JACET ELF-SIG SPECIAL LECTURE
Saturday, November 21st
13:00 – 14:30
via Zoom
Register here:
https://forms.gle/J9siqPQuL9hvGhqm8

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Reconceptualizing English as a Lingua Franca through Multimodality and Complexity

Abstract:
In this talk I discuss the importance of reconceptualizing English as a lingua franca (ELF) and new research directions. I focus on two promising areas: (a) integrating multimodality into conceptualizations of ELF and analyses of ELF interactions; and (b) analyzing ELF interactions through complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) perspectives. I begin by introducing an epistemological expansion of ELF, highlighting the importance of incorporating multimodality and CDST for analyzing complex, multimodal interactional practices in ELF contexts. I then illustrate my points by using interactional data from U.S. universities. The first example involves my analyses of multilingual students’ collaborative phenomena at miscommunication moments (Matsumoto, 2018). The data demonstrate that multilinguals skillfully coordinate diverse multimodal resources (e.g., gesture, gaze, material objects) for resolving miscommunication, underscoring the importance of considering multimodality. My second example involves humor sequences in which multilingual students attempt to construct humor when they encounter nonunderstanding. Here the analyses illuminate characteristics of CDST—particularly, emergence and adaptation, and student agency in shifting classroom interactions into something more positive—specifically, they project themselves as competent English users.

Bio:
Dr. Yumi Matsumoto is an assistant professor in the Educational Linguistics division at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. She earned her Ph.D. in applied linguistics from Pennsylvania State University. Her research areas of expertise include English as a lingua franca, multimodality, gesture and L2 learning/development, laughter and humor construction, and applying complex dynamic systems theory for analyzing classroom interactions. Her work has appeared in the Modern Language Journal, Language Learning, TESOL Quarterly, the Journal of English as a Lingua Franca, Journal of Pragmatics, Classroom Discourse, the Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, and Linguistics and Education.