

CU.mil Summer School 2026: Researching language/s in education from an ecological and mixed-methods perspective

Blended Intensive Programme

(4 ECTS; 1 June – 3 July 2026, including an onsite week in Vienna from 29 June – 3 July)

Aims:

In recent decades, mixed methods studies have emerged as valuable tools for capturing the multidimensional and dynamic nature of language development. Furthermore, ecological approaches have been shown to be well suited for navigating the complexities inherent in authentic second (SL) and foreign language learning (FLL) as well as content and language integrated learning (CLIL) or English-medium instruction (EMI) classrooms. When combined, mixed methods and ecological perspectives offer a powerful framework for capturing the complexity of classroom language use and generating insights that are pedagogically relevant. Undertaking ecologically framed mixed methods studies is both exhilarating and demanding. In addition to incorporating various data collection instruments, such as assessments, questionnaires, observations and interviews, it is crucial to develop a research project that recognizes the complexity and dynamics of using and/or learning language/s in specific educational contexts. Such work this requires ecologically meaningful planning, ensuring that each method contributes to the study's objectives, and systematic analysis that properly integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches to data material.

As part of this BIP, participants will not only delve into the intricacies of planning, implementing, and analysing ecologically framed mixed methods studies, but also explore their broader implications for different research topics and approaches relevant for investigating language/s in education (SL/FLL, CLIL, EMI). This comprehensive approach also emphasizes how such research can significantly strengthen the collaboration between researchers and other stakeholders, most notably teachers, thus amplifying the potential for impactful educational interventions and thus increasing the ecological validity of classroom-based studies.

We will address questions such as:

- In what ways can I make my language-in-education study more ecologically valid?
- How can I integrate qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve empirical convergence or identify divergence? How can I use “a mixed methods way of thinking” to capture various voices and perspectives in my data?
- How can I properly draw conclusions from my mixed-methods dataset?
- To what extent is teacher-researcher collaboration helpful for my study? How can I foster teacher-researcher collaboration when conducting mixed methods studies?

Additionally, there will be hands-on workshop on various research approaches, such as Design-Based Research, Video-Based Classroom Observation or Qualitative Component Analysis, and a range of research focuses as, for instance, emotions and fluency in language learning, language assessment, bi/multilingual disciplinary literacies in CLIL, or the use of technology in language and CLIL teaching. By attending the workshops of their choice, participants will deepen their theoretical knowledge and develop new skills and competencies of relevance to their own research interests and projects.

Structure

The Blended Intensive Programme (of 4 ECTS) consists of two parts:

June 1-26 (virtual component): All participants share and learn about each other's research projects, and engage in a first round of exchange related to set readings introducing ecologically valid and mixed methods research within educational linguistics.

June 29 – July 3 (onsite component): Summer school at the University of Vienna, consisting of lectures, workshops and project-work sessions. The programme will run from Monday morning till Friday afternoon. More information will follow in due course.

Participants

The Summer School is designed to provide interested researchers in the field of applied linguistics, especially **PhD students**, but also **PostDocs** and **language teachers** from Circle U universities, with a robust methodological foundation to support them in enhancing their research competencies through the exploration of various ecologically valid research designs. To this end, our programme features a combination of informative talks highlighting the latest developments in the field and hands-on sessions covering various research methods and how they can be applied in empirical studies. Additionally, there will be extra sessions encouraging participants to apply these methods to their own research projects, regardless of how far their project has already progressed.

Throughout the Summer School, participants will have the invaluable opportunity to receive specialized feedback, familiarize themselves with practical examples, and actively engage in discussions. While the primary language of the BIP is English, practical applications for other foreign languages will be presented. Researchers working with any foreign language are strongly encouraged to participate, as the diverse linguistic contexts explored will enrich the collective learning experience.

Invited speakers (confirmed):

- Armin Berger (Universität Wien)
- Christiane Dalton-Puffer (Universität Wien)
- Remy Decorte (Université catholique de Louvain)
- Simen Grung (Universitetet i Oslo)
- Julia Hüttner (Universität Wien)
- Fanny Meunier (Université catholique de Louvain)
- Yu Tang (Universität Wien)

Organizing committee and speakers:

- Lisbeth M. Brevik (Universitetet i Oslo)
- Ute Smit (University of Vienna)

- Ferran Suñer (Université catholique de Louvain)

Application

Application will be possible from the 1st to the 28th of February 2026 and will be made available through an online form / [here](#). Everybody interested in participating in the Summer School will be required to briefly describe their (intended) research project(s).

Funding

This Summer School is organised within the framework of the Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme (BIP). Under this framework, participation fees are waived, and students may be eligible for mobility funding (travel and individual support grants). While participation in this summer school is reserved for students taking part under the Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme (BIP), a few places can be added for Circle U staff members. Please check with your home university whether you can join this school under the Erasmus+ BIP scheme / whether you are eligible for Erasmus+ mobility funding.