Educational Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI)

Conference 2021

Possibilities in Education: Re-imagining Connections with People, Purpose and Place
25-26 March 2021, Online

www.esai.ie | @esai_irl | #esai21

Conference Booklet
Dear friends and colleagues,

On behalf of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland, I wish to warmly welcome each of you to the ESAI Conference 2021 - our second on-line conference. As we have passed the one-year mark since the beginning of COVID-19, we can look back on that year as a period of challenge and at times anxiety for the health and wellbeing of our families, friends, colleagues, and our students, but also a time of learning and growth. In our naivety, we had thought that this pandemic would be a short-lived event. However, we now know that COVID-19 is a deadly and virulent virus and that living with and through a pandemic has challenged every assumption that we make about our daily family and academic lives.

Academic communities across the globe have embraced the changes with superb professionalism, good grace, flexibility, adaptability and above all optimism. The transition to emergency remote teaching was immediate, and for many this pivot has marked the beginning of a digital transformation within their institutions. As we begin planning for our next academic year, we now consider how we will capitalise on the digital confidence demonstrated by staff and students during the pandemic, as well as re-imagining how we will re-establish connections with people, purpose and place in a post-pandemic environment. This call to examine and re-imagine the possibilities in education is the theme of this year’s conference.

It has been a very busy six months since our last conference. A number of our long-standing ESAI executive completed their terms in September 2020, most notably Enda Donlon (outgoing President), John Walsh (Secretary) and Eamon Costello (Treasurer). We wish to thank our outgoing officers for their outstanding leadership and commitment to the Association. We have refreshed the executive over recent months through filling four co-option places, conscious of the need to expand the geographical reach, institutional representation, and the balance of established and early career educationists on our committee. We are looking forward to electing a new member to the executive at the AGM on Friday, and we thank all the members who have put themselves forward for election.

This year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the publication of our journal, *Irish Educational Studies*. We congratulate our recently appointed Editor, Dr Tony Hall on his work over the last six months and recognise with gratitude the contribution of editors, reviewers and authors throughout the last four decades who have been pivotal to the success of the Journal. This year, we have successfully renegotiated the contract with Taylor and Francis, and have secured
additional benefits for our members. As a consequence, all members of the Association will receive a hard copy of Irish Educational Studies, a discount of 20% on all Taylor and Francis books, and complimentary online access to Educational Studies. It is also important to note that, as the ESAI is a member of the European Education Research Association, all individual members of the ESAI can secure a discount when attending the ECER conference. The ESAI has continued to build relationships with other research associations, and this week we warmly welcome our colleagues from SERA, BERA and NERA to the conference.

This year we have held our conference attendance fee at €20 and are donating half of this sum to an all-Ireland charity. Having consulted with our sister organisation, SCoTENS, we selected Camara Education, an international not-for-profit charity whose mission is to use technology to improve education in low-income communities, as the recipient of the donation being made on behalf of the membership. Founded in 2005 in Dublin, Camara has been installing computer labs in Africa for over 15 years – 10,500 schools – professional development for 55,000 teachers and enabling 3.5 million children to become digitally literate.

Our AGM is scheduled for Friday morning at 11.15am and we extend an invitation to all members to attend. During this meeting, we are taking the opportunity to recognise the lifetime contribution to the ESAI of Prof Dónal Mulcahy. A founding member of the Association, Dónal has been involved with the ESAI across six decades, and was president of the Association from 1980-1982. Since then Dónal, a successful author and educational leader, has continued to engage with the ESAI, being re-elected to the executive in 2017. We are delighted this year, to celebrate Dónal’s unique contribution to the ESAI.

Holding a second virtual conference within such a short period has been very demanding, and the members of the executive have invested great energy and commitment in preparing for the conference; I wish to thank all the members, in particular, the IT leaders amongst us Aimee Brennan and Máirín Glenn, who have been ably assisted by Alison Egan and the IT Team at Marino Institute of Education.

I am delighted at the richness of the papers and symposia on offer this year, and I hope that you have an enjoyable conference.

Prof. Teresa O’Doherty
ESAI President (2020-2022)
ESAI Conference 2021 Theme

Possibilities in education:
Reimagining Connections with People, Purpose and Place

‘The possibilities are numerous once we decide to act and not to react’
– George Bernard Shaw

Teaching has always been about the art of the possible – working to bring out the ‘possible lives’ of our students and to push the boundaries of the existing order of things (Rose, 1995). In her paper, ‘Teaching as Possibility: A Light in Dark Times’ (Journal of Pedagogy, Pluralism and Practice, 1997), Maxine Greene explores the essence of communality in learning, and how identity is negotiated through our connectedness and membership. She cites Dewey (Art as Experience, 1931) and Arendt (Men in Dark Times 1968), who considered ‘the problem of impersonality and empty sociability’ taking over from community (p.20).

Although written decades before the advent of COVID-19, Greene’s discussion of ‘empty sociability’ (1997, p.20) has a new resonance for us. In 2020 we have all experienced an intensified and accelerated introduction of on-line and remote teaching and learning; zoom keeps us connected, and modern technology has assured continuity of educational provision. Technology has proven to be a powerful tool, facilitating continued teaching, learning and research. However, the virtual platforms often leave us and our students feeling isolated and disconnected.

During these months we have learned many lessons about education. Yes, we realise that we can achieve much on-line and remotely, and that geographic boundaries need not limit our capacity to engage with one another. We can reach people, participate in programmes and conferences, without ever leaving our desks. But we have also gained a new appreciation of the importance of people, place, and context of education – we know that learning together, with and from one
another is key; that the social aspects, the fun and happiness in community, in connecting with others, in stimulating and live encounters, enrich our teaching and learning. We realise that schools, colleges, and universities, are valuable sites of engagement, and that they play a pivotal role in the education, welfare, and well-being of a nation.

The pandemic has provided us with an unanticipated and exceptional opportunity; we can decide to return to the pre-Covid normal, or we can use this event as an opportunity for renewal and reimagining education. We work with so many inherited aspects of education; are we now ready to embrace a renaissance in education, and to grasp the opportunity to refashion and re-envision education?

The Educational Studies Association of Ireland invites scholars, practitioners, policymakers, emerging researchers, and interested others from Ireland and beyond to come together at our virtual conference on 25-26 March 2021, and to reflect upon, debate and discuss the possibilities in education. The rich concept of ‘possibility’ welcomes broad interpretation and interrogation, and we invite papers that consider it through a variety of lenses which include (but are not limited to) sociological, pedagogical, historical, religious, ethical, technological, philosophical, political, and economic. The ESAI 2021 Conference will continue our strong tradition of providing a forum for the dissemination of research that considers past, present, and potential contributions and influences at local, national, and international levels.

ABSTRACTS

All abstracts, biographies, affiliations, etc., have been transferred verbatim from the online Abstract Submission System.

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ESAI 2021 Keynote 1 Address – Professor Jan Derry

Centre for Philosophy of Education at the UCL Institute of Education

2pm-3pm Thursday 25th March 2021

The possibility of agency: examining assumptions about knowledge through an Inferentialist lens
– Prof. Jan Derry

Jan Derry is co-Director of the Centre for Philosophy of Education at the UCL Institute of Education. Her research focuses on philosophical psychology, the connection between epistemology and pedagogy, and the nature of professional expertise and judgment. She has taught in the post-16 sector and worked in Teacher Education before developing her research in Philosophy of Education. She led the European funded Philosophy of Technology-enhanced Learning Special Interest Group for the Kaleidoscope Network of Excellence, while based at the London Knowledge Lab. She recently worked on the application of the semantic theory of Inferentialism to the teaching of probability, a research project funded by the Swedish National Research Agency. Her book Vygotsky, Philosophy and Education, (2013) continues her work addressing the connection between epistemology and pedagogy.

Professor Derry’s keynote address will take place at ESAI2021 on Thursday 25th March. It is entitled: The possibility of agency: examining assumptions about knowledge through an Inferentialist lens.

Knowledge and epistemic access have come to the fore in recent discussion yet on both sides of the debate agency has not been at the centre of attention. Accounts stressing the importance of knowledge and facts on the one side and arguments emphasising the meaning making of learners on the other, neglect the significance of individual assent. In my talk I will consider aspects of the heated debate around knowledge and attempt to show how attending to learners’ meaning making is not at odds with a secure and robust account of a knowledge domain. But to appreciate this, we need to consider the limitations of existing presuppositions. One aspect of this neglect is a failure to appreciate the significance of norms and their role in the mediation of human action: the consequences of this neglect affect thought about learning and teaching.
ESAI 2021 Keynote 2 Address – Professor Gert Biesta

Professor of Public Education in the Centre for Public Education and Pedagogy at Maynooth University.

12pm-1pm Friday 26th March 2021

What’s the point of education? Untimely reflections in the age of learning
– Prof. Gert Biesta

Gert Biesta (www.gertbiesta.com) is Professor of Public Education in the Centre for Public Education and Pedagogy at Maynooth University, and Professor of Educational Theory and Pedagogy at the Moray House School of Education and Sport of the University of Edinburgh. He currently holds visiting professorships at the University of Agder (Norway) in the departments of education, arts and mental health, and at the University of the Arts in Helsinki. He writes about the theory of education and the theory and philosophy of educational research, with a broad interest in questions of curriculum, teaching and teacher education. In 2020 he became a member of the national curriculum review committee in the Netherlands.

Recent books include Obstinate Education: Reconnecting School and Society (Brill, 2019); Educational Research: An Unorthodox Introduction (Bloomsbury, 2020) and World-Centred Education: A View for the Present (to be released in July 2021 by Routledge).

Professor Biesta’s keynote address will take place at ESAI2021 on Friday 26th March. It is entitled: What’s the point of education? Untimely reflections in the age of learning

In this presentation I would like to go back to a rather fundamental question, ‘what is the point of education?’ Nowadays we often hear that education ought to be ‘all about learning,’ but this idea misses the point of education in a number of ways. In my presentation I will try to argue that the central and in a sense first concern of all educational work should be for the possibility for our students to exist in and with the world as subjects of their own life, and not as objects of the wishes and desires of others – be they other individuals or groups or such entities as ‘the economy’ or ‘the state.’ I will explore what such a ‘world-centred’ account of education looks like, how it can be justified, and how it might make a critical intervention in contemporary discourses, policies, and practices.
ESAI Lifetime Achievement Award 2021 -
Professor Donal Mulcahy

D. G. Mulcahy, CSU Professor Emeritus in the School of Education and Professional Studies at Central Connecticut State University, and formerly Professor and Chair of Education at University College Cork, is the 2021 recipient of the ESAI Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of six decades of engagement and leadership in the association. His relationship with the association dates back to 1976, where he proposed the idea of the association at a conference organised by Jim McKernan and John Marshall in University College Galway.

Donal’s blueprint for a national educational association was subsequently taken up by a working party which included John Marshall, Jim McKernan, John Coolahan, Sean O’hEigeartaigh and which resulted in the organisation of a conference the following year at University College Cork at which a draft constitution was presented and adopted and the association formally founded.

A founding member of the association, Donal served on the executive for six years, and was elected president of the association in 1980, a position he held until 1982.

Donal was the author of a number of seminal works during this period including *Curriculum and Policy in Irish Post-Primary Education* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1981) and *Irish Educational Policy: Process and Substance* (co-edited with Denis O’Sullivan) (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1989). He served two terms on the Governing Body of Thomond College and he was also the recipient of two Fulbright awards.

Donal left Ireland for Eastern Illinois University in 1989 after which he published *Knowledge, Gender and Schooling: The Feminist Educational Thought of Jane Roland Martin* (Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 2002), *The Educated Person* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), and *Gen Ed* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Sense, 2021) among other works. His commitment to the ESAI did not wane, however, and he returned regularly for the annual conference, presenting papers and publishing articles in the association’s journal *Irish Educational Studies*. After a hiatus of almost four decades from the executive, Donal was re-elected to the executive in 2017.

Colleagues recall Donal’s passion for the association, his commitment to education as a discipline and to the philosophy of education in particular. Always scholarly, collegial and insightful, Donal set the highest standards for himself, his students and his fellow educationists. At the same time, Donal was always available to students and colleagues alike to share his wisdom and insight. A wonderful colleague, teacher, philosopher and mentor, Donal’s unique contribution to the ESAI will resonate for generations to come.

*Professor Judith Harford*
A number of colleagues have shared their memories of Donal:

I am delighted to congratulate Professor Donal Mulcahy - the recipient of the 2021 ESAI Lifetime Achievement Award. I first met Donal at the ESAI conference in the University of Ulster, Coleraine in 1978. He had been one of the founder members of the ESAI two years earlier and for forty-five years he has continued to be associated with ESAI. His book Curriculum and Policy in Irish Post-Primary Education which was published in 1981 was the first significant analysis of curriculum policy in Ireland and I read it avidly at the time and was excited by the philosophical framework which it posited. In 1984 as a member of the Curriculum and Examinations Board and chair of the sub-committee charged with reviewing the Junior Cycle curriculum, I invited Donal to discuss with the committee how his philosophical approach could inform the junior cycle review and reform. I have enjoyed his many publications since that date. Professor Aine Hyland

I am delighted to salute and honour the work of Professor Donal G. Mulcahy, Distinguished Professor (Emeritus) who has been my friend, educational colleague and mentor since 1975. After the First Postgraduate Education Conference was held in Galway in 1976, organized by John Marshall and Jim McKernan with university support from Professor Eustas O Headain, it was Professor Mulcahy who offered leadership and support in requesting to hold the second meeting (after the successful Galway 76 Meeting) at University College Cork. It was there that Donal suggested that an Educational Studies Association of Ireland be organized. It is my understanding that the eight elected members of the Executive of ESAI co-founded the Association. Donal Mulcahy has been a warm, caring and inspirational colleague over all the years. What strikes me as special about Donal is his deep determination and care for educational studies in Ireland. In the tradition of Professor John Coolahan, Dr. Padraig Hogan, and other founder members who have continuously served and those who have taken up this remit are also acknowledged. Professor Donal G. Mulcahy has been a persistent and faithful member constantly caring for, and encouraging, members of the ESAI. I understand that in his retirement he has served on the Executive Board. That is a ‘Champion’ for the ESAI. But there is one further character virtue I would like mention—it is his personal and unswerving loyalty and commitment to help the ESAI succeed. In fact, Donal was the principal person who arranged the ESAI Constitution. This man has a love for education, especially as witnessed by his many published books on education and policy in Ireland. I also now understand he has published a novel depicting a professor’s life in teaching. Bravo, Donal! On St. Patrick’s Day, 2021, you make all of Ireland and our international colleagues proud of Ireland, your stalwart work with setting up the Educational Studies Association and its internationally acclaimed journal Irish Educational Studies. We all owe a great collegial debt to you Donal. Your love for education is contagious; and we love you for this. I salute Prof. Donal G. Mulcahy as a true champion of Irish education. Professor Jim McKernan

I am one of a very small number of members of ESAI who was taught by Donal as undergraduates in Limerick back in 1973 and 1974, when he was Head of Education at Thomond College. Over that period one of my main areas of interest became education studies. I am in no doubt that I can attribute that primarily to the influence of a then very youthful Donal – he looked no older than many of us. We were delighted when he arrived on the scene to discover that not only was he from Cork City (which was almost a guarantee that he would be good humoured) but that following undergraduate and post-graduate studies in Ireland, he had studied for a Masters and PhD degree in education theory in the USA and had already been an academic there and in Canada. I remember him for many things; joining us students in the refectory for chats, playing basketball with us, and even occasionally asking us to push his car when it would not start. Above all else, however, he was an inspirational lecturer who instilled in me a great interest in history of education, philosophy of education and curriculum studies. Donal proved to be my saviour in my obsession with trying to establish in my head connections between all of the academic areas I was studying. After we both left Ireland in 1989 we lost touch with each other for quite a few years but reconnected through attending annual ESAI conferences at which it always a delight to catch up with him as his enthusiasm for education shines as bright as ever. Professor Tom O’ Donoghue

Donal was my first educational theory lecturer at what was then the National College of Physical Education. I have many fond memories of that time and his significant contributions to my development as
a reflective teacher and academic. Donal was about five years out from his own PhD at that time. He seemed a seasoned educational theorist even at that stage. I remember the written lecture notes on the lectern --- no slides, power-point, or even overhead transparencies. He walked totally immersed in his ideas over and back across the front of the room providing what was to me and many others a fascinating narrative about some educational concept or theory. I used to sit enthralled at each of these sessions. The ideas were all new to me and I was totally captured by his ability to build an intriguing narrative and ask insightful questions during the story to ensure we engaged. I have recently enjoyed reading his novel Gen Ed and Dr Kelly (the protagonist in the book) reminded me very much of Donal at the height of his powers engaging students in Socratic pedagogy. In retirement, Donal was still full of enthusiasm for learning and for former colleagues and students. I have always appreciated his interest in and support for Irish education, Irish academics, and in my case for Physical Education as a critical part of a liberal education. As one of the original founders of the Irish Educational Studies Association, this recognition for Donal is more than deserving. Thank you Donal for all your contributions to Irish Education. You have left a marvelous legacy to those who follow in your footsteps.

