LEVERHULME TRUST DOCTORAL STUDENTSHIP

UCL Institute of Education, University College London, and School of Psychological Science, Birkbeck, University of London are pleased to announce the availability of a fully funded three-year doctoral studentship, starting Spring 2020, to study the cognitive foundations of successful second language speech learning in naturalistic and classroom settings.

This studentship is funded through the Leverhulme Trust Research Grant scheme (https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/). Collaboration between applied linguistics, education and cognitive psychology is the essential feature of the studentship. The studentship is a fully-funded Leverhulme Trust research studentship covering three years of full-time tuition fees at UCL and maintenance (living costs). This project will be jointly supervised by Dr Kazuya Saito, UCL, and Dr Adam Tierney, Birkbeck, University of London.

The successful candidate will commence their PhD on **Spring 2020 (January-April)**. They will hold their studentship in the Department of Culture, Communication and Media, Institute of Education, University College London, and will work in partnership with the School of Psychological Science, Birkbeck, University of London. The studentship is available on a full-time basis only.

The Project
Why are certain individuals talented at learning a second language (L2)? Here we propose the first quasi-experimental study to test our hypothesis that having a good ear, i.e. precisely representing auditory information, predicts the success of L2 speech learning. Participants will be first assessed for their conscious and subconscious sensitivity to various non-verbal sounds via behavioural and neurophysiological instruments. A series of quasi-experimental studies will then elucidate how participants with varied auditory profiles improve their L2 speech when engaged in different types of speech training methods from the field of L2 education.

For more details, see http://kazuyasaito.net/

Duration of Studentship
3 Years Full Time

Stipend
£17,009 per annum + Fees £5,210
For more information on the budget of studentship at UCL, see https://www.ucl.ac.uk/research-services/research-studentships/studentship-budgets-figures-201819

Eligibility
Applicants may come from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, but it is expected that the successful applicant will be able to explain clearly the relationship between their existing education and experience and the topic of the studentship, and indicate how their present research interests relate to the proposed topic area. Students who are able to show evidence of experience working on applied linguistics, phonetics, speech sciences, or cognitive psychology are particularly welcome to apply. Candidates should:

1. Hold a good quality Master's-level degree. We recognise that research students approach a doctorate from various different routes, and that not all research students complete a research preparation Master's-level degree first. Doctoral applicants who have not completed a research preparation Master's-level degree are therefore eligible to apply for Leverhulme Trust funding, providing they can demonstrate that they have equivalent experience that has prepared them for doctoral research.

2. Be **a resident of the UK or European Economic Area (EEA)**. For more details of the UCL fee policy for UK/EU students, see https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/pay-your-fees/fee-schedules/student-fee-status#eligibility
(see also https://www.ucl.ac.uk/brexit/support-ucl-community/faqs-students)

3. A working knowledge of programming would be an advantage.

For informal enquiries relating to the studentship, please contact Dr Kazuya Saito, k.saito@ucl.ac.uk.

Closing date for applications: **4th December 2019**

Interview date: **9th December 2019** (20 Bedford Way, or via Skype)

How to Apply
Please clearly mark your applications **Leverhulme Trust Doctoral Studentship**

The application should include:

1. The applicant's Curriculum Vitae.

2. A covering letter including a statement concerning eligibility for this studentship.

3. A research proposal of 1000 words. This should identify how your current academic interests relate to the doctoral project, and explain your reasons for wishing to undertake this research. The research proposal should also indicate critical contexts for the project. It can also outline how you might wish to refine the project so as to meet specific research aims of your own.

4. Electronic copies of transcripts of relevant studies and – where appropriate – a letter from their course coordinator predicting the expected degree result (for those who still have to complete their current Master's-level programme).

5. Two reference letters.

Submission of Application

All application documents should be electronically sent to Kazuya Saito at k.saito@ucl.ac.uk. Your referees need to email their references directly. Only complete applications received, with both references, by the deadline, can be considered. Following the interview, the successful candidate will be invited to make a formal application to the UCL Research Degree programme.