

| GLOBAL OUTLOOK

Cracking Linguistic Puzzles: NTU's Linguistics Legacy on the World Stage

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| The Taiwan team performed well and achieved outstanding results, securing two silvers, three bronzes, and an honorary mention.

Ever since Taiwan's inaugural participation in the International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL) in 2016, Prof. Shu-Kai Hsieh, a dedicated mentor at the NTU Linguistics Institute, has been guiding our young linguists to success on this grand stage. In 2023, linguistics talents from NTU won 2 golds, 11 silvers, 9 bronzes, and 15 honorary awards, showcasing their prowess on the international stage. Notably, three participants earned a place in the prestigious IOL Hall of Fame for their exceptional achievements.

The year 2022 was a milestone; NTU's linguistics talents displayed remarkable teamwork and made exceptional achievements in the team competition. To qualify for the primary training, participants must emerge in the top 10%, with the subsequent stage grooming the top eight for the Asia Pacific Linguistics Olympiad (APLO). NTU's linguistics experts, aided by alumni and former Olympians, provided comprehensive training that went beyond theoretical knowledge, imparting the skills needed to unravel complex linguistic puzzles.



| The 2023 International Linguistics Olympiad was held in Bansko, Bulgaria.

Contrary to common belief, IOL stands apart among high school science Olympiads, blending indigenous language materials into logic puzzles. The competition tests participants' observational, inductive, and deductive skills, as well as their cultural imagination. Past contestants integrated linguistic prowess with diverse disciplines, excelling globally in AI, Computer Science, Mathematics, Medicine, Engineering, and Political Science.

Gao Haoxuan, a three-time IOL Hall of Famer, stresses the invaluable preparation he received at NTU, where linguistic mastery and international camaraderie are fostered. Team competitions, such as the Bunun language-themed escape room designed by NTU students, and enhanced teamwork gave him a competitive edge.

While the Linguistics Olympiad is yet to be fully integrated into Taiwan's talent cultivation framework, annual endeavors receive support from the Department of Pre-college and K-12 Education, LTTC, and other private sponsors. Prof. Hsieh, besides nurturing future linguists, has led initiatives to enhance the allure of linguistics, including producing edutainment videos and founding the Linguists Enthusiast Club at NTU.

Looking ahead to 2025, when the Taiwan Linguistics Olympiad will mark its tenth year, NTU's Linguistics Institute is scheduled to host the 22nd IOL. With an anticipated 300 participants from overseas, the event promises to be a celebration of academic and cultural exchange, showcasing Taiwan's rich and varied linguistic and cultural heritage to the world.