

Workshop:

## **Fitting the puzzle pieces together: the benefits and challenges of mixed-methods research**

**Tineke Brunfaut, Lancaster University**

The use of mixed-methods approaches has considerably increased in language sciences research in recent years. Mixed-methods research involves the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data within the same study. It is justified by the idea that it combines the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods, that it allows to explore a topic from different perspectives, and that it helps uncover relationships between various aspects and layers of the topic. An important characteristic of mixed-methods approaches is the purposeful integration or linking of the various data strands as part of the data interpretation process. As with any methodological approach, however, the suitability of mixed methods needs to be carefully considered against the research questions. The use of this methodology also presents its own challenges.

In this workshop, we will first look at examples of existing studies that have used mixed methods. We will consider what types of research methods were combined in these studies, and how methodological innovations in the language sciences might have enhanced mixed methods research. We will explore what role the different datasets generated through the different methods played within each study, as well as their accompanying data analyses. We will also look into how the different pieces of information were tied together in each study and how they contributed to answering the study's research questions. Second, we will explore the potential and suitability of mixed-methods approaches to workshop participants' own research. We will discuss challenges you may have experienced in conducting mixed-methods research, questions you may have concerning mixed-methods methodologies, and ideas or suggestions you may have around mixed methods research.