CLAVE: Critical Approaches to Language Teaching and Learning. Exploring the gap between theoretical approaches and pedagogical implementation

Faculty of Wellbeing Education and Language Studies (WELS)

Call for doctoral projects starting in October 2027

The Open University

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Project description

Project Type

This is a PhD project

Please note that a research proposal aligned with this research project will be required from applicants in addition to an application form.

School

Languages and Applied Linguistics

Unit

Institute of Educational Technology

Members

Dr Mara Fuertes-Gutiérrez	https://profiles.open.ac.uk/mara-fuertes-gutierrez	mara.fuertes-gutierrez@open.ac.uk
Dr Gerry Howley	https://profiles.open.ac.uk/gerry-howley	gerry.howley@open.ac.uk

Aim

Understanding the potential gap between theoretical approaches and practical implementation will help to promote a more inclusive and comprehensive view of the target language for learners. The analysis of the interplay between

perceptions and pedagogical realities also contributes to broader discussions on language ideologies, educational policy, and research-informed curriculum development.

Methodology

CLAVE adopts a qualitative research approach, grounded in an interpretivist research paradigm. Rather than focusing on quantifiable metrics, the aim is to conduct an in-depth exploration of the processes, pedagogical strategies, and institutional influences that shape instructors' discourses and actual engagement with critical pedagogies in the classroom. An interpretivist paradigm recognises that language education is deeply embedded in institutional, ideological and social contexts. Aligned with this approach, data are collected employing instruments such as semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and evaluation of teaching materials.

Contribution

The broader research project will contribute to evaluate how contemporary pedagogical frameworks are translated into educational practice. By examining the relationship between theoretical developments, institutional contexts, and classroom realities, the project will enhance understanding of the factors that facilitate or constrain more inclusive representations of the target language. The findings will inform discussions on language education policy, curriculum design, teacher education, and the implementation of research-informed pedagogical innovation.


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