Professor Mary O’ Sullivan

I met Donal for the first time at the gathering of likeminded educationists which took place in UCG in 1975 at which the idea for the ESAI was first proposed by Donal. He was a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education at UCC. The papers read were subsequently published in the “Proceedings” of that conference. At this Galway meeting it was decided, given Donal’s strong advocacy, to hold another conference in UCC during the following year (1976) and before this the possibility of forming an association for educational research would be explored. Thus, Donal was centre stage in the founding of the ESAI. My strong memory of Donal at the Cork conference is of an enthusiast driven to involve the press in what he saw (rightly) as a historic educational development in Ireland. I can still see him in the Science Building of UCC at the pay phone putting forward in the strongest words the importance of this new development. In those days “the press” almost certainly meant the Cork Examiner and the Irish Times. I doubt if he had the small change to ring any more! In 1980 I was appointed as a College Lecturer in UCC and thus worked closely with Donal who was now the Professor of Education. His position as Professor, his research and his teaching were all used to further the aims and objectives of the ESAI. His support and enthusiasm have never waned throughout the years. In my view he is a very worthy recipient of this award.

Professor Francis Douglas

I remember attending ESAI for the first time in 2012 at the 40th anniversary of the organization’s inception. It was a great honor for me to finally be a part of the organization. I was delighted to partake in the 40th anniversary of the conference along with my sister, Cara and my wife, Judith Madera, who also gave papers. My dad always maintained a strong connection to ESAI and the many people involved not only in its creation, but also those who continued to ensure its longevity. I met many of the old guard through the conference, people whose names I had heard for years and even remember as a child. In particular, Jim McKernan, Tom O’Donoghue and Johnny Coolahan come to mind. Dad believed that organizations such as the ESAI were vital to a vibrant and evolving academic and philosophical landscape.

Assoc Professor Donal E. Mulcahy
**ESAI Executive 2020-2021**

**President**
Prof. Teresa Doherty (Marino Institute of Education)

**Vice-President**
Dr. Celine Healy (Maynooth University)

**Secretary**
Dr. Máirín Glenn (NEARI)

**Treasurer**
Prof. Patricia Mannix McNamara (University of Limerick)

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Dr. Aimie Brennan (Marino Institute of Education)
Prof. Judith Harford (University College Dublin)
Dr. Aideen Hunter (Ulster University)
Dr. Conor McGuckin (Trinity College Dublin)
Prof. Donal Mulcahy (Central Connecticut State University)
Dr. Máire Ní Riordáin (University College Cork)
Dr. Justin Rami (Dublin City University)

**General Editor IES**
Dr. Tony Hall (NUI Galway)

**Presidents of ESAI**

                  2020-2022: Teresa Doherty
List of Conference Locations 1976-2021

1976 University College Galway; Pre-Associational Graduate Conference
1977 University College Cork: Inaugural ESI Conference
1978 University of Ulster, Coleraine
1979 University College Dublin
1980 Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick
1981 Trinity College Dublin
1982 Queen’s University Belfast
1983 St Patrick’s College, Maynooth
1984 Carysfort College of Education
1985 University College Cork
1986 University College Galway
1987 Carysfort College of Education
1988 Stranmillis College Belfast
1989 University College Dublin
1990 Thomond College of Education, Limerick
1991 St Patrick’s College, Drumcondra
1992 University College Dublin
1993 National University of Ireland Maynooth
1994 Mary Immaculate College of Education
1995 University College Cork
1996 Marino Institute of Education
1997 University College Galway
1998 Stranmillis College Belfast
1999 University College Dublin
2000 National University of Ireland Maynooth
2001 Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick
2002 Trinity College Dublin
2003 St Mary’s College Belfast
2004 National University of Ireland Maynooth
2005 University College Cork
2006 National College of Art and Design, Dublin
2007 Cavan Crystal Hotel
2008 Day’s Hotel Galway
2009 Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny
2010 Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk
2011 Church of Ireland College of Education, Dublin
2012 River Lee Hotel, Cork
2013 Radisson Blu Hotel, Limerick
2014 Sheraton Hotel, Athlone
2015 Maynooth University & Carton House, Maynooth
2016 National University of Ireland Galway & Radisson Blu Hotel
2017 University College Cork & The River Lee Hotel
2018 University College Dublin & Talbot Stillorgan Hotel
2019 St Angela’s College, Sligo & Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo
2020 Online, hosted by Institute of Education, Dublin City University
2021 Online, hosted by Marino Institute of Education

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## Editors of *Irish Educational Studies*

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<td>2020</td>
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<td>Irish Educational Studies</td>
<td>Tony Hall (General Editor) Delma Byrne, Audrey Bryan, Karl Kitching, Déirdre Ní Chroínín, Catriona O’Toole (Book Reviews and Social Media Editor)</td>
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The Educational Studies Association of Ireland expresses its gratitude to the following Corporate Members for their support of the Association during 2021. Corporate Members are listed in alphabetical order.

- ASTI (Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland)
- GMIT Letterfrack (Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology)
- Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (INTO)
- MIE (Marino Institute of Education)
- Mary Immaculate College (MIC)
- NCAD (National College of Art and Design)
NCI (National College of Ireland)

NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment)

PDST (Professional Development Service for Teachers)

TCD (Trinity College Dublin)

TUI (Teachers’ Union of Ireland)

UL (University of Limerick)
NUIG (National University of Ireland Galway)

UCD (University College Dublin)

NAPD (National Association of Principals & Deputy Principals)

Maynooth University (NUIM)

LIT (Limerick Institute of Technology)

UCC (University College Cork)
Educational Studies Association of Ireland
Cumann Léann Oideachais na hÉireann
Annual General Meeting 2021
Friday, 26 March 11.15 am Online

AGENDA

1. Minutes of previous AGM

2. Matters arising

3. Executive Reports
   3.1 President’s Report
   3.2 Treasurer’s Report
   3.3 Secretary’s Report
   3.4 IES Report

4. ESAI Executive 2021/22 – Election

5. ESAI Lifetime Achievement Award 2021

6. Conference 2022

7. AOB
ESAI SIGs (Special Interest Groups)

Following their establishment 2019, ESAI is continuing to support five Special Interest Groups. These SIGs have been established with a view to supporting current and future practitioners and researchers of education. Each SIG will have a two-year lifetime (to conclude in February 2022) and has received funding from ESAI to support its activities during this time.

The five SIGs are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Interest Group (SIG)</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Studies</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:curriculumsig@mu.ie">curriculumsig@mu.ie</a> Twitter @EsaiSig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive Education</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:Margaret.egan@mic.ul.ie">Margaret.egan@mic.ul.ie</a> / <a href="mailto:Johanna.fitzgerald@mic.ul.ie">Johanna.fitzgerald@mic.ul.ie</a> Twitter @MgtEganMIC @JohFitzMIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development in Higher Education Teaching (PD-HET)</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:eilis.flanagan@advance-he.ac.uk">eilis.flanagan@advance-he.ac.uk</a> Twitter @EilisFlanagan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education: Critical Pedagogy and Praxis for Social Justice</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:maeve.obrien@dcu.ie">maeve.obrien@dcu.ie</a> Twitter @Criticalpedago1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values-based Practitioner Action Research VPAR</td>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:info@eari.ie">info@eari.ie</a> Twitter @InfoNeari</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further details on all five SIGs can be found [here](#).

**SIG Session at ESAI 2021**

At ESAI 2021, there will be a special **ESAI SIG Session** on Thursday 25th March at 5.00pm, as part of the 2021 Conference, where each SIG will give an overview of its work so far, as well as its plans for the coming year. The SIGs encompass a broad range of projects and these are well worth exploring.

The link to access this SIG Session can be found on the Conference Programme, and we encourage all attendees to join us for this exciting event at ESAI Conference 2021.
Concise On-demand Presentations

Concise On-demand Presentations can be viewed at any time across the duration of the conference dates (25th-26th March 2021). Please see Delegate Timetable for links to presentations.

[C1] Moving beyond ‘let’s have another Mass’: post-secular approaches to exploring and expressing a faith-based ethos in the pluralist public square of an Irish University

Anne Lodge (DCU)

‘Ethos’ is a nebulous term which McLaughlin (2005) argues refers to the culture, atmosphere, relationships and ‘spirit’ of an institution. The extensive international literature on Anglican educational ethos indicates two key things. First, ‘ethos’ tends to be understood by practitioners in educational institutions in terms of its overt religiosity – namely, association with worship, assembly or links to the parish (e.g. Jelfs 2010; Terry 2013; Campion 2010; Wilkinson 2020). Second, as Edwards (2015) argues in the Australian context, efforts to engage with and respectfully include the post-secular diversity of the student body can result in such a watering down of Anglican ethos that all spiritual or faith content is lost in the effort to include.

The Republic of Ireland is transforming into an actively secular society through public policy and societal pressure from parts of the community, while at the same time becoming post-secular due to its globalised, diverse population. This secularisation / post-secularisation tension in itself impacts on the perceived right of faith voices to speak into the public square and to have a voice in the educational sphere. As Sullivan (2012) points out, education is an arena subject to particular contestation with regard to faith and belief.

This paper considers how an Anglican Centre, now in its fifth year of existence in a secular university (following the incorporation of an Anglican College of Education into a secular university in line with changed State policy in 2016), is developing and expressing its own ethos and identity. The Centre strives to speak a range of authentic Anglican voices into the public square of an Irish University and Irish educational policy.

The paper explores how, in practice, the Centre has developed a framework to scaffold and evaluate its activity and relationships. This includes a commitment to the underpinning of both its Anglican authenticity and the turning of its gaze outward and invitational to the public square of the University and beyond. The Centre’s scaffolding and evaluative frameworks draw on the five marks of mission of the Anglican Communion (Wright 2015) alongside Warner’s (2013) vision for a third level Anglican ethos. These frameworks have the intention of supporting and interrogating the Centre’s curriculum, pedagogy, relationships and public contributions. They aim to move and deepen the Centre’s Anglicanism beyond a more traditional focus on religious piety and assist it in resisting a secularizing impulse that is an inevitable influence in a pluralist university context.

Anne Lodge is the Director of the Church of Ireland Centre, DCU. She is a member of the School of Policy & Practice in the DCU Institute of Education.

[C2] A living theory of transgenerational and trans-institutional learning - researching possibilities in a virtual environment

Cornelia Connolly (NUIG & NEARI); Caitriona McDonagh (NEARI); Mary Roche (NEARI); Bernie Sullivan (NEARI); Máirín Glenn (NEARI)

As co-convenors of Network of Educational Action Research in Ireland (NEARI) and its Values-based Practitioner Action Research (VPAR) SIG with ESAI, the authors consider the networks as spaces where transgenerational and trans-institutional practitioners share their research stories, engage in dialogue, reflect critically and work towards generating educational theory from practice.

The global crisis caused by the worldwide spread of COVID-19 is unprecedented. As responses to the crisis developed, it became clear that school closures had challenging implications for many young people and those supporting them. Such disruptions bring a focus on the precarity of daily life and indeed the challenge then posed for professional development and self-study practitioner research. The move from face to face collaboration to a virtual environment has proven challenging for some teachers, teacher educators, teaching staff. Recent experiences show how a time of crisis can act as a catalyst for questioning and reflection on that which was previously taken for granted. The prospect of socially-distanced learning communities prompts us to reflect on the challenge and opportunity this presents.

Based on long held values of inclusion, collaboration, dialogue and knowledge creation, the authors facilitate these spaces as sites of possibility and transformation. Examining our facilitation of these networks, we have re-imagined the concept of learning communities (Glenn et al. 2017, Wenger-Trayner et al. 2015) within a framework of social validity (Habermas 1976). This research generates new understandings based on Habermas’s criteria of “comprehensibility, truthfulness, authenticity and appropriateness” (pp. 2-3). Showing how networks such as NEARI and VPAR further demonstrate a new understanding of third space by moving beyond the ideas of Bhabha (1990) and Soja (1996) we, authors, seek to support professional knowledge creation in an era of considerable change amidst the global pandemic. Drawing on the work of Woolf (2020) a third space theory is evoked in terms of hybridity and logic which describes 1) perceived
The idea of lived space resonates with a commitment to a Living Theory approach to practitioner research. This paper outlines a new living theory emerging in a time of pandemic, that is one of transgenerational and trans-institutional learning and explains the authors’ educational Third Space theory where the third space contributes to a new critical approach to critiquing previously held assumptions. It fosters a diminution of power, hegemony and the levelling of relationships; the sharing of common values, the identification of new values and the creation and development of identity as practitioner researchers in the generation of new knowledge.

Cornelia Connolly is a lecturer at the School of Education, National University of Ireland Galway. In addition to a Ph.D. in pedagogical innovation, she holds a B.Eng. (Hons) and M.Eng. (Hons) through research. Her teaching and research interests centre principally on STEM education and education design.

Caitriona McDonagh is an education consultant, lecturer and tutor in postgraduate teacher education and action research and is a co-convenor of NEARI and the VPAR ESAI SIG. She previously researched her practice as a teacher of students with special education needs to PhD level (UL).

Mary Roche is a former teacher, and retired Education Lecturer. Mary now tutors on the PME programme in UCC. She holds a PhD in Education from UL and her research interests include action research, children’s literature and dialogical pedagogy.

Bernie Sullivan is a former Primary School principal who completed her PhD in Education at the university of Limerick. She currently lectures and tutors in both undergrad and postgrad Teacher Education programmes. Her research interests are action research, living theory research, social justice and inclusion.

Formerly a Primary School principal, Máirín Glenn now works on postgraduate teacher education programmes. She is a co-convenor of NEARI and the VPAR SIG with ESAI. Máirín is passionate about self-study action research and living theory. She has co-authored four books on the topic including 'Learning Communities in Educational Partnerships: Action Research as Transformation' (2017).

