PPD Educational Dialogue module content

In addition to teaching theory and methodology, the course is based around some of the (intersecting) main research areas of the CEDiR (Cambridge Educational Dialogue Research) group. Course participants may be able to join in some of the group’s local activities and benefit from its wide international network. The provisional course structure (with development and reporting of inquiry projects alongside) includes:

• Introduction to key dialogic theorists: This session introduces three core theorists in dialogic theory; namely, Robin Alexander, Neil Mercer and Rupert Wegerif, and looks briefly at the wider research literature in the field. It introduces the philosophies, ethos, pedagogies and practices and of dialogic classrooms and considers how these align with cognitive and psychosocial development theories such as Vygotskian sociocultural theory and Erikson’s identity development theory.

• Introduction to tools for planning teacher inquiries and promoting classroom dialogue: You will be introduced to the extensive Teacher-SEDA and Ed:Talk toolkits which contain a number of specialised, research-informed but practical tools for fostering high quality dialogue and looking at change over time.

• Teacher-student dialogue: Introduction to systematically analysing classroom dialogue for the specific forms revealed as productive for student learning by our large-scale research, including building on or challenging others’ views and active student participation in a supportive classroom atmosphere.

• Student-student dialogue and effective collaboration: In this session we take a closer look at the talk that happens as children learn together. If language and thinking are so inter-linked then how can we maximise the potential of talk in the classroom? We will look at studies from the classroom and look in detail at children’s language and the clues it gives us to their learning processes.

• Analysing classroom talk & nonverbal interaction: In this session we will focus on linguistic features that are specific to different types of spoken language, including the accompanying nonverbal interaction. The basic methodology for analysing spoken interaction will be introduced.

• Multimodal classroom dialogue: In this session we will consider how the multimodal affordances of digital technology can be used to enable, support and transform interaction and dialogue in a variety of educational settings (e.g. online spaces for learning in addition to ‘conventional’ classroom settings) through drawing on ongoing research undertaken at the Faculty of Education.

• Professional dialogue and sharing inquiry outcomes: You will present your inquiry outcomes to course peers and hear about opportunities to link your ongoing development of dialogic approaches to ongoing Faculty projects and an extensive alumni network offering school-to-school learning and resource sharing.

Course team: Sara Hennessy (leader), Farah Ahmed, Anna Cermakova, Riikka Hofmann, Fiona Maine, Louis Major, Alison Twiner