



MASTERCLASS

With Patricia Duff, University of British Columbia

Wednesday 12 November 2014, 15:00-17:30 in DMB, Room GS4

Case study research in applied linguistics: What can case studies of L2 learners tell us?

Case studies have played a crucial and enduring role in theory development in second language learning, bilingualism, and applied linguistics more generally for more than half a century. Despite involving just a small number of research participants or sites (sometimes just one), case studies can be a compelling and powerful means of conveying the richness and complexity of individuals' teaching and learning contexts, as well as their experiences, perspectives, and developmental trajectories (among other themes). From researchers' detailed descriptions and interpretations of individual cases, others can gain a deeper, more holistic understanding of the phenomenon being explored and the factors and meanings associated with it. Case-based methods are pervasive and effective tools in higher education (e.g., in medicine, law, business, social work, political science, and education) for this very reason. In this presentation I discuss current and emerging themes, theoretical constructs, and populations examined in case study research in second, foreign, and heritage language learning in transnational, diasporic, and other multilingual contexts. I then discuss the significance of case studies of language learners for teachers, researchers, and the general public in terms of what they reveal about the challenges, processes, and possibilities associated with contemporary language learning. I also recommend strategies for conducting, interpreting, and reporting findings from case studies in a reflexive, credible, and interesting manner.



Places are limited. If you would like to attend, please email rmk33@cam.ac.uk

Patricia (Patsy) Duff is Professor of Language and Literacy Education and Distinguished University Scholar at the University of British Columbia, where she coordinates graduate programs in Teaching English as a Second Language and Modern Language Education, and co-directs the Centre for Research in Chinese Language and Literacy Education. Her research deals with language/discourse socialization in multilingual contexts, the teaching and learning of Chinese and English as international languages, and qualitative research methods in applied linguistics. Her publications include Case Study Research in Applied Linguistics, Inference and Generalizability in Applied Linguistics (co-edited), Encyclopedia of Language and Education: Vol. 8, Language Socialization (co-edited), special thematic issues of the Canadian Modern Language Review (co-edited), and many articles and chapters.