

English Language and Linguistics Faculty Research Interests



Jacee Cho

I was a Russian language teacher (but I am a native speaker of Korean) before I went to the University of Iowa to study Second Language Acquisition. There are many different theoretical approaches to research on second language acquisition. My research focuses on learnability problems within the framework of generative linguistics, or the theory of Universal Grammar. I am interested in how expressions of definiteness are interpreted and acquired in a second language. I am currently working on a multidirectional study (English-Russian-Korean) on the acquisition of definiteness. I would like to work with students who are interested in investigating second language acquisition of syntax and semantics using psycholinguistic methodologies. I teach courses in second language acquisition, first language acquisition, and syntax.



Thomas Purnell

The problems I find fairly interesting have to do with how sounds go from some abstract command to an utterance to a discourse structure in the middle of conversation between two social actors. In other words, I am especially keen on investigating variation in sounds related to phonology, phonetics, sociophonetics, accent, dialectology, etc. My training is as a theoretical phonologist interested in the interaction of tone and stress. Along the way, through work with John Baugh and Bill Idsardi (see our 1999 article in the *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*), I became equally interested in the entire speech chain, from distinctive features to articulatory variation and how that variation is tied to social groups. This interest has carried over to my collaborative work on the *Wisconsin Talk* (2013, UW Press) with Joe Salmons (German) and Eric Raimy (English). Students I enjoy working with are those that are keen on investigating dialect variation and how variation is influenced by distinctive features, enhancement and social knowledge. Additionally, I encourage students to balance archival recordings (e.g., DARE recordings) with contemporary recordings. My courses range from phonology and grammar classes, to courses on dialects and variation. Recent seminars include “English Vowels” (Sp. ‘14), “Labov” (Sp. ‘13) and “English Stress and Poetic Metrics” (F ‘11).



Eric Raimy

I like sounds and thinking about how they are used in human language. I especially like to think about how sounds are ordered and represented in the human brain but am interested in almost any aspect of sound in human language. Before I came to UW-Madison most of my research focused directly on reduplication and representations of linear order. Although I still work on these topics, I am now an active member of the Wisconsin Englishes Project collaborating with Joseph Salmons (German) and Thomas Purnell (see above) and focus on documenting and analyzing variation in local language varieties here in Wisconsin. See our edited volume *Wisconsin Talk: Linguistic Diversity in the Badger State* (2013, UW Press). I believe in a pragmatic eclecticism in theories and methods in the approach to phonology which is one of the guiding principles for my edited volumes with Charles Cairns (CUNY Emeritus) on the syllable, *Handbook of the Syllable* (2011, Brill) and the segment, *The Segment in Phonetics and Phonology* (2015, Wiley).



Anja Wanner

I'm a syntactician by training and love to discuss all things grammar, especially the relationship between form and meaning. I have published books on syntactic and semantic verb classification, the role of syntax in analyzing textual genres, and the form and function of the English passive. More recently, I have become interested in the development of prescriptive ideas about grammar, which is also the topic of my current book project, entitled "Bad Grammar." I am interested in supervising projects that deal with any aspect of verb syntax, synchronic or diachronic, and the development of grammatical and textual norms in written language, including genres of computer-mediated communication. Courses that I teach include "The Structure of English," "English Syntax," "English Words: Grammar, Culture, Mind," and "English Grammar in Use," which also serves as an introduction to corpus-linguistic methods.



Richard Young

I was born and grew up in London and, after graduating from Oxford with a degree in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics, I taught in Italy and Hong Kong before settling in the United States in 1983. My Ph.D. is from the University of Pennsylvania and my dissertation was the first extension of quantitative variation theory to interlanguage. Since then, my abiding research passion has been to understand the relationship between the use of language and the social contexts that language reflects and creates. I have always seen that relationship as dynamic and reflexive, and my research has focused on change—how newcomers learn to participate in the practices of a new community. My research has resulted in four books: *Variation in Interlanguage Morphology* (1991), *Talking and Testing* (1998), *Language and Interaction* (2008) and *Discursive Practice in Language Learning and Teaching* (2009). I have published over 60 articles in journals and anthologies and I serve on the editorial boards of three major journals.

Here in UW-Madison’s English Department I teach graduate courses in second language acquisition, research methods, pragmatics, and language in society, as well as an introduction to the linguistics of English for undergraduates. During 2005–6, I served as President of the American Association for Applied Linguistics and chaired the 14th World Congress of Applied Linguistics in Madison. Far from home, I have held visiting professorships in Germany, Sweden, China, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore and I served as consultant to Educational Testing Service in Princeton during the major redesign of the TOEFL test.