[C3] An exploration of shared leadership in a university self-study research hub

Richard Bowles (MIC); Miriam Hamilton (MIC); Déirdre Ní Chróinín (MIC); Anne O’Dwyer (MIC)

Self-study of Teacher Education Practice (S-STEP) is a way for teacher educators to gain a deeper understanding of their own practice (Casey et al., 2018). Collaboration with colleagues frequently underpins this research approach. This paper explores the experiences of four researchers who established a self-study research “hub” or community of practice in their university. They intended to create a learning space for faculty members interested in self-study to engage with an informal but structured professional development programme through regular meetings and workshops.

The four hub leaders set out to examine how they facilitated the activities of the group over the course of one academic year. By drawing on social learning theory, they used a Value Creation Framework (VCF) (Wenger et al., 2011) to make sense of their experiences as leaders. Specifically, the central objectives of this paper were to (1) describe how the VCF was used to document the accomplishments of the hub and (2) investigate what they learned about their own practice as they led hub activities.

Throughout the 2019-2020 academic year, qualitative data were generated as follows: (1) the leaders held five review and planning meetings where their discussions were recorded and, subsequently, transcribed, (2) an external critical friend carried out an individual hour-long interview with each of the leaders, using a common semi-structured interview guide, and (3) the leaders updated a VCF template after each hub event. This was done collectively and served to document the positive aspects that they had noted. Data were analysed thematically by the research team.

The research team identified positive impacts of the initiative at each level of the VCF as hub members variously gained new knowledge about self-study, shared experiences and resources, engaged in critical discussions about existing research, and initiated collaborative self-study projects. The leaders themselves enjoyed participating in a shared leadership structure, and acknowledged that working to develop trust was an important component of their collaboration. Their involvement caused them to reflect deeply on the successes and challenges of hub facilitation, and on the potential implications for their own practice as teacher educators.

Richard Bowles is a physical education teacher educator, with an interest in self-study as research methodology. Current research projects include the exploration of the concept of meaningful PE, and the embedding of reflective practice in athlete-centred coaching settings.

Miriam Hamilton is a teacher educator with a particular interest in issues of equality in education, STEM education and pedagogy. Her research extends to self-study of her own practice, professional development in education and connections between research and praxis.

Déirdre Ní Chróinín is a physical education teacher educator with an interest in teaching, learning and assessment in primary physical education; initial teacher education in physical education; meaningful participation in physical education, physical activity and sport and qualitative research methodologies including visual methods and self-study.

Anne O’Dwyer is a teacher educator in the area of Science Education. Her research interests include Science Education, pre-service teachers’ perceptions of teaching and learning, and teacher empowerment and education
An teagasc ábharbhunaithe san iarbhunscoil Lán-Ghaeilge: Dearchtaí múinteoirí faoi oiliúint agus múinteoirí luathghairme

T.J. Ó Ceallaigh (MIC); Niamh Dennehy (Coláiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh); Máiréad Ní Chonaill (Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighn, Corcaigh); Aideen O’ Connor (Gaelcholáiste Mhuire A.G., Corcaigh)

Cé go soláthraitear leis na cláir oiliúna múinteoirí bonn maith do n ghairm, ní féidir leis na cláir sin múinteoirí ionchaisca a ullmhú go hiomlán do phost casta i láidhne a bhionn ag athrú de shior. Leagtar béis ó roint staidéar ar a thábhachtaití atá na chéad bhillanta den teagasc go hárithise. Ar an gcús sin, is féidir féachaint ar thús na gairme mar chuid bhunriachtanach den thorairghairmghairm, agus múnlaíonn an tréimhse sin rannpháirtíocht ghearmhíil an mhúinteora nuachailithe san fhoghlaime do feadh an tsaoil. Sa pháirtí seo, tabharfar spléachadh ar dhearcthaí múinteoirí faoi oiliúint agus múinteoirí luathghairme maidir le tosú ar an teagasc san oideachas lán-Ghaeilge, agus ar a dtaithí ar an teagasc sin. Bailíodh sonraí ó cheistneoir fairsing ar líne, agallaimh ar líne le múinteoirí nua-cháilite, le múinteoirí luathghairme agus le bainistiocht scoileanna. Léiríonn na nádúrthoirí go bhfuil deacracht ag múinteoirí teacht ar eolas ábhartha alínithe le riachtanais an mhúinteora agus go bhfuil sé dian orthu am agus ualach oibre an mhúinteora a bhainistiú go sciliúil, Léiríonn na nádúrthoirí freisin go bhfuil easpa muiníne, easpa inniúlachta agus easpa tacaíochta mar bhaic ag múinteoirí nua-cháilite agus ag múinteoirí luath ghearmhíil. Ag deireadh an chúrsa is féidir fáilte a chur ar mhioltáil, ar impleachtaí agus ar thaighde don todhchaí. Tá an Dr T.J. Ó Ceallaigh mar Stiúrthóir na Staidéar Iarchéime Múinte san Oideachas i gColáiste Mhuire gan Smál, Luimneach.

Tá an Dr Niamh Dennehy mar léachtóir i Scoil an Oideachais agus mar Stiúrthóir ar Shocrúchán Scoile do mhic léinn MGO i gColáiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh.

Tá Máiréad Ní Chonaill mar phríomhoide táinisteach i nGaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighn, Corcaigh.

Tá Aideen O’ Connor mar mhúinteoir i nGaelcholáiste Mhuire A.G., Corcaigh.

Musical Futures and COVID: the experiences of generalist teachers and students of informal and non-formal music teaching and learning in the primary classroom

Edmond Gubbins (MIC)

Informal and non-formal learning pedagogies are garnering increased debate in education. From a music education perspective, informal learning places the students’ abilities, needs and interests at the heart of the learning experience. Musical Futures – an international and ground-breaking approach to music education rooted in informal learning pedagogies orients intentionality towards playing and making music, while the teacher acts as a facilitator of the process of students’ musical discovery (Green 2002; 2008; Karlsen and Väkeva 2012; Finney and Philpott 2010; Folkestad 2006).

While the impact of informal and non-formal pedagogies on music teaching and learning forms the primary focus of this research project, the pandemic has given rise to incidental insights into the nexus of informal learning, music education and primary generalist practice. Certainly, the impact of the pandemic has deeply impacted all aspects of schooling and society; music education is one such area to have been significantly affected. Teachers have found themselves in a position of great uncertainty and have had to adapt their pedagogies to ensure the continuation of learning for our students. However, this place of uncertainty generates possibility for the reappraisal and reimagining of practice.

Following from last year’s ESAI presentation which outlined how informal learning had the potential to open up possibilities for music education in the primary classroom, this paper will present the initial findings from the pilot cycle of this doctoral project. Teachers and students who have been using the Just Play branch of Musical Futures for the first school term share their perspectives on the approach on music teaching and learning in a socially-distant paradigm. These findings will be discussed in this paper and insights gained from this pilot will be used to inform future cycles and also to demonstrate the possibilities for music education in a reimagined format.

Edmond Gubbins is a PhD Researcher at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. He is an Irish Research Council funded scholar and the current awardee of the Eda Sagarra Medal of Excellence for postgraduate students in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences category. His research investigates the musical backgrounds and experiences of generalist primary teachers and the impact of informal teaching and learning on music education using the Musical Futures pedagogical approach.
[C6] Garnering the Social in Social Media? An examination of the use of the online T-REX platform in student teachers’ research activities: interactions, collaborations and challenges.

Deirdre Harvey (St Angela's College, Sligo); Maria Campbell (St Angela's College, Sligo)

The incorporation of social media into educational activities in higher education is increasingly prevalent. Social media platforms provide students with new opportunities to create, share, interact, collaborate and be supported in their learning experiences. Through adoption of such platforms, student’s individual and collaborative work is more visible and accessible to wider audiences, both locally, in closed student peer groups and more widely, to unknown public audiences. The appeal of appropriating social media within teaching and learning has been widely heralded, including increased access, ease of use, sharing of knowledge, flexibility in assessment, fostering student interactions and enabling social, community-based forms of learning. However, employment of social media for educational activities has pitfalls. It is often assumed that students, who use social media in their personal lives, are similarly motivated to use them for academic purposes. As such, the introduction of new social media practices and expectations can result in student tension. Others argue social media is distracting and lacks authenticity, resulting in performative behaviour to a given audience.

It is from this backdrop that the following study aims to examine undergraduate student teachers experiences of using an online platform (Teachers’ Research Exchange (T-REX)) for a research activity. The T-REX platform is dedicated to researchers (school-based teachers, student teachers and researchers in higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland) with an interest in education-based research. This study investigates one undergraduate module, Education Research Methods, which requires student teachers to collaborate in small groups to design a feasible research project. To facilitate the groups in their research designs, engagement with T-REX is stipulated throughout. A range of T-REX interactions and supports are possible, with student teachers enrolled in a variety of groups on the platform (private, closed groups, overall module group and a public group, with registered T-REX members). This paper outlines the initial findings from an online questionnaire and focus group completed by student teachers enrolled in the module. The following questions were considered:

- What is the nature of student teacher’s engagement on the platform?
- What are the main motivations to use the platform?
- What opportunities and challenges are presented when using the platform?
- How could use of the platform be improved according to student teachers?

Findings will be considered, along with discussion on some of the implications for the use of social media in higher education. It is hoped that this body of work will add to growing evidence in this area.

Dr. Deirdre Harvey is a lecturer and researcher in Psychology of Education and Educational Research Methods on undergraduate and post graduate programmes. Dr. Harvey's research interests encompass the school placement experience, student teacher/teacher collaboration, learning and wellbeing (including sleep, stress, health behaviours) broadly.

Dr Maria Campbell joined the School of Education, St. Angela’s College, Sligo, as lecturer in 2000 and is currently, Director of Graduate Programmes. She is Southern Chair of the cross-border body for teacher education on the island of Ireland – the Standing Conference for Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS 2019-2022).

[C7] Exploring Primary School Children’s Learner Identity: Implications for 21st Century Education

Fiona Brennan (MIC); Suzanne Parkinson (MIC)

Preparing learners to thrive and succeed in this unpredictable and evolving world may require education policy-makers to reconsider the vision for 21st century education. While it is recognised that content knowledge is still an important part of learning, there is an expanding body of literature (e.g. McGuinness 2018; Gholami 2016) suggesting that pupils’ beliefs, attitudes, competencies, metacognition, mindset, motivation, and strategies may significantly influence their ability to succeed as learners. 21st century education should enable students to develop awareness of themselves as learners and to formulate self-understandings as learners, that is to say, a learner identity. This dynamic construct promotes the construction of meanings about oneself as a learner and supports individuals’ engagement with the process of becoming and being a learner (Coll and Falsafi 2010; Kolb and Kolb 2009). Promoting learner identity inspires learners to reflect on their experience of learning and to foster personal competencies needed to respond to complex future challenges and learning opportunities. The purpose of this study was to shed light on the concept of learner identity with a view to exploring Irish children’s current understanding of their learner identities and examining the factors that children attribute to the development of these identities.

This study utilised a qualitative research methodology under an interpretive research paradigm. The study elicited learner voice as a conduit for exploring students’ identities as learners through the use of pupil questionnaires and interviews. Twenty-two individuals aged ten to twelve years were invited to complete a questionnaire as part of an initial screening process. Six pupils were invited to engage in follow-up semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data were thematically analysed over a number of distinct stages to discern pupils’ perceptions of the composition and formulation of their learner identities.

Participants described learning as a process of gathering and remembering information and identified the teacher as an important source of information. Most pupils associated their learner identities with their perceived level of intelligence, classroom behaviour and strengths in core subject areas. The importance of positive interactions with peers, parents and teachers was acknowledged by participants. Findings
from the study highlight the need for educators to nurture the intrapersonal aspects of learning and to equip pupils with the language to articulate their developing senses of identity as learners; thus contributing to a redefined vision for future education.

Fiona Brennan graduated from the B.Ed. in Education and Psychology degree programme in Mary Immaculate College in 2017 and is currently working as a primary school teacher. Fiona recently completed an MA in Education by Research at Mary Immaculate College under the supervision of Dr. Suzanne Parkinson. Her research project was funded by Mary Immaculate College under the Departmental Assistantship Award Scheme.

Dr. Suzanne Parkinson is an educational psychologist based at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Her areas of specialism include learner identity, educational assessment & evaluation and professional training, and practice in educational psychology. She is the author of the award-winning series ‘My Learner ID’ an innovative framework for primary schools to nurture children becoming and being learners and is the recipient of the 2020 PSI Award for Contribution to Professional Practice.

[C8] Connecting and belonging - learners' experiences of completing a PhD (part-time) in Ireland

Maeve O’Regan (TCD)

This PhD research explores the experiences of 18 individuals who completed a PhD on a part-time basis in the university sector in Ireland. Developing a conceptual framework and methodology to understand the experiences of part-time doctoral learners was challenging as part-time doctoral candidates have been described (e.g. Rodwell and Neumann) as invisible in doctoral education policy and practice, and also campus life due to often balancing study with other employment and caring responsibilities.

A questionnaire was developed, based on Actor Network Theory (Latour, 2005) to explore participants’ experiences of accessing doctoral programme information and support (face-to-face and online) from the academic institution at different stages of the doctoral process. A semi-structured interview process was developed based on Theories of Agency (Archer, 2004) to explore the role of personal agency and help seeking behaviour (inside and outside the academic institution) as influencing progression and completion of doctoral studies on a part-time basis. The findings highlight the importance of addressing individual learners’ needs from multiple perspectives (e.g. working and caring roles and time commitments) beyond an assumption of the learner as full-time and located within the academic institution during studies. The individual stories of completing a PhD on a part-time basis highlight the diversity of learners’ experiences, both in terms of access to supportive communities inside and outside the academic institution. Personal resilience and seeking help from others emerged as key influences on learners’ experiences of completing a part-time PhD often in the context of limited support or community from the academic institution, employer or personal networks.

The study presents recommendations from participants on providing support and resources (face-to-face and online) for learners with limited access to the academic institution during studies. In light of measures to move teaching and learning from face-to-face to predominantly online platforms since March 2020 to limit social contact in response to the Covid-19 pandemic impacts many more learners, educators and academic institutions than the part-time doctoral candidates originally envisaged as the beneficiaries of this study when it was conceived in 2016.

Maeve O’Regan is a part-time PhD researcher in the School of Education Trinity College Dublin. Her research explores part-time learners’ experiences of completing a PhD, often in the context of limited access to the academic institution due to balancing studies with employment and other caring responsibilities. The study explores the intersection between the individual and the academic environment (face-to-face and online) as influencing progression and completion of doctoral studies.

Dynamic E-Posters

[EP1] Innovations in Higher Education Teaching and Learning Using Arts-Based Approaches
Sandra Ryan (MIC); Anne Marie Morrin (MIC); Anne Dolan (MIC)

Arts Education is widely accepted as playing a crucial role in children’s development because of the affective and cognitive nature of art practice (Barnes 2002; Freedman 2003). Teacher education courses have traditionally been delivered through separate disciplines each with its own worldview, rules, and conventions (Foster and Lorimer, 2007) and, indeed, this reflects subject organisation in primary schools. The arts are also a valuable tool in building confidence and overcoming the fear of uncertainty in developing future teachers to be advocates of creative and critical thinking. This is in keeping with recent initiatives such as Creative Ireland to promote and enable creativity for individual children and within communities.

The Studio Habits of Mind (SHOM) project explores how the pedagogical approaches traditionally found in the methods of an artist’s studio may be used to develop opportunities for collaborative partners to engage and respond to innovative, arts-based pedagogies and
assessment across the disciplines of visual art, sociology and geography. Core to this model of teaching and learning is the breaking down of disciplinary/curricular boundaries. This mirrors the proposed new primary curriculum that advocates integrated learning in primary classrooms.

