

## CBS Research Seminar

# Multilingualism and the Brain

Presented by

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**Date: 28 Feb 2018 (Wednesday)**

**Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Venue: HJ303, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University**

### ABSTRACT

A majority of the global population is multilingual. Although many studies have investigated the cognitive processes used to produce words in multilingual speakers, one criticism of this research is the emphasis on Indo-European languages typically always including English as the dominant language. The question posed in this presentation is whether cognitive processes that have been assumed in models of language processing (naming, reading and spelling) extend to multilingual speakers. This is not a trivial question. Multilingual speakers can use very different writing systems. Indeed, even within a language e.g. Japanese and Korean - two or more scripts must be learned to become literate (monolingual bi-scripts). If the same cognitive mechanisms used to read and to spell in one type of script impact on reading and spelling skills in different scripts then several clinical implications arise e.g. in the diagnosis and treatment of aphasia, dyslexia and dysgraphia in multilingual speakers. One feature of the presentation will be reports of multilingual speakers who display reading and spelling disorders in typologically distant scripts. These cases highlight the striking similarities across languages.