

Vienna Informatics Living Lab
Educational Adventures & Creative Learning
TU Wien, Faculty of Informatics
Institute Information Systems Engineering

Guest Lecture

The Future of Disruptive Innovation in Global Language MOOCs Education on edX

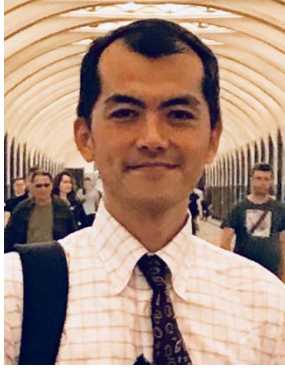
Dr Haohsiang Liao
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Tuesday July 23, 2019, 11:15 - 12:15
Zemanek Saal, TU Wien, Favoritenstraße 11, Groundfloor

Abstract

This talk presents MandarinX, an organization providing a premier Chinese language learning experience online in partnership with edX, a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) provider founded by Harvard and MIT. As of May 2019, MandarinX has experienced high demand with an enrollment of 282,286 learners across five in-house designed and developed MOOC courses: First Steps in Chinese, Basic Mandarin Series: Level One, Two, Three and Business Chinese Series: Mandarin Chinese for Business. The main missions of MandarinX are: (1) to provide a high-quality online language learning environment that is conducive to language acquisition through strong learner-learner and learner-instructor interactions; (2) to bridge the gap between cultures by introducing different facets of Chinese life correlating with corresponding materials.

This talk focuses on the presenter's leading role in the pedagogical design of MandarinX, including print, audio, video, and digital. The presenter will introduce each of the components in detail and how these components facilitate the learning cycle of learners. Additionally, the presenter will address the following aspects: (1) the production of language MOOCs, including materials development and video productions, (2) three key elements for successful language MOOCs, (3) topic selections and pedagogical manifestation of language MOOCs, and (4) the evaluation of learners of language MOOCs. Lastly, the presenter aims to combine MandarinX courses and an online speech recognition and immediate feedback tool that provides the learners with immediate and quantitative feedback about accuracy on pronunciations, tones and intonations. This tool also assists learners in identifying and focusing on their actual deficiencies and based on their individual performance, guides them in real time through individualized training, drills and a road to improvement. The presenter argues that while language MOOCs have taken learning opportunities far beyond the traditional limitations of classrooms, the next frontier of innovations in teaching foreign languages lays in providing immediate and tailor-made feedback for individual learners.



Dr. Haohsiang Liao is the Director of Chinese Language Program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Before joining MIT in 2013, he has taught Chinese at Williams College and Harvard University. Dr. Liao has published and co-authored several Chinese language textbooks for learners across various levels. Additionally, his entry, “Chinese Language Pedagogy at the University Level in the United States,” is included in the Encyclopedia of Chinese Language and Linguistics published by Brill in 2016. Dr. Liao has been collaborating with the Lincoln Laboratory of MIT on an online speech recognition tool. He is also on the executive team for five MOOC courses on edX: “Mandarin Chinese: First Steps, Level 1-3, and Mandarin Chinese for Business.” Dr. Liao’s areas of expertise are digital language pedagogy, cross-cultural communication, teacher training and evaluation.