Student teachers need to engage with enquiry-based methods of learning and experience the unpredictable and the uncertain. For the majority of students, and indeed lecturers, this is an uncomfortable space to occupy, as the thought of the unknown and fear of failure can be a major obstacle for practice-based enquiry. Students’ reluctance to engage with exploratory methods, challenges us as educators to reconsider how to (re) engage with teaching and learning. In particular, it is essential to consider strategies, which stimulate students to think independently and seek out learning experiences through alternative and interactive means.

This e-poster will present a range of teaching, learning and assessment innovations being developed as part of the SHOM project (ongoing until 2021).

**Dr. Sandra Ryan** is a lecturer in sociology of education and educational disadvantage with the Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education in Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. Her research interests include educational partnership development and family engagement in education, teacher education for social justice, educational evaluation and inter-disciplinary collaboration and arts-based teaching, learning, assessment and research. She is author (with Carol Lannin) of *Pathways to Partnership: Engaging Families in Learning – Mapping the Way* (2021) Limerick: CDU.

**Anne Marie Morrin** is a lecturer in visual arts education with the Department of Arts Education and Physical Education in Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. Her research interests include interdisciplinary approaches to visual art education; educational environments as pedagogy; reflective journals as a tool in the classroom and art-based research. Recent research projects include: Dyslexia and the visual literacy, Participatory art practice and the hidden curriculum.

**Dr. Anne Dolan** is a lecturer in primary geography with the Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education in Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. Ireland. Her research interests include creative approaches to geography, inter-disciplinary collaboration and the use of the arts in geographical explorations. She is the author of *Powerful Primary Geography* a toolkit for 21st Century Learning (2020) London: Routledge and editor of *Teaching Climate Change in Primary School: an interdisciplinary approach* (in press) London: Routledge.

**[EP2] Reimagining Learner Engagement in Remote Learning Contexts**

*Roisín Morris-Drennan (QQI); Boland Mairéad (AONTAS); Leah Dowdall (AONTAS); Oisin Hassan (NSiEP); Jeffrey Cox (NSiEP); Kalianne Farren (AONTAS)*

On 12 March 2020, in an effort to contain the spread of COVID-19 in Ireland, the Irish government instructed schools, and providers of further education and training and higher education to close their doors and cease face-to-face provision. As teaching, learning and assessment continued online and remotely, providers of education and training and other educational stakeholders have had to adapt processes and structures to enable continued opportunities for learner voice and input to core processes. In Irish further and higher education and training, engagement with learners is integral to programme and organisational decision-making and to the operation of internal and external quality assurance.

This e-Poster will be a joint submission by AONTAS, the national adult learning organisation which supports learner voice in further and community education and training; the National Student Engagement Programme (NSiEP), an initiative that seeks to strengthen student engagement in decision-making across Irish higher education; and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the state agency with responsibility for the external quality assurance of post-secondary education and training.

The presentation will seek to reflect on those strands of the conference pertaining to reimagining connections with people and place in the context of engagement with learners in remote learning contexts, including in the briefing, training and input of learner participants in quality assurance and other processes in both the further education and training (FET) and higher education (HE) sectors. It will present and reflect on the results of a comparative analysis of data gathered by the three organisations under the following three headings:
- Learner participation
- Methodology (including capacity building among learners)
- Challenges and successes (and learning that will contribute to practice post-COVID-19).

The submission will include short case studies based on the following examples, which will facilitate the inclusion of reflections and observations on commonalities and differences between the impact of virtual platforms on learners in HE and FET contexts:
- Learner representative participation in external quality assurance processes (ETB inaugural review; CINNTE review; QQI reengagement/validation processes)
- HE class representative processes (NSiEP)
- FET learner fora and ‘Learners as Leaders’ initiatives (AONTAS)

*Roisín Morris-Drennan* is a Senior Quality Officer in Quality and Qualifications Ireland. As part of her current role in the Tertiary Education Monitoring and Review Unit, Roisín established the policy and procedural framework for the inaugural review of quality assurance in education and training boards. Prior to joining QQI in 2018, she held academic administration roles in the National University of Ireland, St Patrick’s College and Dublin City University. Roisín is also a former civil servant. As a Principal Officer in the Department of Education (NI),
she led the Department’s planning & performance management function. She also worked for the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (NI), where she undertook policy and strategy development.

Mairéad Boland works in Quality and Qualifications Ireland’s (QQI) Tertiary Education Monitoring and Review Unit (TEMRU), where she coordinates the QQI CINNTE Institutional Review process for publicly regulated higher education institutions and the validation of doctoral research degree programmes leading to QQI awards. She is the QQI contact for professional statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) and coordinates QQI’s programme of engagement with the PSRBs.

Leah Dowdall completed a PhD and MPhil at Trinity College Dublin. She also holds a Masters of Education Degree from Framingham State University and has experience teaching both in the United States and Ireland. She is currently the Head of Research at AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation tasked with the delivery of the National FET Learner Forum.

Oisin Hassan is the Programme Manager at the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) working to promote partnership between students and staff across Irish Higher Education

Kalianne Farren completed her Masters at the London School of Economics. She is currently a Project Officer at AONTAS working on the Research Team. She is responsible for the delivery of the National FET Learner Forum.

Dr Jeffrey Cox is the Development Coordinator for the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP), a partnership initiative jointly developed by the Higher Education Authority, Quality & Qualifications Ireland, and the Union of Students in Ireland. In this capacity he administers NStEP’s Student Training Programme. A Fulbright Alumnus who first arrived on the island as an exchange teacher in Northern Ireland, Jeffrey has a variegated background in the broader education sector in both the United States and Ireland.

[EP3] Irish primary teachers’ self-efficacy to teach PE: the influence of the B. Ed with a Specialism in PE on teachers’ values, practices and confidence to teach PE

Cillian Brennan (MIC); Elaine Murtagh (UL); Richard Bowles (MIC);

Since 2012, a physical education (PE) specialism has been offered by some initial teacher education programmes at primary level in Ireland, aimed at developing teachers as subject experts and leaders (Marron et al. 2018). Social cognitive theory (SCT) can be used to help investigate the development of these teachers as subject experts. SCT suggests individuals’ views and behaviours are a product of their interactions with interpersonal, behavioural, and environmental influences (Bandura 2011). Self-efficacy plays a key role during these interactions, shaping views and behaviours (Bandura 2011). The PE specialism has the potential to develop teachers’ self-efficacy, and their subsequent views and behaviours as teachers and leaders in primary schools.

To investigate the impact of the B. Ed with a specialism in PE on graduates’ self-efficacy to teach PE, their PE teaching practices, and their views on PE.

An online questionnaire was used to collect data among graduates of the B. Ed with a specialism in PE. A mix of Likert scale questions, closed questions and open-ended questions was used, investigating four areas; 1) the specialism experience: teachers’ motivations for undertaking the specialism, and how they valued the experience; 2) confidence to teach PE: participants were invited to state their level of agreement with 15 self-efficacy statements relating to planning, teaching, and assessing PE, guided by the Humphries et al. Physical Education Teaching Efficacy Scale (2012); 3) PE teaching practices: the frequency and duration of PE teaching each week; 4) views on PE in Ireland: how teachers felt PE in Ireland aligned with the UNESCO guidelines on high-quality PE (2014), as well as recommended changes to PE teacher education and PE provision in Ireland.

80 valid responses were received from a population of approximately 220 graduates. Data were analysed using Microsoft Excel.

The PE specialism was a positive experience, developing teachers’ understanding of PE, improving content knowledge through practical experiences.

Confidence to teach PE was high across all areas, particularly planning, teaching methods and differentiation. Teachers were less confident in implementing assessment practices.

Worryingly, 12% of teachers fail to meet the recommended PE curriculum time allocation.

Recommended changes to PE in Ireland included: improved teacher education for non-specialism students; an increased time allocation; and improved facilities and resources.

Evidence suggests the PE specialism can develop confident subject experts. Further investigation will be required to examine the development of these teachers as PE leaders in primary schools.

Cillian Brennan is a second year PhD student in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. He is a graduate of the Bachelor of Education with a specialism in physical education at MIC. His research interests include physical education, teacher education, subject leadership, and occupational socialisation.
Elaine Murtagh is a Senior Lecturer in Physical Education in the Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences. Elaine was awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Physical Education) and a PhD from Ulster University. She also holds a Specialist Diploma in Teaching, Learning & Scholarship from the University of Limerick.

Richard Bowles is a physical education teacher educator, with an interest in self-study as research methodology. Current research projects include the exploration of the concept of meaningful PE, and the embedding of reflective practice in athlete-centred coaching settings.

[EP4] 'All talk': problematising teacher research to make a difference
Máirín Glenn (NEARI)

Educational action research generally assumes that practitioners not only research their practice with the aim of enhancing it but that they work towards social change in terms of the creation of a more socially just and healthy world (Kemmis 2012, Ledwith 2017) and the ‘flourishing of humanity’ (Whitehead 2018). Many educators are comfortable with researching their practice so as to enhance it but are unsure as to how they might work towards a more socially just world. Classroom discussions around social justice at all levels of education frequently refer to discrepancies between first- and third-world wealth as well as issues pertaining to race and gender, as well as the myriad of other hate-induced injustices that prevail in our society. Drawing on the premise that social justice is both a process and a goal (Bell 2007), many educators feel unsure about how to become agents for social change as they ask ‘what can I do?’ (martinez 2012). Problematising the question ‘What can I do?’ lies at the heart of this paper.

Because, as educators, we have been ‘already been socialized in ways that support the power structure’ (Chomsky 2000), our ability as educators to critique the education system and our roles within it, has already been modified unbeknownst to us, and can inhibit us from asking ‘What can I do?’. It is therefore incumbent on us to consciously work towards developing critically-aware lenses for viewing our practice and to remind ourselves that the classroom is still a place of potential – a radical space of possibility (hooks 1994).

As educators, our attitudes and actions in classrooms, lecture halls and online learning platforms send clear messages of our sense of social justice and equality to students, their families and across communities. Our power as teachers and teacher-educators to do good, and not-good is immense.

This poster proposes that a progression towards a more just society ‘begins in one’s own mind and heart and can be seen in the everyday dealings and relationships people have with one another’ (Glenn 2020: 26). The poster argues that the NEARI network is a catalyst for opening discussions on questions like ‘What can I do?’ so that social justice becomes not only a discussion topic for the classroom, but that educators become drivers of social justice in their everyday actions in their practice.

Formerly a Primary School principal, Máirín Glenn now works on postgraduate teacher education programmes. She is a co-convener of NEARI and the VPAR SIG. Máirín is passionate about self-study action research and living theory and has written extensively on the topic.

[EPS] Reimagining Possibilities and Seizing Opportunities: Reflections on a Researcher’s Interrupted Journey
Patricia O’Regan (GMIT, Letterfrack)

This poster will present a reflection on the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on a Master’s research project and how this interruption can be harnessed to explore possibilities in reimaging the completion of data collection in a creative and innovative way. The research project explored the provisions made in an initial teacher education (ITE) programme at GMIT, Letterfrack, regarding the development of literacy and numeracy teaching strategies. This project was conducted to gain insight into teaching literacy and numeracy in technology-based environments. This was a response to the Department of Education and Skill’s (DES) initiative to improve literacy and numeracy standards, stating that this should be the remit of all teacher at every level of education. A case study was conducted on the ITE programme at GMIT, Letterfrack. However, data collection was interrupted by the pandemic. Achieving the objectives of this research required redesigning the data collection journey. Reflecting on my own training and experience as a lecturer, as a researcher and as a student informed this presentation, recommending strategies to ensure the same level of communality and engagement as a face-to-face experience, through the Micro Soft (MS)Teams platform. Research data was collected at a conference (February 2020) that included students from each year, school-placement tutors and educational staff (no=84) participating in questionnaires and circle table discussions, enabling an authentic conversation among the ten groups in this educational community. Focus groups (2) and interviews (4) were conducted online through the MS Teams platform. How can the creativity and communality experienced in the face-to-face context be replicated when data collection is forced to an online setting? Reflecting on the impact that the pandemic has had on conducting research has provided the space required to reimagine the ways in which a researcher can use an online platform such as MS Teams, to their benefit. The functionalities of MS Teams can be used in creative and engaging ways. Strategies, that have become apparent through experience and research are using different MS Teams channels to create communities and networks of people, the chat function being used as a collaborative and reflective tool, the sharing of files and information within a channel, the integration of online questionnaires incorporating reflective questions and using a circle of learning allowing an alternative reflective space. Using these functions successfully requires strong leadership, structure, and planning. This technology creates opportunities to reimagine how we connect with other people and communities, in ways that traditional methods would not have allowed, enabling an alignment with the altered society in which we now live.

Patricia O’Regan is a full-time Masters student at GMIT, Letterfrack, receiving a RISE scholarship from GMIT. Her research focusses on literacy and numeracy within the initial-teacher education programme at GMIT, Letterfrack.
Across all sectors of education, the COVID-19 pandemic has precipitated a re-imagining of teaching and learning collaborative spaces. For the authors of this research - lecturers in higher education - assumptions about the potential negative impact on learner engagement, resulting from the transition to online delivery, were challenged. The authors developed and piloted a continuous professional development module, entitled Postgraduate Supervisory Skills, which was designed to enhance research supervisory practice. Two module co-lecturers and a ‘critical friend’ (a professional colleague who assumed the role of module observer) held periodic online ‘dialogical reflections’ designed to critically reflect upon module delivery and learner engagement. The module research participants included 12 higher education lecturers, from one institute, representing a variety of subject disciplines. The online platform employed was Microsoft (MS) Teams. With this context in mind, the primary aim of this research is to present a critical reflection on the potentiality of selected MS Teams functionalities to promote online communities of practice. The researchers’ critical reflections centre around selected learning activities aligned with specific platform functionalities. Methodologically, a qualitative action research framework is adopted. Data collection methods include video recorded ‘dialogical reflections’, video recorded ‘circles of learning’, pair/triad sub-channel collaboration evidence and outputs, and a post-modular MS Forms learner questionnaire. A salient research finding is that online dialogical reflections, ‘circles of learning’ and pair/triad collaborations, via the MS Teams platform, can collectively foster effective cross-disciplinary communities of practice. A recommendation arising out of this research is to intentionally promote cross-disciplinary communities of practice in the next iteration of action research.

Pauline Logue is a lecturer in teacher education and the Programme Chair of the MA in Teaching and Learning programme in the Department of Creative Education, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. Her specialist areas are theory of education, school placement and ethics in education.

Kate Dunne is a lecturer in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). Her subject specialist areas are engineering - applied to furniture design and making - and teaching and learning. She plays a leading role in research development in GMIT Letterfrack.

Susan Rogers is a lecturer in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. Her specialist areas are art and design, furniture history, and research training and development. She has contributed to numerous innovative design conferences in the West of Ireland and beyond.
Parallel Session 1 (Thursday 25th 15.15-16.00)

[P1] Research and Practice in CPD  Room 2

[P1.1] Constructive Disruption: Problems of Practice in Practitioner Research

Colleen Horn (MIE) & Kelly DeLuca (Teachers College, Columbia University)

Practitioner research is disruptive (Leonard & Gleeson 1999) and allows for the inclusion of additional voices into the research context. As practitioner researchers employed in two different international initial teacher education settings, we attempt in this paper to “…problematize our own experiences to raise questions about...expectations and norms for research, teaching, and service and the potential of practitioner research to disrupt these - constructively” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 87). We will do this by looking to Lytle’s (2000) Framework for Practitioner Inquiry, wherein she suggests that practitioner researchers regularly consider their legacies, locations, ways of knowing, orientations, methods, communities, and neighborhoods.

