



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.

4-8 April, 2011, MOSAIC Centre for Research on Multilingualism, University of Birmingham
Second five-day residential course

SUMMARY OF EVALUATIONS

(32 completed forms and further comments)

1. Marketing and publicity.

Q: How did you hear about the residential course?

- Via e-mail (3)
- Through my supervisor (11)
- Via this ESRC project mailing list (1)
- Via the Linguist List (2)
- From the postgraduate student representative in my university department (1)
- Via the University of Birmingham website (1)
- Via the MOSAIC Centre website (2)
- Via a circular from the School of Education, University of Birmingham (3)
- Via the CHILDES network (1)
- From the organisers (2)
- Via the UKLEF discussion list
- From colleagues
- Via the BAAL mailing list (1)
- From a friend
- From publicity included in the delegates' pack for a previous event (the Master Class by Professor Alastair Pennycook)

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)

- The course was well organised and very informative [mentioned by 9 participants]. *In the words of two participants: (1.) “A really good combination of theoretical input, activities and discussion”; (2.) “A great balance between lectures and group activities”.*
- The positive features of the course included the level of research innovation, the quality of the presentations and the student involvement [mentioned by 23 participants]. *In the words of four of them: (1.) “Outstanding content and teaching. World class experts”; (2.) “The talks were interesting and I liked that they were used as a starting point, not an end”; (3.) “Very useful initial lecture on the foundations and theories surrounding multilingualism”; (4.) “The positive features were the composition of the course, consisting of key areas within the field of multilingualism and ‘hands-on’ tasks related to data analysis (data workshops)”.*
- The data workshops were useful for sharing ideas and considering approaches to data analysis [mentioned by 4 participants]. *In the words of one of them: “The data workshops gave the opportunity to work on real practical issues”.*
- The group work led to productive discussion [mentioned by 4 participants]. *Two of them said the following: (1.) “Group activities were a positive feature giving time to discuss and share”; (2.) “I enjoyed sitting in a group of four people and engaging in group activities”.*
- The poster sessions were also valuable [mentioned by 2 participants], *as noted by this participant: “The poster presentations and data workshops allowed me to learn about other research projects”.*
- Most of the participants found that the course was relevant to their own work [mentioned by 4 participants]. *In the words of two of them: (1.) “The course content covered theoretical and methodological issues relevant to my doctoral project”; (2.) “All this information about ethnography is coming at exactly the right time for me (now preparing the ethnographic case studies in my Ph.D. research)”.*
- The members of staff were friendly, open and helpful and created a welcoming atmosphere [mentioned by 11 participants]. *In the words of three participants: (1.) “I appreciated the great openness of every lecturer to discuss multilingualism linked to their own research projects”; (2.) “One positive feature was being able to share different points of view in a comfortable environment”; (3.) “A great environment to ask questions, whatever our stage of research”.*
- The course provided an opportunity for networking and sharing work with peers [mentioned by 14 participants]. *In the words of two of them: (1.) “This has been an excellent opportunity to meet like-minded researchers and learn together from experienced academics”; (2.) “Listening to people’s work and views from different countries was very enlightening”.*
- There is a need to future events of this kind and a research network [mentioned by 4 participants]. *One participant put this as follows: “Establishing some network for researchers working on multilingualism across contexts is very important – to understand this phenomenon (the marvel of multilingualism) better, we would need to start to relate findings across contexts”.*

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 helpful to have had the programme information further in advance [mentioned by 5 participants].

- More time could have been devoted to the poster presentations [mentioned by 2 participants]
- It would also have been useful to have had the poster presentations on the first day or earlier in the week – either with or instead of the ice-breaker session [mentioned by 4 participants]. *As one participant put it: “At the beginning of the week, very brief presentations could be included in the plenary session using the posters, so that you find out very quickly who is doing what and whose research might be relevant to yours – just a suggestion”*
- There could have been more data workshops.
- The management of some of the data workshops could have been a bit better. *This point was made by just one participant who said: “Dominant voices monopolized and I felt very inhibited by this, though I had a lot to say”.*
- More space should be given to discussion [mentioned by 2 participants].
- More attention could have been given to methods of data analysis [mentioned by 2 participants].
- A session on multilingualism in home domains would have been valuable.
- Something on ethical issues would have been welcome.
- Perhaps a little more on issues not strictly related to language learning or education e.g. translation studies, intercultural communication.
- If available, DVDs of research in action would have given another perspective for discussion.

4. **Further comments** (at the end of the course)

- I have really enjoyed every session
- Super week, perfect!
- I really enjoyed the whole week. Well planned and executed. Enriched my knowledge, my thinking and my network. I was happy to meet the team. I am very inspired by your work. *Merci beaucoup!*