

LANGUAGE PRIZES 2025/2026

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 2024/2025



S.A.T. Alsagoff Arabic Language Prize – Nur Iliyana Binte Iskandar

Learning Arabic has been one of the highlights of my university life. Not only have I been exposed to a whole new culture, I have also made lasting friends along the way. There is never a dull moment in Arabic class, for learning a new language is always fun and interesting, challenging you in ways you'd never imagine.

Fret not, language learning is a good kind of challenge, and with the most amazing teachers like Ustaz Muzzammil and Ustaz Omar, the challenge doesn't seem so daunting– in fact, it becomes enjoyable and something you'd look forward to each week.

I would like to thank my Arabic language teachers and classmates for being my constants throughout my Arabic language learning journey. I wouldn't have been able to win this prize without their support and guidance.



Ng Kim Choon CLS Chinese Language Prize – Thai Le Minh Hoai

I'm really honoured to have received the Ng Kim Choon CLS Chinese Language Prize for AY25/26! It has been such a fulfilling journey over the past three years since I first started learning Chinese at NUS.

In my LAC classes, I learnt not only new vocabulary and grammar points, but also a lot about Chinese culture and the way of life in China. After three years of learning Chinese, I am now well-versed in popular Chinese travel destinations and Chinese food! We had opportunities to become tour guides and introduce our favourite destinations to the class, as well as teach our classmates how to cook our favourite dishes in Chinese. We also had so much fun taking part in a lot of activities together, such as Chinese calligraphy and writing poems in Chinese. I always had a great time in class and looked forward to my LAC classes every semester.

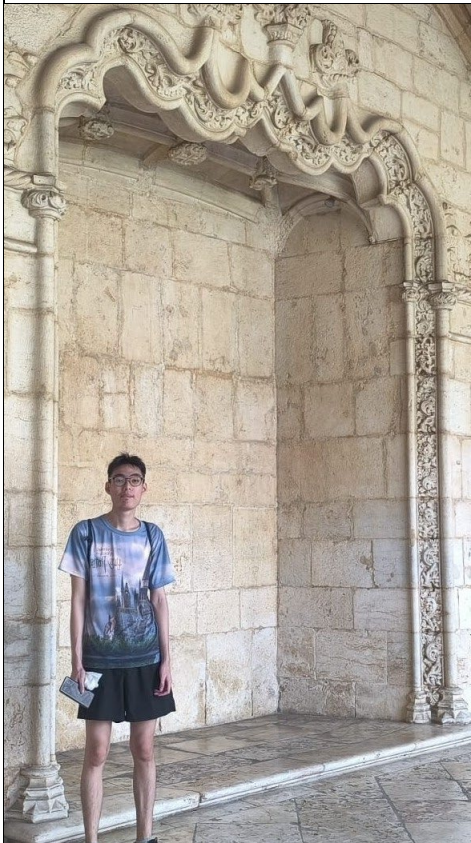
It has truly been one of the highlights of my NUS journey. I'm really glad that I chose to learn Chinese at NUS, and I'm incredibly grateful for all the wonderful memories and experiences along the way.



Yap See Eng CLS German Language Prize – Shristinath Sardar

When I started my journey as a student at NUS, I had decided then that a new language would be a good goal to work towards. Learning German has opened so many new doors for me! The classes were an enjoyable experience that I looked forward to every week. I have been able to communicate with so many new people and gain so many new opportunities that I previously would not even have considered. I even received an invitation from an Austrian friend to attend Oktoberfest with him this year! If you are contemplating learning a foreign language during your time in NUS, consider German!

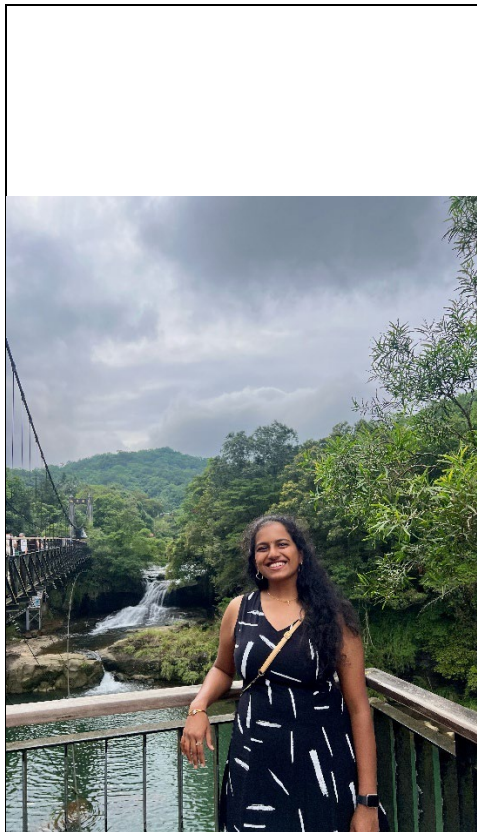
The picture I submitted is of my time in the Swiss alps, where I got a chance to SHOCK the natives with the German I learned at NUS.



Yap See Eng German Language Prize – Tan Yannian

My German learning journey has taught me that language learning is most rewarding when we focus on the joy of the process. What began as an interest gradually became something much more meaningful: a way to understand another culture, connect with people, and open up academic and career possibilities I had not fully expected.

