Key Features of the Course

We encourage original thinking and value 'distributed' knowledge. Our goal is to foster an intellectual community to advance research and scholarship in applied linguistics and languages education.

The course is unique in its design, providing an opportunity for students with different research and professional backgrounds to share expertise and cross-fertilise ideas (e.g. modern language, applied/educational linguistics, community/heritage language, English as a Second/Foreign/Additional Language, and Languages Other Than English or LOTE).

The course has a strong emphasis on research training which culminates in the completion of two 4,000/6,000-word essays in the first two terms (MPhil only) and a 15,000-word thesis which will be submitted in mid-July (for MPhil) or by the end of August (for PGCE-MEd). The thesis entails original empirical research conducted in one, or where appropriate, more cultural contexts. Students are expected to draw on a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches to develop a framework for data analysis.

As a common thread running throughout the course, students will be given individual supervisions as well as group-based support in the planning and analysis of an empirical project of their choice which forms the centre piece of their thesis. MPhil students have an opportunity to work with two supervisors (usually one for Essay 1 and the other for Essay 2 and the thesis) while MEd students work with the same supervisor throughout the year.

Examples of recent thesis topics include:

- □ Social network analysis and second language development during study abroad
- □ Primary pupils' multilingual identity in foreign language learning
- □ Development of language teachers' Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge
- □ Motivational dynamics, positive psychology and third language acquisition
- □ Teacher and peer feedback in CMC collaborative writing tasks
- □ The relationship between foreign language learning and wellbeing
- □ Social media, self-directed learning and second language acquisition
- □ Automated assessment and feedback in L2 writing

The staff and students on the course are all members of the **Second Language Education Group** which hosts a wide range of teaching and research activities in the faculty:

- □ PhD/EdD in Second Language Education (SLE)
- □ MPhil/MEd in Research in Second Language Education (RSLE)
- □ PGCE in Modern Languages (ML)
- □ Cambridge Research in Community Language Education Network (CRiCLE)
- □ We Are Multilingual Initiative (WAM)
- □ Second Language Education Group Seminar Series (SLEG)
- □ Cambridge Masterclasses on Multilingualism, Education and Language Policy
- □ Cambridge Distinguished Lecture Series in Second Language Learning and Teaching

Module 1.

Learning Context: Second Language Learning Theories across Disciplines

In this module we examine two broad strands of theoretical approaches of language learning. In the cognitive and psycholinguistic strand, we look at bilingual cognition, language processing and cross-linguistic influence in SLA in various educational contexts. In the sociocultural and sociolinguistic strand, we examine issues such as language mediation and scaffolding in relation to language development as well as the theme of variation in relation to language use, identity and attitude. Other sub-themes examined in this module include learning strategy, motivation, the role of L1 in L2, and interaction and feedback.

Module 2.

Pedagogical Context: Second Language Classroom Pedagogies across Cultures

In this module we analyse the concept of L2 pedagogy and review key pedagogical approaches that have been dominant in recent years, including Language Immersion, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and processing instruction. We problematise some of the assumptions of these pedagogies and critically debate what constitutes an 'appropriate pedagogy'. Other sessions in this module include Focus-on-Form Instruction, CALL, language teacher cognition and a teaching practicum.

Module 3.

Policy Context: International Perspectives on Language Education Policy and Multilingualism

In this module, we examine various issues in relation to bilingualism and multilingualism in the context of education policy-making and policy-delivery in different countries and regions. The course starts with a discussion of the theoretical and national policy frameworks for language planning. Subsequent sessions move from an analysis of the issues relating to medium of instruction in schools, to analysis of language diversity and multilingual practice in the classroom, and finally to examination of the relationship between language and identity at the individual level. Other sub-themes in this module include study abroad, intercultural education, and language and schooling in development contexts.

Module 4.

Methodological Context: Multiple Approaches to Researching Language, Learning and Education

In this module, we examine various approaches, methods and techniques that are often used to collect and analyse language-related data. This module complements the generic Research Methods Strand (RMS) and aims to consolidate students' knowledge of research and to facilitate the translation of such knowledge into empirical work. Hands-on sessions on statistical analysis and discourse analysis are provided for the students to work with real data. Another aim of the module is to provide opportunities for the students to develop their professional skills and scholarly identity, through participating in research seminars, workshops and presentations.