Narrative inquiry was chosen due how it draws upon Dewey’s notions of continuity and interaction as well as his notion of situation which highlights the relational element of this methodology, thus supporting the idea that this inquiry process is co-constructed by researcher and participants. As narrative inquirers we saw this research as an opportunity for “systematic, intentional study of one’s own professional practice” (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009, p. 6) that will support us with “fostering professional growth, enhancing instruction and assessment, and building reflective skills (Smith, Yendol-Hoppey, & Milam, 2010).

The research was focused on particular problems of practices related to partnership maintenance (Ellis et al. 2011). These problems of practice guided and prompted our practitioner researcher approach so that our questions “emanate from neither theory nor practice alone but from critical reflection on the intersection of the two” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 15). The complex nature of discourse frames the collection and analysis of data through analyzing themes and structures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Riessman, 2007). Data collected in the form of a journaling about problems of practice was directly related to partnership experiences. Data was analysed through dynamic narrative inquiry (Daiute, 2014).

There were three preliminary findings that highlight the complexities and nuances of partnership relationships in field-based experiences. First, the work of strong partnerships in teacher education, both developing and maintaining them, is undervalued (Ellis et al. 2011) and are challenging to negotiate. Second, while practitioner research encourages reflexivity, the very nature of research can limit our ability to reconsider our purposes thus causing miscommunications when agendas are seen to be competing. Our third preliminary finding is the continued importance of considering problems of practice as defined widely.

Colleen Horn  Marino Institute of Education

Kelly DeLuca (Teachers College, Columbia University)

[P1.2] Possibilities in education: Reimagining Connections with People, Purpose and Place with living-posters

Marie Huxtable (University of Cumbria)

In 2015 I was engaged in Living Educational Theory research. This included contributing to a ‘Town Hall Meeting’, at the Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA) 2015 conference in Toronto. The successful proposal can be accessed from http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arna/ARNA2015TownHallProposal090215.pdf . I created the idea of ‘living-posters’ as an answer to the question ‘how to enable educational practitioner researchers, who could not physically, or virtually participate in the conference, to be ‘presenced’ with their work?’ The practitioner researchers were situated in diverse cultural contexts and fields of practice and shared a common purpose of contributing to a global educational knowledgebase.

Living-posters have subsequently been used as an educational device and research method to generate and sustain a global social movement of Living Educational Theory researchers. This used can be seen in the 1st International Living Educational Theory research conference at http://www.spanglefish.com/livingtheoryresearchgathering/index.asp . They have been used to provide a form of educational assessment for part of a professional Master’s Degree.

To research the question, ‘How does encouraging educational practitioners to engage in Living Educational Theory research and to create and share their ‘living-posters’, contribute to refashioning and re-envisioning education as a life-long, values-laden, communal and personal process?’

The methods are mixed and include action-reflection cycles, narrative and living-posters, and processes of validation for enhancing the
validity of explanations of educational influences in learning (living-educational-theories). Individual practitioners’ accounts of their living-educational-theory research are generated from explorations of the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the form, ‘How do I/we improve what I/we are doing?’

Data sources will include the individual living-posters created for The 1st International Living Educational Theory Research Online Conference, 2020, (see https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/participants2020conference.pdf) and those of groups such as NEARI and the Values-based Practitioner Action Research (V-PAR, SIG of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/neari20.pdf)

A contribution to the global academic, intellectual and scholarly discourses which are refashioning and re-envisioning education as a life-long, values-laden, integrated communality and personal process. This contribution includes the use of living-posters in clarifying and communicating the meanings of the embodied expressions of the values that are used by educational practitioner-researchers to explain their educational influences in learning with values of human flourishing.

Marie Huxtable (University of Cumbria) is an Educational Psychologist who developed and lead the implementation of an authority wide inclusive policy to provide educational opportunities for all to develop talents as gifts, which included INSET for teachers and a programme of out of school workshops for children and young people. Currently Visiting Research Fellow with University of Cumbria, Editor of Educational Journal of Living Theories and supporting spread of knowledge, understanding and practice of Living Educational Theory research.

[P1.3] Entwined with the Past: Iterational Agency Achievement among Beginning Teachers during Induction
Dan O’Sullivan (UCC)

This study centres on iterational agency achievement among nine beginning primary teachers, during their induction year of practice, post-graduation.

The achievement of agency is conceived of as a temporal phenomenon, that is, a configuration of influences from the past, engagement with the present, and orientations towards the future. In given instances, the degree to which each dimension contributes to agency achievement varies, resulting in one temporal orientation being the dominant tone (Emirbayer & Mische 1998; Biesta & Tedder 2007; Priestly et al. 2015). Iterational aspects contributing to agency achievement include personal and professional beliefs and values rooted in past experiences, life histories and professional biographies.

This study aims to evidence what agentic processes would entail were the iterational tone to be sounded most forcefully by the beginning participants during their induction year.

This study draws on interview data derived from the nine beginning participants. A three-cycle, individual interview design, facilitated continuing contact with participants throughout the induction year (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Tantamount to the analytic technique of ‘pattern-matching’ (Yin 2006), cross-case analysis is used to identify common patterns relating to the iterational nature of participants’ agency recurring across the nine cases (Braun & Clarke 2013; Miles et al. 2014).

Representative interview data are drawn upon to substantiate that when agency is in its iterational modality, the present is permeated by the conditioning quality of the past.

Firstly, past workplace experiences and an appreciation of the historicity of the workplace are both utilised to “read” the micropolitical reality of present workplaces.

Secondly, iterational agency rooted in life histories directs beginners towards certain pedagogical practices. Accordingly, the influence of traditional didacticism is prominent in early pedagogical thinking.

Firstly, in illustrating how beginning practice is intertwined with the past, the discussion of agency is placed squarely within the context of its own historicity. It argues for a conception of beginning practice that acknowledges not only its spatial and ecological arrangements, but also its temporal embeddedness (Pantić 2015; Hardy & Edwards-Groves 2016).

Secondly, the study demonstrates that habitual and routinised activities are not devoid of agency (Emirbayer & Mische 1998). Manifested in beginners’ abilities to recall, to select, and to appropriately apply tactic actions that they have developed through past interactions, the agentic dimension lies in how beginners selectively recognise and implement practices in their ongoing, situated transactions.

Dan O’Sullivan is a lecturer at the School of Education, University College Cork. He lectures on inclusion-related issues on a range of postgraduate teacher education programmes. His research interests centre on inclusive schooling, literacies, assessment, initial teacher education, and the induction and continuing professional development of teachers.
[P2]: Examining the Impact of COVID  Room 3

[P2.1] Using the lived experiences of parents, young people and children of ‘Schooling at Home’ in Ireland during COVID-19 to identify possibilities for inclusive future-facing education.

Niamh Flynn (NUIG), Elaine Keane (NUIG), Emer Davitt (NUIG), Veronica McCauley (NUIG), Manuela Heinz (NUIG), Gerry MacRauric (NUIG)

In March 2020, close to one million school-aged children and young people in Ireland were abruptly transitioned into an unfamiliar learning environment - their home - while parents were faced with the new role of teacher to their children in the absence of any preparatory training. This study aimed to excavate and amplify the lived experiences of parents, children and young people as they attempted to navigate the circumstances related to this unparalleled disruption to traditional school-based education.

In this paper, we consider the main findings of an online survey conducted at the end of the 2020 academic year in collaboration with the National Parents’ Council Primary. A cross-sectional research design was employed, with parents, young people and children invited to reflect on their experiences of ‘schooling at home’ between March and May/June 2020. A final sample of 2733 parents, 896 primary school children, and 293 second-level students was attained, providing a strong representation of parent and student voice.

In terms of the key findings, evidence of inadequate supporting technology was found for some families, particularly for those with students who attended DEIS second-level schools, presenting a significant barrier to student continuity of learning. Secondly, the majority of students, but most markedly, second-level students, believed that they had learned less during ‘schooling at home’ than at school, likely connected to a reported decline in academic interest and motivation. Thirdly, students, especially those at second-level, struggled to adjust to their new situation, and the loss of readily accessible peer support and social interaction was acutely felt. A fourth key finding was the “impossibility” of the situation for working parents, who reported finding juggling ‘schooling at home’ with work-home-childcare responsibilities exhausting and “unsustainable”.

In our paper, we reflect upon and discuss these findings in the context of relevant national and international research, with a particular focus on what has been learnt from the period of school buildings closure. Facing our immediate and longer-term education futures, in which remote and/or blended learning may feature, we argue that contemporary evidence-based insights will be significant in reimagining support for all learners in the continuing- and post-COVID reality.

Dr. Niamh Flynn is an Educational Psychologist, and Lecturer in Educational Psychology, Inclusive Education, and Research Methods in the School of Education at NUI Galway. Her research interests are focused on inclusive education, social-emotional learning, and student and teacher wellbeing.

Dr. Elaine Keane is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology of Education and Research Methods, and Director of Doctoral Studies, in the School of Education at NUI Galway. Her research and publications centre on widening participation in higher education, social class and ethnicity in education, and diversifying the teaching profession.

[P2.2] Primary School Closures during the Coronavirus Pandemic: Impacts, Opportunities and Connections

Margaret Nohilly (MIC), Bernie Collins (DCU) Veronica O’Toole (University of Canterbury, NZ)

On March 12th, 2020, a government decision in Ireland was taken to close all schools due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Initially, at the time, it was thought that schools would open again in a number of weeks, however, all school buildings remained closed until the new academic year commenced in September 2020. During this time school teachers and school leaders reimagined how education took place, adapting from physical classrooms to online classrooms and transitioning from face to face methods of staff communication to meetings on a variety of online platforms. Initial findings of a small scale study undertaken with primary school teachers and school leaders tell a very interesting story of shutting down school buildings on the same day the government decision was announced, and the emotions that evolved to dealing with the aftermath of the closure; not only from the perspective of teaching and learning, but considering staff relationships and communication and the impact on teacher wellbeing. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with ten primary school principals and twelve primary school teachers, working in a variety of size and context of primary school. In addition, two questionnaires were completed by all research participants; the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (Gross and John, 2003) and the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (Mihofont et al, 2008) which was adapted for use with teachers. The overall aim of the study was to provide an opportunity for both principals and teachers to reflect on how the pandemic impacted on their wellbeing and by inference, the impact of the increased emotional labour of teaching during covid. Findings presented report on both qualitative and quantitative data in the context of related literature on teacher wellbeing and teacher emotional regulation strategies.

Margaret Nohilly is a lecturer in SPHE and Wellbeing in Education in Mary Immaculate College of Education. Her research interests include wellbeing, child protection and SPHE. She is co-author of ‘Wellbeing in Schools Everyday: A whole-school approach to the practical implementation of wellbeing’.

Dr. Bernie Collins is a retired assistant professor from Dublin City University (DCU) who lectured in Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). She is an advocate for children’s voice and has published in the area, including articles and teacher’s manuals. She is currently co-
researcher on an EU project titled Gender Equality Matters (GEM) which aims to empower whole school communities to tackle gender-based bullying and gender-based violence.

**Dr. Veronica O'Toole** is a Senior Lecturer and Researcher in Educational Studies and Leadership at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and was a Visiting Scholar to the University of Limerick in 2019. Her teaching and research focuses on teachers' emotions, and wellbeing including post-disaster. Her research on the emotional impacts of the Christchurch Earthquakes on teachers, has been published in highly ranked national and international journals.

[P2.3] The shifting sands: Teaching during and after the COVID19 pandemic school closures

**Majella Dempsey (MU); Jolanta Burke (MU)**

This paper reports on data from n=384 Irish teachers after schools re-opened in September 2020 looking at their post-traumatic growth. The qualitative data weave a rich tapestry that provides insights into the complexity of teaching and learning from a distance within a system designed for face to face interaction. Some valuable learning from the pandemic school closure and subsequent reopening will be presented as a re-imagining of connections with people, purpose, presence and place.

**Majella Dempsey** is Associate Professor in Maynooth University and leads the Curriculum Studies strand of the Professional Doctorate. She lectures on curriculum and STEM education.

**Dr Jolanta Burke** is an Assistant Professor at Maynooth University and a researcher specialising in positive education, leadership and wellbeing. She is a chartered psychologist with the British Psychological Society and the author of “The ultimate guide to implementing wellbeing programmes for school” published by Routledge (2021) and “Positive psychology and school leadership: The new science of positive educational leadership” published by Nova Science Publisher (2020).

[P3] Teacher Preparation across Time and Space

**[P3.1] The role of secondary school teachers and their training in France: possibilities of renaissance or reliance on inherited cultural and institutional traditions**

**Imelda Elliott (ULCO Boulogne France - Université du Littoral Côte d’Opale) & Emeline Lecuit (NSPE-Lille-HDF & ULCO)**

Before the French Revolution, the training of secondary school teachers who were mainly religious was organised in the novitiates. When the Jesuits were expelled in 1764, it was necessary to find new lay teachers and to educate them for their new role. From the beginning of the 19th century, State secondary education was developed. New ranks of teachers, lecturers and assistant teachers emerged. It is interesting to study the different methods of teacher preparation by rank from 1802 to today and to see what traditions are still upheld nowadays.

The Professional Masters in Education (Master MEEF) is undergoing a major reform which will be implemented in 2021. This paper will review this policy to see to what extent it is possible for current teacher education to be renewed and revitalised. Is it possible to think outside the box, or are teacher education and teaching roles almost totally reliant on cultural and institutional traditions of previous centuries? To what extent is policy borrowing from other countries which do not take into account French traditions? Is it possible to successfully implement policies and practices from other jurisdictions with very different teaching and training traditions without the traditional safeguards built into these policies in the countries where they are taken for granted, e.g. the introduction of the new professional development portfolio as the sole method of assessment of a PME student which contains not only professional components but also disciplinary knowledge ? The study uses the methodology of policy theory. Research methods involve: interviews, description, analysis of documents and statistical data.

**Professor Imelda Elliott** is the director of the Professional Masters in Education in the field of Modern Languages at Université du Littoral Côte d’Opale (ULCO), Boulogne, France, and also lectures on various education and language programmes. She has published numerous articles and books on Irish and French education policy. Her research is mainly in the area of education policy, teacher education and public policy in the area of language education.

**Dr. Emeline Lecuit**, who has a PhD in Linguistics, is the head of a centre of Graduate Teacher Education College and also head of languages in teacher education in Lille Nord de France. She is a lecturer in English and pedagogy on teacher education programmes at primary and secondary level. She has published articles on translating proper names using natural language processing tools and is now researching the history of teacher education.
[P3.2] Possibilities in Education: Reimagining Connections with Retired Teachers and Trainee Teachers –

Trudy Corrigan (DCU); Brian Cummins (Stranmillis University College Belfast)

The aim of this educational project titled 'STARTT', an acronym for Student Teachers and Retired Teachers Together is a joint north and south of Ireland educational initiative which has the aim of bringing together retired teachers and student teachers in both primary and secondary education. This is a ScoTens-Funded project and its aim is to bring retired teachers north and south of Ireland together with trainee teachers north and south of Ireland to share dialogue, deep learning and engagement together. Initially the aim was for both retired teachers and student teachers to meet together face-to-face but within the current Covid context, this has now changed for both cohorts to meet together online.

The aim of the project is to facilitate older and younger teachers to learn from the expertise, the lived experience, the tacit knowledge and the contemporary approaches as well as the learning from tried and tested innovative approaches to teaching and learning. This is chiefly in the recognition that teaching is about the art of the possible. As stated by Rose (1995), it is to push the boundaries of the existing order of things. This is to promote the expertise, knowledge and skills of retired teachers in an informal capacity as a contribution to deep learning for trainee teachers. The aim is that young trainee teachers can use this knowledge as a wealth of knowledge relevant to developing positive teacher/student relationships in a spirit of respect and understanding of the unique role of both pupil and teacher in this partnership together.

