

# (Re)defining Advanced Proficiency

HKU Constituent Theme  
Languages, Media & Communication:  
Language in Education & Assessment Seminar Series

Speaker

**Prof James P. Lantolf**

Department of Linguistics & Applied Language Studies  
The Pennsylvania State University, USA



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## Abstract

This presentation, following from the principles laid out in a dialectical approach to second language (L2) learning, makes a case for reuniting language and culture into a dialectical unity, or what Agar (1994) calls 'languaculture'. The consequences of such a move are profound for how we understand and assess L2 proficiency. Two sources of empirical evidence are considered: research on figurative language, including metaphor and metonymy in L2 learning; and the synchronization of language and gesture, in what McNeill (2005) refers to as Growth Point, in particular with regard to how languacultures organize 'motion events'.

**James P. Lantolf** is the George and Jane Greer Professor in Language Acquisition and Applied Linguistics in the Department of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at the Pennsylvania State University. He is also Director of the Center for Language Acquisition and co-Director of CALPER (Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education and Research). He has published over one hundred books, edited volumes, journal articles, book chapters, encyclopedia articles and reviews. His most recent publications include *Sociocultural Theory and the Genesis of Second Language Development* (co-authored with S. L. Thorne), Oxford University Press, 2006; and *Sociocultural theory and L2 development: State-of-the-art, Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, March 2006.

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