Module Title: Multilingualism and Bilingualism

Module Code: LIN6034

Credit Value: 15

Level: 6

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

This course will explore the consequences of the use of two or more languages in an individual or a community. The first half of the course covers individual bilingualism, including experimental research in neurocognition, cognitive advantages or disadvantages of bilingualism, debates over a critical age for language learning, effects of early and late bilingualism, and language attrition. The second half of the course covers aspects of societal bilingualism, including language planning, attitudes, language change through contact, code-switching, and bilingual identity. Throughout the course, the interaction of cognitive and social forces will be emphasised, as will links to linguistic and sociolinguistic theory.

In this module you will learn how to define bilingualism and multilingualism, examining these terms from both a societal and individual perspective. You will learn basic experimental methods which are drawn on when investigating bilingualism and multilingualism, and you will also familiarise yourself with important – and sometimes controversial – questions related to these topics. You will acquire new terminology, such as attrition, L2 acquisition, language planning, attitudes, language change through contact, code-switching, and bilingual identity, which will allow you to discuss these topics and questions in a nuanced way.