

## **‘It’s kind of like a middle ground’: Students’ strategic management of silence in multicultural group work.**

Lou Zhang, *University of Warwick*

Silence has been listed as a major challenge in multicultural group work (MGW) and the students identified as ‘silent’ in multicultural classrooms are likely to be labelled with culture or language-related evaluation. In this talk, I will report some initial findings of my PhD project which explores how silences in MGW work in terms of turn-taking and sequence organisation. Findings reveal that silences in MGW are relevant to various local contingencies at an interactional level and can be employed by the speakers as a resource for specific interactional purposes. The study has shed light on how silences are repaired, managed and manipulated as locally derived phenomena instead of a homogeneous status of non-participation. I will argue that interpretations of silence should be grounded in local contexts of interaction rather than automatically associated with macro-level social factors.



**Language. Culture. Matters.**

Applied Linguistics Seminar Series, every Wednesdays, 16:00– 17:00

### **About the speaker**



I am a PhD student at the Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick. My research interests include intercultural communication, classroom interaction and conversation analysis. More specifically, my current project investigates silence in interactions between students in multicultural group work. Before starting my PhD, I was an English language teacher to young learners in China. As a graduate teaching assistant, I have assisted the teaching of MA modules at the department. I am also a facilitator in student opportunity team and I support the delivery of intercultural training workshops at the university.

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Applied Linguistics Seminar Series, Wednesday 23 February, **16-17h (UK Time)**

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