In return, the retired teachers have an opportunity to connect with student teachers and to feel a sense of community because the project takes place within the context of building a community of expertise, knowledge and shared understanding between the relationships formed between the retired teachers and the student teachers. This is to facilitate their knowledge to be used as a wealth of learning. This sharing of knowledge and active development of a learning community between retired teachers and trainee teachers has never been tried before in any formal context within higher education.

This project contends that in light of the current challenges facing education and older people in our community, it is a 'trailblazer' in terms of its north and south of Ireland engagement of both retired teachers and student teachers learning together. It promotes deep learning and an active development of a learning community between older and younger teachers. In light of Covid, this is now more important than ever before.

The project has used a series of questionnaires to highlight the need for this project among the trainee teachers. The second phase is to highlight the needs and aspirations of the retired teachers engaged in this study.

This paper highlights the findings of this project to date. In addition it highlights the need to promote the sense of community, fun and connection experienced between retired teachers and young trainee teachers when this initiative is actively developed by our universities and teacher training colleges. This is to highlight how this connection can play a very important role in the education, welfare and the wellbeing of a nation.

Dr Trudy Corrigan is a member of the School of Policy and Practice Institute of Education DCU. She has developed intergenerational learning initiatives in DCU which have reciprocal benefits for both young and older people. She is currently an editor of a book on the importance of Human Rights at a global level.

Dr Brian Cummins is a senior lecturer with a specific interest in enterprise and entrepreneurial education. His research interests are in social disadvantage and in particular to understand the impact of social disadvantage on a child's educational engagement and attainment.

[P4] Policy and Management of HE Room 5

[P4.1] Athena SWAN: warts and all exploration of corporate camouflage in higher education

Frank Houghton (LIT)

Education offers immense possibilities for societal transformation. The higher education sector has focused for many years on attempts to combat inequalities in society. However, valid critiques of the unequal opportunities afforded different groups of employees in higher education settings have come to the fore in Ireland in recent years. Well publicised legal action in NUI Galway undoubtedly helped focus the minds of Government and Ministers on this important issue. In response Ireland has developed a number of responses and initiatives. One of the most prominent is the adoption of the Athena SWAN process throughout Higher Education Institutions in Ireland. Athena SWAN awards cover three grades (Bronze, Silver & Gold), and can be awarded at Institutional and Department level. In recent years the focus of Athena SWAN has moved beyond its original specific concern with gender inequalities to also encompass race and intersectionality. The focus has also shifted beyond an initial concentration on science, to encompass other disciplines, and more recently professional and administrative functions.
This paper aims to explore the Athena SWAN process in a provincial Irish Institute of Technology. The author was an active and reflective participant in an institutional Bronze Athena SWAN application. Although successful on its first attempt the process observed raised a significant number of issues that require further exploration. Issues raised include corporate culture, dissemination, staff involvement, contract staff not covered by the Charter, a lack of a focus on social class, and ultimately staff disillusionment.

Dr Houghton is formerly a tenured Associate Professor at Eastern Washington University. He has a strong background and interest in peace & equality studies. He is an active researcher with over 150 publications in peer reviewed journal, many of which focus on inequities by gender, race or class.

[P4.2] Recasting Teaching Excellence in Higher Education: in an age of organisational management and an over-reliance on metrics and rankings

Diarmuid Lane (UL), Geraldine Mooney Simmie (UL)

The quality of teaching and student learning across higher education is a widespread concern of global and local significance. Higher education increasingly focuses on ‘black box’ approaches of intelligent adaptability to meet performance targets at institutional level (Biesta, 2016). Such neo-liberal/elite approaches of improving teaching excellence reduce academic complexity to a market value where students are viewed as private consumers of a commodity (Brew et al., 2020; Freire, 2018, 1970; Greene, 2017).

In recent years, there has been a surge in research unearthing more nuanced conceptions of teaching excellence in higher education (Mitten & Ross, 2018; O’Leary & Cui, 2020). Educational researchers moving beyond instrumental notions, critical in ensuring that good teaching remains open-ended and doesn’t fall into the slippery slope of scientism (Lynch, 2015; Osberg & Biesta, 2021).

Our aim is to conduct a critical scrutiny of what it means nowadays to be an excellent teacher in one university setting. The study is a critical reflexive analysis of our journey as academics and teacher educators as we seek to become better university teachers and to contribute something original to the new debate. We draw from the reflexivities of discomfort explored by Thomas & Vavrus (2019) their willingness to work with and against the grain of a universal pedagogy based on control by numbers that denies other ways of knowing. The study is timely given that teaching quality in higher education is increasingly measured using metrics, such as, retention rates, module performance, Student Evaluations of Teaching (SET), and Module Satisfaction Surveys (MSS).

The findings generated offer fresh insights in relation to the current framing of teaching excellence in higher education. We discuss the importance of engaging in teaching and learning (SoTL) where teaching excellence is recast as a broader way, where the empirical enters into conversation with philosophy and critique for higher education (Skelton, 2009) concerned with emancipation and life in a just democracy. While approaches to teaching can be refined and reified to satisfy an overreliance on metrics (Lynch, 2015), and awards bestowed on teachers deemed to excel, we argue that there is a danger in this organisational approach of limited performativity as it has potential to reduce teaching excellence to intellectual stagnation. The paper goes some way to fulfil the social, critical and heuristic responsibility of educational researchers (Marcel, 2013) and will be of interest to others grappling with similar issues.

Diarmuid Lane PhD. is a Lecturer in the School of Education, University of Limerick where he teaches in the area of Technology Education. Diarmuid has been awarded for teaching excellence on a number of occasions at both a local and regional level. His current research interests are in the areas of teaching excellence in higher education and spatial thinking across disciplines.

Geraldine Mooney Simmie PhD. is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Education, University of Limerick where she lectures on Policy Studies to doctoral students. Geraldine’s research interest is in emancipatory teacher professional learning and development and the intersectionality between teacher education and democracy.

[P4.3] What the Doctors did Next

Andrew Loxley (TCD); Tom Farrelly (MTU & TCD)

The main purpose of this study has been to explore what affect (if any) does doctoral level learning have on workplace and professional practice. In comparison to the extensive research undertaken vis-à-vis different facets of the doctoral ‘journey’ (see author A 2018; Fillary- Travis 2018), the experiences and ‘journeys’ post-graduation is relatively unexplored territory. This is somewhat of an irony given the extensive policy push by most industrial and post-industrial societies over the past 25 years to increase the ‘supply’ of doctoral holders in pursuit or facilitation of knowledge-based economies (see e.g. EU 1999; 2004, 2011; HEA 1999, 2012; OECD 2014). Nowhere is this lacuna more apparent than with the professional doctorate, which although fulfills many of the same scholarly aims and outcomes of the ‘traditional’ doctorate, it is a degree usually conceived of in terms of applicability to professional practice. From what we know, both of these notions are fluid and not simply reducible to instrumentalism and/or exploitable capacities by either graduates or employers (Avis 2009), but also include large elements of personal as well as professional transformation. Hence our intention was to explore the dynamic and dialectical relationship between the graduate and the workplace. In particular, this involved paying close attention to the structural, relational and cultural conditions in which the graduates are located.

Following our review of the extant and relevant literature as well as our experience as doctorate educators, our main research questioned focused on:
1) the application of skills, understanding and knowledge in the workplace following the doctorate,  
2) changes in interpersonal relations in the workplace; and  
3) career development and progression.

The data was generated through semi-structured online interviews undertaken over a three-month period in 2020 with a sample of professional doctorate holders (n=20). Interviews were each approximately 90 minutes long and structured around a schedule comprising of 14 questions organised around 5 themes. The sample frame was constructed via an email invitation sent to all graduates (n=30) of a doctorate in education programme (which began in 2005) located within an Irish university.

Summary of Findings
• The specific education sector and workplace context (e.g. post-primary higher education etc.) can act as an enabler or constrictor on the application of learning (e.g. research skills, substantive knowledge etc.) and/or career pathways.
• Pre-doctoral occupational role and status re position within authority and power structures was a factor in embedding and/or transferring doctoral learning in the workplace.
• The status and perception of the professional doctorate and the graduate her/himself irrespective of occupational role status was positively embraced and regarded by colleagues and employers and where appropriate external organisations.
• Doctoral education is transformative both personally and professionally which becomes instantized and sustained in and through practice.

Prof Andrew Loxley is based in the School of Education Trinity College Dublin. Amongst other activities he established in 2005 (and still coordinates) the professional doctorate in education and has undertaken research and written on doctoral education, higher education policy and the Irish knowledge economy.

Dr. Tom Farrelly works as a social science lecturer in the Kerry Campus of Munster Technological University. His primary roles are as academic developer supporting the development of technology enhanced learning amongst staff, and teaching research methods to undergraduate and postgraduate students. He is also an adjunct member of the school of education in TCD where he lectures on the DEd and PhD programmes.

ECR (Early Career Researcher) Session 1 Room 6

[ECR.1.1] Forest School (FS) as an Emerging Pedagogical Approach in Ireland – An Ethnographic Study.
Joan Whelan (DCU); Orla Kelly (DCU)

This oral presentation is based on initial findings from my current PhD research on Forest School (FS) in Ireland. FS is about the same group of learners and leaders spending a sustained period in a local natural place, once a week, ideally year-round. An emergent pedagogical approach in the Irish primary school context, FS is associated with experiential, learner-led practice, engagement, fun and nature connection. FS utilises an emergent approach to planning, prioritises process and uses observation and reflection as assessment tools. This study is written in the context of the challenge living ‘lightly, equitably, meaningfully and empathically on the earth’ which Wals (2017) described as the ‘key question of our time’ (p.157) and which the Covid 19 pandemic has brought into sharp focus.

The aim of this ethnographic study was to describe how FS is experienced, and understood, in Bay School (a pseudonym), the first Irish primary school to introduce FS (in 2011/2012) and in turn to situate that experience within the understanding of the wider Irish FS community. Drawing on a contemporary, interdisciplinary perspective, and using a conceptual framework based on Noddings (2005/2013) model of schools as centres of care, this study makes an original contribution of examining FS pedagogy through this lens.

Ethnography is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher (as participant observer) studies a group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time. The study took place during the 2019-2020 school year. I participated in 22 FS sessions as participant-observer. Data collection methods included field notes, photos, reflection sheets and a survey (generated by the researcher) and children’s diaries and drawings, staff observation and planning sheets, and parent sheets (part of the normal work of the school), to which I have access.

FS has been described as a ‘break’ from the ‘cultural density’ of the regular classroom (Waite & Goodenough, 2018) and as an alternative ‘space apart’ (Harris, 2017). This presentation proposes a different perspective in line with the findings of this study. This study suggests that in Bay School, FS is about being in the presence of nature, rather than about getting ‘out’ of the classroom. Thus, FS can extend and complement the pedagogical repertoire available in our primary schools. This in turn can help to make our schools more caring, connected places. The presentation will explore these findings in more detail.

Joan Whelan is a final year PhD student in the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global studies in the Institute of Education, DCU. She retired as a primary school principal in 2016. She is Chairperson of the Irish Forest School Association.

Orla Kelly is an Associate Professor in the Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies within DCU Institute of Education. Her main teaching responsibilities are for science education and local studies on the BEd primary programme. With research expertise and strong publication records in the areas of outdoor learning and science education,
including creativity in primary science and education for sustainability through science, she has a growing international reputation in these areas.

[ECR1.2] CCTV and schools

Lisa Kelly (DCU)

This dissertation was carried out for a Master of Education degree, that set out to research why Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) is installed in schools and what the effects of it may be on the school population. This topic is under-researched in Ireland, with no data available on CCTV in schools in Ireland. CCTV is a growing phenomenon in schools around the world, but its installation sparks a tension with the right to privacy. CCTV is regulated by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and enforced by the Data Protection Commissioner (DPC) in Ireland, however Irish schools may not be fully compliant.

Originally, CCTV was installed in schools to protect the perimeter of the school, and there was a clear philosophy to catch the criminal outsider from damaging school property. However, its use may have ‘crept’ to surveil teachers and/or pupils. Effects from CCTV may manifest in behavioural, social, and/or cognitive effects on the various members of the school population.

This research comprised a qualitative meta-ethnography, which consisted of seven studies that met the research criteria. These studies all hailed from either the United Kingdom (UK) or Israel. The research also consisted of a small-scale survey with nine principals in Ireland. The data from both the meta-ethnography and the survey were collated and analysed side-by-side, in order to determine if new themes would emerge from the process.

This research put forward a qualitative CCTV Effects Framework, which has not featured in prior research. The framework intersects trust and status and argues that effects from CCTV at school may depend upon one’s status and trustworthiness within the school environment. Where trust and status are high, the effects of CCTV may be minimal. Conversely, where trust and status are lacking, individuals may feel vulnerable as a result of CCTV. School leaders may currently feel compelled to make decisions about installing CCTV in the absence of relevant research. While this research does not go nearly far enough, it may be of use in assisting schools in the CCTV decision making process, allowing them to place their pupils and/or teachers in the framework to understand potential negative effects.

Lisa Kelly has recently completed a Master of Education degree at DCU. She has taught across various grades at primary level, as both a class teacher and in learning support roles. Her areas of interest include geography and math education. She is committed to ongoing professional development and has a keen interest in research that centres around children’s rights.

[ECR1.3] Narrowing the Second Level Digital Divide: Using Digital Technologies in the Post-Primary English Class to Close the Digital Usage Gap

Laura Sloyan (DCU), Yvonne Crotty (DCU)

In the past, a primary concern with regard to digital inequality was that there was unequal access to, and motivation to use, the Internet and associated technologies among various demographic groups. In developed countries this gap in access has generally closed with most groups being able to access the Internet via various means (mobile technology, open Wi-Fi, etc.). However, other gaps have opened up and continue to widen. The second level divide refers to discrepancies in skills and usage among different groups in society (e.g. gender, age, race). Socio-economically disadvantaged students use technology mainly for messaging and consuming media rather than creating content, information gathering or generating cultural capital. The Covid related school closures of 2020 only highlighted this gap and its implications, with many students in the researcher’s DEIS school lacking the necessary digital literacy skills to engage with online learning or attempting to access their school work via mobile phone rather than a PC or laptop, putting them at further disadvantage.

Socio-economic disadvantage is reinforced by digital inequalities (Van Dijk, 2020) and schools seem to be uniquely positioned to help narrow this gap by embedding digital literacy skills into the curricula and using technology for creative, collaborative and productive purposes. This paper outlines the process of developing a digital literacy curriculum for use in the English Post-Primary classroom. The research was carried out using an educational entrepreneurial approach (EEA) to action research (Crotty, 2014), which consists of a process of exploring, understanding, creating and showing transformation within one’s own practice. Qualitative data was collected using a questionnaire, reflection journals, student feedback and the digital artefacts created throughout the process. The research seeks to help address digital disadvantage by designing and creating a curriculum that guides teachers in facilitating students to use technology in new and innovative ways- researching and creating their own short animated documentaries. In-class activities that promote digital literacy skills (as outlined by Eshet, 2004, 2012) can help to close the usage gap that exists for disadvantaged students.

Laura Sloyan is a teacher in a Dublin DEIS school. She is currently studying for a PhD in education. Her research, carried out using an action research methodology, focuses on the creation of a digital literacy curriculum for use in the post primary English class and an accompanying online CPD course for teachers.

