds, I look forward to my Korean Language classes every time because they are always so fun and interesting! As someone who has always wanted to pick up Korean Language but did not know where to start, this Language Programme really helped kick off my learning journey. I enjoy the challenge that comes with learning a new language, and I truly believe that this experience has made my campus life more colorful and vibrant :)



**CLS Malay Language Prize  
- Lo Wee**

It is a great honour to be awarded the CLS Malay Language prize and I am happy that my effort to master a third language has been recognised. To all my juniors who are in the process of learning another language, I challenge you to apply what you have learnt in real life as much as possible. Do not be afraid to make mistakes, do not fear to speak in the language, only then can you truly put to good use what you have learnt in class.

Throughout the Malay Language courses, I was guided by amazing teachers, Cikgu Jamal, Cikgu Aishah and Cikgu Sew, who made learning Malay so fun and interactive. Of course, I also had the fortune of having really good classmates who were always willing to speak in Malay with me and corrected me when I made mistakes. In the beginning of my Malay Language journey, Covid-19 had also challenged the learning of a new language, as Malay classes were conducted on zoom, which made it harder for me to converse and practice Malay in class.

Despite the lack of face to face classes, my Malay Language teachers found creative ways to get the class to improve our Malay, such as having individual projects which required us to make recordings in Malay, as well as group projects which opened us up to more conversations with each other. I believe that as long as you stay committed to learning a new language and never give up, you will reap the benefits of mastering a new language.

For me, having just started a new job, I realised how important it is to be fluent in an additional language. Fortunately, being able to speak in Malay meant that I could better connect with my clients, especially those who are older and are not able to converse in English. Furthermore, learning Malay not only equipped me with the practical skills of speaking and writing in Malay, it also taught me more about Malay culture and heritage, which are the intangible benefits of learning a new language. My words cannot fully encapsulate how fun, satisfying and useful it is to learn a new language. You can only experience it yourself and I would highly recommend anyone to do so.



## **CLS Thai Language Prize – Yang Siong Sim**

My journey with Thai began before I even matriculated at NUS, when I was in Bangkok with an alumna of the CLS Thai Language Programme. During the trip, I saw the way she listened, laughed, and connected with others, all in a language that she had learned in just three years. At the end of that trip, she asked me how I found my first time in Thailand, and all I could say was that I looked forward to the day I could make sense of its people and their language.

Learning a language is not easy, especially when it is not one that you grew up with. It is memorization, practice, mimicry, inference, guesswork, pattern recognition, and most importantly, risk taking. The best quality you can have when learning a language is to have the audacity to run your mouth, make a mistake and sound stupid, then laugh about it and move on. All the effort is worth it the moment you see someone's eyes light up as you speak to them in their own tongue.

I would like to thank all my ajarns for my time in the CLS Thai programme. You have taught me far more than words alone. From you I have learnt the stories, histories, prejudices, struggles, hopes, and dreams of a people hidden between the lines of a language. To Ajarn Titima, the way you say "thank you" whenever you learn something new, whether it be from a fellow professor or your own student, has inspired me greatly. You have ignited in me a passion for linguistics that will burn for a long time.