

FED ERC Seminar

Native Versus Non-Native Models for Learning English as an L2: Some Observations on Learners' Competence and Agency

Date & Time: 20 Jan 2016, 13:00 – 14:00 (Light lunch begins at 12:30pm)

Venue: Room G021, Faculty of Education (E33)

Language: English

Audience: UM Staff / Postgraduate Students

Registration: https://umac.au1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6xGLZEhaGep1IH3

Enquiries: Mr. Brendan LEI (FED_Event@umac.mo); Tel: 8822-4120



** Complementary light lunch will be provided.*

Abstract

This talk begins with an anecdote in which I was challenged to clarify what a native speaker is, because I used native English speakers to benchmark Chinese EFL learners in terms of pragmatic behaviours. We move on to look at some key arguments raised by advocates of the non-native model and examine to what extent the arguments are relevant to Chinese learners of English. We use the examples of Ha Jin and college students who wrote English essays for a web-based magazine in Macao to demonstrate L2 speaker's agency and tease out the possibility that the native- and non-native models are complementary rather than conflicting in L2 learning.

Speaker



Prof Xian WANG joined the University of Macau as an assistant professor in 2007. He earned his MA and PhD in applied linguistics at the University of Queensland, and taught English and translation subjects for five years at a tertiary institution in Macau before joining the Department of English of the UM. His initial research interest was in second language acquisition and pedagogy. He focused on investigating L2 learners' pragmatic competence for several years, and proceeded by relating pragmatic research to translation studies and published in this area. He is currently conducting research projects that use a contrastive approach to investigate differences between Chinese and English in terms of cohesive devices and other discourse properties, using both comparative and parallel corpora. He is also inspired by social theories, which open new horizons for looking at contrastive linguistics and translation studies.