Dr. Yvonne Crotty is an Associate Professor in the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies at Dublin City University and is Co-Director of the International Centre for Innovation and Workplace Learning. Previously she taught at post-primary level education for 15 years. She is chair of the Masters in Education and Training Management (eLearning) programme and supervises Masters and PhD students.
The objective of this international symposium is to examine how women in leadership are addressing systemic inequities so as to re-envision the narratives, policies, and practices of their nations. Addressing the theme of reimagining people, purpose, and place (Brooks & Watson, 2018; Miller, 2020), we feature three research investigations of women in leadership from Costa Rica, Ireland, and Pakistan. Each nation faces similar yet unique challenges with the multiple, global pandemics of COVID-19, systemic racism, and other -isms. Their stories serve as models of bold advocacy toward revision of their countries’ gendered and racial hierarchies and invite inclusion of many voices in civil society (Bertrand & Rodela, 2017; Liu, 2020). The studies apply the theoretical construct of Critical Race Theory (CRT), which embodies a critique of liberalism, examining how women leaders challenge deeply-entrenched systems of injustice (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gillborn, 2007). The investigations further employ feminist theories, explicitly challenging white, Western theories of gender and focusing instead on “constructing a new subject of a new feminist geopolitics of knowing and loving” that emphasize agency, resilience, and persistence (Lugones, p. 756). Each study examines the progress, successes, and challenges of women leaders internationally in making strides to address how to educate its citizenry and interrogate the embedded, systemic racism of public policies. (Fekete, 2020).

Elizabeth C. Reilly is Professor of Educational Leadership in the School of Education at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California, USA. As a TK-12 classroom teacher and administrator, Dr. Reilly principally served in urban schools and school districts. An internationally-recognized scholar investigating women in educational leadership, Dr. Reilly presents, publishes, & researches globally.

Mary Cuneen, having been a post-primary teacher of mathematics, is acting Assistant Professor with the School of Mathematics and Statistics at University College Dublin. She is acting director of the BSc in Mathematics, Science and Education. Her research interests are in teacher education and gender in educational leadership, especially in the field of STEM education.

Victoria Showunmi is a lecturer at University College London in the Institute of Education. Dr. Showunmi’s research interests are gender, identity, race, and class, focusing on identity and leadership, and Black girls and young women’s well-being. She has academic experience in Ireland, the United Kingdom, and through the DAAD scholarship at the Hochshule Fulda in Germany.

Parallel Session 2 (Thursday 25th 16.15-17.00)

[P5] Mindfulness & Wellbeing Room 2

[P5.1] The Motus SEL Program: A service evaluation of a social emotional learning program for Irish early adolescents

Christopher Shum (UL), Samantha Dockray (UCC), Jennifer McMahon (UL), Jade O'Rourke (UCC), Deirbhrihn Hanratty (UCC)

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has been evidenced to foster effective cognitive, academic and behavioural skills among early adolescents (Durlak et al., 2011). Despite a plethora of evidence demonstrating the positive effects of SEL on academic performance, few studies have directly focused on emotion regulation and psychological well-being. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL; 2020), emotion regulation is a vital aspect of SEL programs, and has been linked to psychological well-being among adolescents (Hu et al., 2014). The Motus SEL program includes a brief SEL workshop, which specifically teaches emotion regulation strategies, a parent and teacher seminar and additional teaching resources. The program is based on the CASEL framework and is taught by psychology graduates in school settings. The workshop has been specifically tailored for early adolescents through gamification and involves education about cognitive behavioural therapy, neuroscience and mindfulness.

This study examined the effect of the Motus SEL program on emotion regulation skills and well-being among 6th class students. The impact of age, gender and baseline capabilities were also examined.

150 participants aged between 10-13 years old were recruited from eight Irish primary schools. Participants completed the Emotional Regulation Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents and The Stirling’s Child Well-being Scale before and after completing the Motus SEL workshop, in a pre-post design.
Paired sample t-tests indicated that the Motus intervention had a small but significant effect on emotion regulation and well-being (Cohen’s d range = -.17 to .43). Age and gender had no bearing on the effectiveness of the intervention. Children who had lower scores on the pre-intervention emotion regulation and well-being measures demonstrated larger magnitudes of improvement in both emotion regulation and psychological well-being. As participants experienced improvements in cognitive reappraisal, they also experienced improvements in well-being.

The Motus SEL program demonstrated immediate benefits to emotion regulation skills and well-being, which could indicate that SEL programs that specifically teach emotion regulation strategies have a positive impact on adolescent mental health. Longitudinal studies will be useful to determine the enduring benefit, and the effects, if any, on mental health difficulties in childhood and adolescence.

Christopher Shum has a psychology degree, a neuropsychology masters and is currently completing a PhD investigating the effect of social emotional learning on psychological well-being. In 2018, Christopher set up Motus Learning; an organisation that carries out social emotional learning workshops in primary schools. The Motus SEL program has been completed in over 100 schools throughout Ireland and the UK.

Dr. Samantha Dockray is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork. Her key interests relate to the application of psychobiological models of behaviour and emotions, including diatheses-stress frameworks to understand the development of externalising behaviours, health and positive wellbeing. Samantha has particular interest in the health and wellbeing of people at periods of transition, such as adolescence and emerging adulthood, and during periods of stress.

Jade O’Rourke has completed undergraduate and master’s degrees in psychology and is currently studying a masters in education, with the hope to become an educational psychologist.

[P5.2] Wellbeing promotion in education: Forging new insights and practices

Catriona O’Toole (MU)

With global concerns about the wellbeing and mental health of children and young people, schools across much of the Western world have been identified as key sites for the delivery of mental health interventions and wellbeing has become a cornerstone of national curricula across educational sectors. The need for wellbeing promotion in schools has been further highlighted by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school children and staff. This new wellbeing agenda can be viewed as a positive development, recognising the importance of nurturing children’s holistic development and moving schools beyond narrow definitions of achievement. However, there are also risks that wellbeing becomes just another task on which students must achieve and perform.

This paper raises critical questions about wellbeing policy and practice in schools. It highlights problems with individualistic discourses and concepts in relation to wellbeing, and it provides a framework for progressing new ways of thinking about the relationship between wellbeing and education.

The paper is based on a conceptual analysis; it draws on embodiment/enactivist approaches in cognitive science and philosophy of mind (eg., Gallagher, 2017; Varela et al, 1991), as well as critical and post-critical education theory (Biesta, 2015; Klafki, 2000). Drawing on these theoretical resources, this paper analyses dominant approaches in the field of wellbeing; offers alternative theorising emphasising the interdependencies of mind/body/environment and articulating a conceptualization of wellbeing as a profoundly relational, dynamic and emergent phenomenon. It then connects this new understanding of wellbeing with educational theory and practice, particularly in the spirit of (post)critical Bildung.

This paper recognises the need to move beyond individual and pathologising conceptualisations, acknowledging broader social and cultural determinants of wellbeing. It highlights the co-dependence of wellbeing and education and argues for the need to connect wellbeing promotion to broader projects for educational and social change. In doing so, it highlights the importance of reclaiming wellbeing as an educational goal in its own right.

Catriona O’Toole is assistant professor in Maynooth University Department of Education and chartered psychologist with the Psychological Society of Ireland.


Gareth Byrne (DCU), Bernadette Sweetman (DCU)

Since October 2018, researchers at the Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education at Dublin City University have been engaged in the Adult Religious Education and Faith Development project. One element of this project involved a series of interviews taking place with people involved in adult religious education and faith development, in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and across a variety of settings. The purpose of these interviews was to gather together the rich insights from the wealth of experience of the interviewees on the practicalities and possibilities in adult religious education. This ‘lived wisdom’ could then be employed in the reimagining of opportunities in religious education for Irish adults in creative and innovative ways.

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The data, on which this paper is based, is drawn from the transcripts of ten semi-structured interviews and focus groups conducted between December 2019 and November 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic emerged in the course of this series of interviews.

This paper focuses on the specific impact of COVID-19 on the reflections of the interviewees on the nature, scope and possibilities of adult religious education in Ireland. In particular, it will explore the online dimension of adult religious education both as was in existence pre-COVID 19 and that has emerged further in light of the pandemic.

The data demonstrate the strong significance of connection across different forms of adult religious education. According to the majority of interviewees, acquiring and nurturing a sense of belonging and community was evident as a key factor for adults in religious education.

The consequences of the restrictions imposed during the pandemic sharply highlighted the importance of this sense of connection. Participant accounts of how COVID-19 forced them to reimagine ways of connecting within adult religious education settings, including online initiatives, informs us on how to engage with and reshape adult religious education in new ways.

Dr. Gareth Byrne is the Director of the Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education at Dublin City University.

Dr. Bernadette Sweetman is a post-doctoral researcher in Adult Religious Education and Faith Development at the Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education, Dublin City University

[P6] Social Inclusion and Higher Education  Room 3

[P6.1] Academic freedom and trans experiences: From proclamation to response

Sean Henry (MU)

The last five years have seen an upswing in debate at the interface between trans experiences and academic freedom. In 2016, for instance, Canadian academic Dr Jordan Peterson released a video series taking issue with developments around gender identity in universities across Canada, claiming that requests to refer to students and colleagues by their preferred pronouns were authoritarian (Murphy 2016). In the European context, similar themes featured in public debate in October 2018, where several academics signed an open letter to The Guardian newspaper opposing, among other issues, the establishment of close links between UK universities and LGBTQ advocacy groups. In the letter, these links were resisted as they risked curtailing the right of academics to critique ‘all-encompassing’ discourses around gender recognition, particularly when their critiques were at variance with the priorities of such advocacy groups (The Guardian 2018).

This paper aims to respond to this context by posing two broad questions. The first: what does it mean to exercise personal academic freedom, while at the same time being attentive to the social responsibilities of academic work? The second: how can the academy take such responsibilities seriously without a) becoming bound to the expectations of external advocacy groups, or b) closing possibilities for ongoing and productive critique?

I structure my argument around the two questions mentioned above, and engage in a close textual analysis of philosophical texts in educational theory. Reference to secondary sources on the experiences of trans people in education will also inform the illustration of my arguments.

I argue that the distinction often drawn between personal academic freedoms and the social nature of academic work is a false one. I claim that the ‘freedom’ of the academy manifests itself less in the right of scholars to say or write whatever they wish, and more in the creative dispossession of the self that a scholarly responsiveness to the other demands (a responsiveness that includes an attention to the varied, flesh-and-blood experiences of trans people). Moving to the second question, I claim that this relational and creative understanding of academic freedom calls on scholars to situate the academy and academic freedom in a position of ‘tactfulness’, where the expectations of external advocacy groups can be spaciously taken up, discarded, avoided, or reworked in light of what the lives of trans people themselves might demand in varied contexts and situations.

Sean Henry has worked on a contract basis as Assistant Lecturer in Philosophy of Education at the Department of Education, Maynooth University, since September 2019. My teaching interests span philosophy of education, sociology of education, and inclusive education. My research is interdisciplinary in nature, bringing together fields as diverse as philosophy of education, religious education, sex education, queer and feminist theories, and queer theologies/religious studies. I completed my Ph.D. in Philosophy of Education at the Department in 2019. My dissertation was entitled ‘Queering Religious Schooling: Teachings, Values, Rituals’.
Possibility, Teacher Education and Uncertainty: A call for teacher education as 'hoping with'

David Gibson (DCU)

Greene’s (1995, 1997) call for teaching as possibility, in response to a crisis where education focuses on the economy, performativity and privilege, understands that education is always already political. For Greene, like Freire (1968, 1992), education as possibility must attend to powerlessness, silencing practices and transform pedagogic relationality. The question of what education should be or how teaching should be enacted, like any other time, is a question of how to practice hope. (Perrone, 1998).

The last year of COVid has invited students and educators alike, not simply to acknowledge their own experience of hope and despair, but to question what does hopelessness in ourselves or others, invite us to do (Weingarten 2007). The experience of disruption, suffering and loss during the COVid pandemic however, risks an insular pedagogic response, ignoring those silenced and denied recognition before, during and after COVid-19.

In the first part of this paper I argue that education must reject the naïve or absolute hope of optimism, that come what may, things will have meaning and be okay. Where this hope is aligned to pedagogy, educators will adapt, shift and accommodate, but without asking what they are complicit in. An alternative mode of ‘hoping-with’ (Freire 1960, Weingarten 2007, West 2020) invites educators and students to articulate visions of ‘ultimate hope’ (Marcel,1951) ,generate ‘vocabularies of hope’ (Halpin, 2003), and cultivate community practices (hooks, 1994). In the second part, I argue that the question of hope intersects with the contemporary concerns with Teacher Educator Identity. Echoing the work of researchers on teacher identity from the 1980s on, I propose that Teacher Educators may be caught between two competing commitments in practice, an identity orientated to performance and professional recognition versus an identity orientated to community and solidarity. The opportunity to reimagine and refashion education is also an opportunity for teacher educators to interrogate their own commitments and complicity.

Dr David Gibson is an Assistant Professor in Philosophy and Education, Institute of, DCU (PhD University of Manchester)

Possibilities in Financial Education: third level students' knowledge and beliefs on personal finance in Ireland

Anne Ryan (MIC,UL)

Personal finance is one factor that impacts significantly on health and wellbeing. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to transform our world (United Nations 2015) by 2030 include No Poverty and Zero Hunger. These goals can be supported by educating people to manage their personal finances. Personal finance education is available within secondary education in a growing number of middle schools and high schools in the USA and in most third level institutions. Personal finance is not a standard component of education at secondary level or in third level in Ireland.

Students can be slow to assume responsibility for their personal finances while in education (Lowe 2018). This tendency to put off consideration of personal finance may be reinforced by the exclusion of personal finance theory and education from the students’ second level and higher education experience. Financial goals can be an afterthought of graduation and entering employment.

This research paper analyses a range of different personal finance models and theories. The paper explores third-level students' financial literacy, based on values attributed to personal finance. The research considers the beliefs and values on personal finance held by students and models of personal finance used. Alternative mathematical and behavioural models of personal finance are considered. The need for formal models of personal finance to benefit students is discussed.

A research study is proposed using a survey questionnaire and focus groups to explore personal finance knowledge and influences on student personal finance. The aims of this research is to better understand student personal finance education needs in higher education in Ireland.

Anne Ryan is an Academic Developer whose research interests are classroom context for learning and the learning dialogue between student and lecturer. Her current research is on student knowledge and beliefs on personal finance.
[P7.1] Practitioner Professionalism in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Ireland: an emancipatory practice of care relations or a data driven system of performance management?

Dawn Murphy (ITC); Geraldine Mooney Simmie (UL)

In the last decade in Ireland, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) established itself and gained prominence with policymakers (Hayes, 2014). With political recognition, a strong reform discourse of quality, regulation, standardisation, and qualification embedded in ECEC professionalism. Professionalism is concerned with pedagogy, regulation, instruction and care relations, and the educability of all young children (Biesta & Miedema, 2002).

In recent times, the political push for expedient solutions changed professionalism dramatically. ECEC moved from understandings that education is a shared endeavour to a new corporatist neoliberal/elite model. A market-led discourse identified by Lynch et al. (2012) as carelessness, commercialisation and gender. Practitioners understood not as pedagogues but as deliverers: ‘positioned as technical standardised applications of top-down expert knowledge that meets objective accountability measures for the purpose of attaining optimal developmental outcomes for children’ (Fenech et al, 2010, p.89)

Research aim/objectives

The research reported here problematizes practitioner professionalism in ECEC in Ireland and critically questions who benefits. ECEC practitioners and policy makers can appear to hold distinct conceptualisations with seemingly little conversation between them (Osgood, 2006b, p.189) with power held tightly by policymakers. The paper aims to identify differences between views expressed in policy documents and by practitioners, and to make visible hidden assumptions, tensions and contestations (Creswell, 2014, p.10).

