



ESRC Researcher Development Initiative (RDI - Round 4)
3 year project in advanced research training, May 2010-April 2013
Researching multilingualism, multilingualism in research practice (RES 046-25-0004)

Researching multilingualism: key concepts, methods and issues.

5-9 July, 2010, MOSAIC Centre for Research on Multilingualism, University of Birmingham
First five-day residential course

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

(28 completed forms and follow-up comments)

1. Marketing and publicity.

Q: How did you hear about the residential course?

- From a friend (2)
- From the MOSAIC website (1)
- Via e-mail (3)
- Via the BAAL mailing list (4)
- From the organisers (5)
- Via a school or department in a British university (e.g. Sheffield, Leeds, Lancaster) (3)
- From a colleague (2)
- Via the UKLEF discussion list (2)
- From a supervisor/former supervisor/mentor (4)
- Via the HERA project (3 participants had just been appointed to a project funded by Humanities in the European Area (HERA) and coordinated from the MOSAIC Centre, University of Birmingham (by Professor Adrian Blackledge) (3)

2. Positive features (*organisation and content*)

Q: What were the positive features, in your view?

(Where points were mentioned by several participants – this is indicated below. Points are also illustrated using a selection of the wordings used by individuals, so as to convey the tenor of the remarks)

- There was a good balance between different types of activities [mentioned by 15 participants]. *In the words of one participant: “A satisfying mix of sessions and styles/types”.*
- The course was well organised, the timetable was varied, there was good time-keeping [mentioned by 14 participants]. *In the words of three participants: (1.) “It has been a very*

professionally-guided, well organized course”; (2.) “The work was organised well into manageable chunks”; (3.) “I liked the ‘effective’ timetable”

- The course was informative and interactive, with high quality input and rich contributions from a variety of speakers [mentioned by 10 participants]. *In the words of four participants: (1.) “They [the speakers] have been extremely stimulating and challenging at the same time”; (2.) “All the input was outstanding – truly”; (3.) “I’ve got a lot of useful hints, ideas and inspiration”; (4.) “Hugely engaging with very rich contributions from all participants”.*
- The sessions that combined input with group-work were particularly valuable. [mentioned by 3 participants]. *In the words of two participants: (1.) “They enabled us to reflect on our own work in productive activity-based ways”; (2.) “Well planned, participatory structure”.*
- The readings and reading list were particularly valuable. [mentioned by 3 participants]. *In the words of two of them: (1.) “The reading list provided was extremely useful”; (2.) “Good background reading”.*
- The data workshops were useful for sharing ideas [mentioned by 5 participants]. *In the words of one participant: “The data sessions were a very big highlight for me”.*
- The poster presentations were also valuable. [mentioned by 1 participant]. *As this participant put it: “The poster presentations and data workshops were very useful”.*
- Participants were quite satisfied with the course. Expectations were fully met or exceeded [mentioned by 20 participants]. *In the words of three participants: (1.) “My expectations have been exceeded. I did not expect the sessions to be relevant to me, nor to be so well targeted and carefully designed. I learnt a lot and felt privileged to have the benefit of knowledge and advice from such experts in the field”; (2.) “My expectations were more than met. It was an inspirational week. The presentations were wonderful”; (3.) “Thanks to the whole team for their willingness to share their experiences and for their openness/transparency. I really appreciate this”.*
- Participants found that the course was relevant to their own work [mentioned by 5 participants]. *In the words of three participants: (1.) “This course is important input in theory and methodology for my study”; (2.) I got some ideas about data I have available. Now I plan to undertake a new research project; (3.) “I am excited about now being able to use my new knowledge in my teaching and research”.*
- The course provided an opportunity for networking [mentioned by 6 participants]. *As two of them put it: (1.) “An excellent opportunity for networking and sharing my work with my peers”; (2.) “Very good networking among the course participants and good atmosphere. There’s been a constant ongoing discussion about multilingual matters among participants from breakfast until late dinners”.*
- The members of staff were very friendly and helpful and there was a welcoming atmosphere [mentioned by 10 participants]. *In the words of 2 participants: (1.) “Staff were extremely accessible and helpful, very generous, welcome human contact”; (2.) “Impressive how quickly the staff knew us by name”.*
- It was a confidence-building experience [mentioned by 3 participants]. *In the words of two of them: (1.) I now feel more confident about what I understand by linguistic ethnography and I am pleased to be involved in this innovative contemporary field; (2.) “I feel more confident about my research approach now and how it fits into existing and developing frameworks. This will help me situate my work better in the field.”*
- It would be useful to take part in future events of this kind [mentioned by 4 participants]. *As two participants put it: (1.) “More data workshops might be organised soon. Please make this*

happen; (2.) “Do plan on keeping in touch with course participants. We will value advice on the ethnographic side”.

3. **Areas for improvement** (organisation and content)

Q: Is there anything that could have been improved?

(Where points were mentioned by several participants – this is indicated below. Other points were just raised by one person)

- It would have been useful to have had the programme information further in advance
- Those volunteering data for the data workshops could have been briefed prior to the course about the procedures, format etc.
- More time could have been set aside for each data workshop (e.g. an extra hour) [mentioned by 3 participants]
- More time for discussion would have been welcome [mentioned by 2 participants].
- There could have been more on data analysis [mentioned by 2 participants]
- More time could have been set aside to discuss the readings circulated before the course. [mentioned by 2 participants]
- There could have been some input on theoretical underpinnings.
- Input on different models of Critical Discourse Analysis would have been great.
- The poster session could have come earlier, since it was a way of getting acquainted with each other’s work.
- It would have been useful to have a separate room for the posters to facilitate interaction with the presenters.
- It was not a good idea to schedule a lecture in the last hour of the day. It was difficult to concentrate.
- It might have been good to have some more moving around e.g. activities out on the lawn
- It felt weird to have a course about multilingualism entirely in English...I would have liked to have had some multilingual activities.

4. **Comments received later** (e.g. via e-mail, from two early careers researchers at the University of Luxembourg)

We both very much enjoyed the summer school which continues to inspire us in our work. I am regularly in touch with a bunch of people I met at the summer school and hope to catch up with some of them at Sociolinguistics Symposium 19 in Berlin, later this year.