

*The Center for East Asian Studies,  
Department of Liberal Studies,  
and Linguistics Program  
present*

## **Dr. Robert Sanders**

*Komatsu University*

*“To mark or not to mark:*

*Just how similar are Chinese dialects*

*in this regard”?*



This presentation reports on an experimental study of the frequency of formal passive and disposal marking in five Chinese dialects — Beijing Mandarin, Taipei Mandarin, Guangzhou Yue, Shanghai Wu and Taiwan Southern Min. Using oral stories and oral responses, the study examines whether usage frequency is dialect-specific or is relatively uniform throughout. The results provide a rather nuanced view of ‘Pan-Chinese’ grammar, i.e. the usual distinction of Northern vs. Southern dialects is not fully predictive of the relative frequency at which the passive and disposal functions are formally marked.

**Robert Sanders** holds a PhD in Linguistics from the University of California at Berkeley (1986) and has previously taught Chinese language and Chinese linguistics at the University of Hawai’i (1986-1988), the Ohio State University (1988-1993), Tohoku University (1998-2004) and the University of Auckland (1993-1998, 2004-2016). He takes up a similar position at Komatsu University in April of this year. His publications include the two textbooks *Fundamental Spoken Chinese* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2009) and *Fundamental Written Chinese* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), as well as journal articles that examine Beijing and Taiwan Mandarin from a variety of linguistic perspectives, including phonetics and phonology, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and cognitive linguistics.

**Thursday, February 8, 2018**

**3:00 PM**

**Bond Hall 217**

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