Winning the language prize is a great honour, but more importantly, it reminds me how far sustained curiosity and enjoyment can take us. I hope this encourages others to try learning a language and see where the journey leads.



CLS Hindi Language Prize
– Saadhana Ramesh

Receiving the CLS Language Prize Award is something I'm incredibly grateful for. It's especially meaningful to have the time and effort I've invested in learning Hindi recognised in this way.

Learning a new language has been such a rewarding experience. In the beginning, it can feel like you're trying to make sense of an entirely new system, with all the unfamiliar vocabulary, unfamiliar sentence structures, and plenty of moments where everything sounds like complete gibberish. But there's a pretty amazing moment when that starts to change. You hear Hindi being spoken somewhere outside the classroom, and suddenly, words that once sounded completely foreign start to make sense. You realise you actually understand what's being said.

Going from the basics all the way to Hindi Level 6 has taught me much more than just the language itself. It has given me a lot more confidence in my ability to learn something difficult through consistency and patience. There's something quite reassuring about seeing how far you can come simply by showing up, putting in the effort, and getting a little better each day. When I started, I could barely understand a word of Hindi. Now, I can make it through a Bollywood movie without subtitles – which, if you ask me, is a pretty significant achievement!

A huge part of this journey has been Dr Sandhya, who has made learning Hindi feel both approachable and enjoyable. Her patience, creativity, and genuine passion for teaching have made such a difference. She has always been generous with her time and willing to offer guidance, even beyond the classroom, which made the learning process feel much less daunting. She's truly a sweetheart.

I'm very glad I decided to take Hindi, and I would wholeheartedly encourage anyone who has been thinking about picking up any new language at all to just go for it. You might struggle at first, but there's something incredibly satisfying about looking back and realising just how much you've learned."

	CLS Korean Language Prize (Best Student) – Chew Yu Rong Winning the Korean Language Prize is something I never expected, and I am truly honoured and grateful. Being able to speak Korean made my exchange in Korea much more meaningful, and even opened the door to an internship there. Learning Korean has introduced me to many wonderful people and opportunities that I would never have imagined otherwise. I am especially grateful to all the professors who guided me throughout this journey, particularly Prof Chi Seo Won, whose encouragement and dedication inspired me to keep learning. I hope my experience encourages others to take the leap, because learning a language can open doors far beyond the classroom!!
	CLS Korean Language Prize (Second Best Student) – Tan Ying Xun, Megan When I was taking Korean 1, I never would have thought that one day I could speak coherent sentences in Korean confidently. Now after completing Korean 6, while there is still lots of room for improvement, I found myself more confident in conversing in Korean. As I went higher up in level, the passion of the professors only became greater. I would like to thank all the tutors and professors who have shaped my Korean learning journey the past 4 years in NUS, and especially Prof Park Mihi (Korean 5) and Prof Chi Seowon (Korean 6), for their unwavering passion in teaching us!

	CLS Tamil Language Prize - Zachary Koh I am very honoured to receive the CLS Tamil Language Prize. It was not an award I was expecting — much less aware of — when I decided to take up Tamil two semesters ago. I knew it would be difficult learning to read, write, and speak a language from a totally unfamiliar language family, but I truly did not anticipate how rewarding the experience would be. Though I was far from the perfect Tamil student, I thank my instructor, Mrs Saba, and my fellow classmates for their graciousness and tolerance towards my silly mistakes. Learning Tamil without them just wouldn't have been the same! The Tamil community in CLS may be on the smaller side, but I wholeheartedly recommend the programme if you're even the slightest bit interested. Stick with it for a semester or two and you might pick up something about a language rich in history, media, and culture. It is one whose presence echoes throughout Singapore's heritage and society — a language beautiful and undeniably sweet.
	CLS Malay Language Prize - Tan Heang Yi, Charlton Receiving the CLS Malay Language Prize has been a tremendous honour. I still recall deciding almost spontaneously to pursue Malay between course registration rounds and attending my first lesson without a successful appeal anyway. It was an impetuous decision, but one that I have come to be immensely grateful for. The Malay language is an integral part of Singapore's cultural tapestry, yet, let's face it, many of us (my former self included) butcher it, from common utterances like *tombalik or *kajiao to even the lyrics of our National Anthem. Learning the language has allowed me to appreciate our shared heritage more deeply while opening the door to meaningful conversations and new perspectives. Beyond grammar and vocabulary, I had the opportunity to explore the metaphorical worldview of the language through peribahasa (proverbs) and the lived experiences of my wider community through literature, news articles, and songs. These have taught me to see Singapore through different perspectives and reminded me that language is ultimately about understanding people. All these could not have been possible without my amazing cikgus from Malay 1 to 6 – Cikgu Sew, Cikgu Ain and Cikgu Dul, who patiently guided me through the intricacies of the language and introduced me to the richness of both traditional and contemporary Malay culture. Terima kasih, Cikgu! And to those considering learning Malay in university, don't overthink it. Trust me, you've seen how I started. You never quite know where a language will take you until you begin, so hop in and find out!



CLS Thai Language Prize – Hana Binte Mohamed Razali

I am honoured and humbled to receive the CLS Thai Language Prize. I would like to express my biggest thanks to all the Ajarns and friends who I have learned immensely from, and for the experiences and community that I gained through the journey of learning this language.

All the best to those who are learning Thai or a new language! Enjoy the process and don't give up.