This paper draws from findings in a critical interpretivist doctoral study. The research study consisted of a critical literature review, a policy analysis in Ireland, from 1999 to 2020 and a mixed methods study (Bryman, 2012), capturing the perspectives of ECEC practitioners, in questionnaires (n=104) and interviews (N=11), including reflexive insights of the author (Pillow, 2003). The study drew from an explanatory framework (Apple, Foucault) and used SPSS and NVivo to assist with data analysis.

Findings reveal the detrimental impact of limited performativity on care relations in ECEC professionalism in Ireland (Chang-Kredl, 2018; Taggart, 2016), justified for improved quality and at odds with the values of practitioners in this study (Urban, 2008). The educative role of the pedagogue, inclusive of care relations rendered subservient to the political desires of management. Professionalism has become an organisational trope for a performative system of management rather than an occupational support structure for its members (Evett, 2011). The need to embed the construct of Educare (Warin, 2014) was identified as critical to the future development of ECEC professionalism.

Dawn Murphy PhD is a lecturer and placement co-ordinator on the Early Childhood Education and Care programme at Institute of Technology, Carlow. Dawn’s research interest is in the professionalization of Early Childhood Education and Care and the implications of this for practitioners and children.

Geraldine Mooney Simmie PhD is a Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Education at the University of Limerick where she lectures on Policy Studies to doctoral students. Geraldine’s research interest is in emancipatory education and professional learning. Her book on Democracy and Teacher Education is now published by Routledge.

[P7.2] Cultural Governance in Higher Education: Time to refocus on people, purpose and place

Terry Twomey (LIT)

Since 2011, higher education in Ireland has a defined national strategy to 2030. This medium-term strategic focus is a welcome change from the rolling cycles of system change that characterised Irish higher education in the last decade before the millennium and the first decade of the new millennium. That period saw the influence of new public management and managerialism challenge previous understandings and operational structures in Irish higher education. This paper reviews that period of higher education management, identify the benefits of managerialism and addresses the weaknesses in new management approaches to higher education. It focuses on the cultural issues that have arisen, challenges to the collegiate culture, changes in staff identities and how these have impacted on higher education management. The paper looks proposes changes to cultural governance of higher education to address underlying issues and underpin a dynamic higher education system that supports excellence and is fit for the higher education challenges of the 21st century. A clear distinction between management and academic objectives and wide collaborative engagement are explored as potential strategies for higher education management.
[P7.3] Realising the possibility of a European supranational university: A conceptual reflection on the CHARM-EU European University Initiative

Silvia Gallagher (TCD), Timothy Savage (TCD)

Realising the possibility of a European University has long been debated in European education, strategy, and policy discussions. Conceptualized as a means for strengthening higher education partnerships, driving educational innovation, and promoting common European values, in 2019 17 higher education alliances were selected to pilot European University Initiatives (EUI). These initiatives focused on a shared strategy for education, an inter-university campus, and the formation of knowledge creation teams to address societal challenges using a multi-disciplinary approach. One such initiative is CHARM-EU.

CHARM-EU aims to implement a challenge-driven university, creating flexible, transdisciplinary, student-led educational programmes focussing on identifying and solving global challenges. This conceptual reflection explores the activities, possibilities, requirements, and challenges facing CHARM-EU, related to its reimagination of people, purpose, and place within European higher education.

Conceptual reflection on conference theme

Reimagining a traditional university to a European university requires people to reflect on their practice and restructure their roles and processes. Administrators, institutional governance members, academic teachers, extra academic actors, and students, all have a part to play in this reimagination. For example, developing educational content across multiple institutions using a transdisciplinary, challenge driven approach requires supportive professional development and clear pedagogical guidelines. Ensuring a strong, cohesive and clear governance structure over existing institutional structures, across European and national policies and laws, requires diplomacy and collaboration.

The purpose of EUIs are ultimately to promote European values, and improve quality, performance, and international competitiveness of European higher education institutions. However, to attain this purpose, single HEIs need to reimagine their strategy towards internationalisation, mobility, and transnational collaborations. Within a the transnational EUI context, existing governance structures, strategies, policies and pedagogical approaches require an overhaul through thoughtful partnership and consensus building. The concept of place is at the forefront of EUIs, with physical, blended and virtual mobility being embedded within CHARM-EU. Although mobility has long been mooted as a driver for institutional strategy, EUs move a step further by embedding it within all aspects of their initiative. This requires reflection and reimagining of mobility structures, and facilitation of new mobility innovations and internationalization-at-home.

Any initiatives seeking to reimagine the traditional university model face challenges, but a supra-national approach response creates another level of challenge forcing EUs to reconsider and re-evaluate connections and processes. Reimagining connections with people, purpose and place are key concepts in a EUI. By conceptualizing these initiatives in this way, stakeholders can better understand their purpose within a complex web of actions needed to achieve success.

Dr Silvia Gallagher is a CHARM-EU Research Fellow at Trinity College Dublin. Her research interests lie in higher education innovation, focusing on teaching and learning design, online learning, and inter-institutional collaborations. Current research projects are exploring Challenge Based Learning, inter-institutional professional development methods, transdisciplinary module design, and outcomes from the European Universities Initiative.

Dr Tim Savage is an Assistant Professor in Technology and Learning in the School of Computer Science and Statistics. He has nearly 20 years’ experience researching the role and potential of technology in learning and education with a particular focus on higher education. He is a member of the Centre for Research in IT in Education group (CRITE). He sits on the eLearning Thematic Group of the League of European Research Universities (LERU) on behalf of College and the Education, Training, and Assessment subcommittee of the National Adult Literacy Association (NALA).

[P8] Online Teaching & Learning Room 5

[P8.1] A small-scale study into the use of Flipgrid for Fostering a Social Learning Community in an Online Classroom

Jodie Morris (DCU)

As a Healthcare Teacher in the Further Education and Training sector (FET) of Ireland, this small scale study focuses on a group of 7 mature students during their rapid transformation to online learning during COVID 19.

This action research paper aimed to explore if the asynchronous video platform - Flipgrid, could foster peer community in an online learning environment.

Terry Twomey has been vice-president academic in LIT since 2004. He is currently Project Director for Technological University Development. Terry's research interests are higher education management and academic quality assurance.
classroom while mitigating feelings of isolation that can occur when working from home. This study focuses on peer interaction, social presence, social learning and community in remote learning.

A mixed-methods approach was used with a small population of participants. Qualitative surveys were used to gain insights into students perceptions of using Flipgrid, while the platform’s automatic monitoring provided quantitative data.

The evidence suggests that Flipgrid has a higher affordance of social presence than synchronous video discussion as peer interactions increased. Flipgrid improved peer community and alleviated isolation amongst students, which resulted in a more connected, engaged and motivated group. The implementation of Flipgrid was a positive experience which allowed for community building and helped keep an online course from becoming stale and repetitive.

**Jodie Morris** is postgraduate student currently studying a Masters in Education and Training Management (eLearning) at the Institute of Education, DCU.

[P8.2] **Reframing foreign language teacher training through collaborative online, blended and HyFlex learning: connecting learners within a pedagogy of care framework.**

**Giovanna Carloni (University of Urbino)**

Since March 2020, universities have engaged in emergency remote teaching as well as online and blended learning worldwide. Transitioning from emergency remote teaching to carefully planned online/blended teaching requires instructors to analyze their digitally-enhanced pedagogical practices to start designing effective online and blended – as well as HyFlex (Hybrid-Flexible) (Beatty 2007, 2010, 2019) – practices catering to students’ new multifaceted needs from a pedagogy of care perspective (Friedland 2016; Motta and Bennett 2018; Bozkurt et al. 2020; Jackson 2021). In this light, this presentation aims to illustrate how digitally-enabled collaborative learning environments can be devised, using a design for learning approach which promotes students’ active learning and agency in online contexts (Goodyear 2015; Rapanta et al. 2020) where “Successful online learning requires student-centered design, i.e. carefully thinking about what students will actually have to do to learn” (Rapanta et al. 2020). To this purpose, an outline suited to designing digitally-enhanced collaborative activities suitable for connecting students as well as local and global contexts while catering for their well being will be presented. In particular, the added value of collaborative activities, devised on the grounds of a socio-constructivist view of knowledge which conceives content and language development as socially constructed (Selwyn 2016; Darby and Lang 2019), will be presented as a key dimension of newly devised learning environments. Furthermore, the role of digital technologies as instrumental in fostering students’ multimodal meaning making (Hampel 2020) will be accounted for. This presentation will provide instructors planning to design digitally-enhanced courses with useful information suitable for implementing highly engaging learning environments.

**Giovanna Carloni** is a lecturer in foreign language pedagogy and a teacher trainer at the University of Urbino, Italy. Her research interests include applied linguistics, teaching Italian as a second and foreign language, CLIL, corpus linguistics, virtual exchanges, and educational technology. Among her publications: “CLIL in Higher Education and the Role of Corpora. A Blended Model of Consultation Services and Learning Environments” (Ca’ Foscari) and “Digitally-Enhanced Practices and Open Pedagogy in English-Taught Programs. Flexible Learning for Local and Global Settings in Higher Education” (Franco Angeli).

[P8.3] **Bring Your Own Cake: Online Death Cafes as Death Education Opportunities**

**Jennifer Moran Stritch (LIT)**

Death Cafe events, consisting of facilitated discussions on topics such as mortality, loss, grief, the afterlife, etc. are experiential activities that can enhance personal learning for those who participate. This paper offers reflections from the perspective of a Death Café host and professional educator. In particular, the reflections focus on the virtual Death Café Limerick events held in 2020 and how they might be viewed as vehicles for informal death education in the midst of a global pandemic.

The Death Cafe social franchise movement stems from the work of Swiss sociologist and anthropologist Bernard Crettaz. Death Café Limerick, which caters to people in the greater Limerick area who wished to gather in person to discuss aspects of mortality, death and grief, first ran in November 2015 as a socially-engaged art event. This Café was structured carefully, based on models of social engagement that offered participants not only the chance to talk about death and eat cake (one of Crettaz’s requirements for a Death Cafe), but also the option to participate in separate parallel creative sessions to allow non-verbal communication of ideas, highlighting the theme of mortality with the intent of facilitating conversations about thanatology. Death Café Limerick events have continued over the last five years, taking place at various lives venues across the city, county and as far away as Dublin.

However, since March 2020, COVID 19 prevented most social gatherings in Ireland and the rest of the world. Death Cafés moved to online Zoom gatherings, engaging in many of the same activities and discussions but using technology to create cohesion and connection. This shift required changes in design and facilitation of these groups in many ways: how participants interacted with each other, how technology enhanced or detracted from these interactions, how participants could be supported when discussing difficult topics, and even how they accessed and enjoyed the celebratory foods in their own homes (cakes, sweets, pastries, special coffees, etc.) that had previously been supplied by the hosts in a shared venue.

This paper, based on practitioner reflections from one of the host/facilitators of Death Café Limerick, considers the benefits and challenges of moving this activity online. It also aims to position Death Café events, both virtual and in real life, on the spectrum across informal and formal death education.
Jennifer Moran Stritch is a lecturer in the Department of Applied Social Sciences at Limerick Institute of Technology and Principal Investigator with the Loss and Grief Research Group at LIT. She is a frequent speaker in Ireland and internationally on aspects of thanatology, death education, and experiences of loss across the lifespan, and also teaches on the RCSI/Irish Hospice Foundation MSc in Loss and Bereavement. In November 2015, Jennifer co-hosted “Death Cafe Limerick”, the first Death Cafe event in the Munster region, along with Dr. Tracy Fahey and the late Limerick artist/educator Sinead Dinneen.

[ECR Session 2] Room 6

[ECR 2.1] Towards Technological Universities in Ireland: policy agenda and academic work
Tanya Zubrzycki (TCD)

Institutes of Technology are widely acknowledged for their contribution to the expansion of higher education in Ireland, and have traditionally served an important regional and vocational mission with a close connection to the industry and professions.

The Technological Universities Bill has been on the policy agenda in Ireland for a number of years, and was passed in 2018 providing the legislature for qualified Institutes of Technology (IoTs) to merge and be designated as Technological Universities (TUs). Various policy documents outline the vision and expectations for TUs, such as their potential contribution to economic progress and regional regeneration, as well as growing and developing the institutions further. Institutes of Technology are already involved, to varying degrees, in research and PhD provision. It is envisioned that the newly formed TUs would advance knowledge and innovation in Ireland and also take on additional functions, including building the research capacity and developing research collaborations.

This paper is based on an ongoing PhD study supported by the Teachers’ Union of Ireland and focused on the exploration of the academic work in the technological higher education sector in Ireland, particularly in light of the continuing and complex process of TUs development. The paper presents the findings from the fieldwork as part of this ongoing PhD study – an online survey of the academic staff working in the technological higher education sector in Ireland, and interviews with the academics and other stakeholders with expertise in the sector.

The findings reveal some opportunities for better alignment of the expectations for Technological Universities and the current situation of the academic work in the sector and highlight the importance of considering any potential implications of TU designation for the academic staff.

Tanya Zubrzycki is in the final stages of her doctoral studies in the School of Education at Trinity College Dublin. She is a recipient of the Ben Bishop scholarship to explore the academic profession in Ireland’s technological higher education sector, in light of the development of Technological Universities. She has a Master’s Degree from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Her other research interests are higher education policy and lifelong learning.

[ECR2.2] Meaningful mobilities: re-imagining the format of educational conferences from an Early Career Researcher’s perspective
Christian H. Hanser (University of Edinburgh)

The cancellation of in-person and on-site conferencing during the global pandemic has opened an unprecedented space of experimentation for novel networking formats. While online conferences allow to raise inclusivity with regards to (financial and geographical) access, this presentation seeks to spark further debate for disrupting dominant models of physical conferencing space. Large-scale events are increasingly challenged by the interdisciplinary field of Critical Event Studies as they can be experienced as anonymous and alienating for those who do not belong to the in-group.

It is argued that Early Career Researchers struggle to enter existing networks in academia and to develop feelings of belongingness to the wider educationalist community as they are challenged by the performance expected from them in an ablest academy characterised by narratives of success and pressure. The arts-based presentation reflects on the use of a mobile tiny house (shepherd’s hut) as a conference fringe used during educational conferences in Scotland (2018 -2019) to provide a pop-up sanctuary at large-scale academic events. By reflecting on this immersive, participatory experience I develop on the need of safe spaces for expressing fragility and precarity and the possibilities of being, more than doing.

Existential and meaning-centered pedagogies (Waibel, 2018) could be cultivated by Early Career Researchers through novel bottom-up conferencing formats in order to create commons in academia that claim pedagogies of uncertainty, non-mastery and ‘failure’ for a post-Covid educational sphere that embraces humility to advance.

Christian Hanser is PhD student at Moray House School of Education and Sport and initiator of an itinerant community education project (www.thewelcomehut.com)
ECR 2.3 Possibilities and Opportunities for universities in the Post-Independence era

Rhody-Ann Thorpe (Université du Littoral, France)

History has shown that the period following independence is often characterized by reforms undertaken by the formerly colonized. The latter usually embarks on a mission to right the colonial wrongs and to eventually attain a level of parity on the world scene through economic prosperity and political stability. Many countries tend to focus on the education system for reforms as, in many of the cases, this was one of the sectors that was predominantly targeted under colonial rule. In Ireland, for example, the 1800s were marked by the transformation of the education system with the aim of making it more uniform and like the British'. During that time, indigenous languages and features, for example, were progressively eroded as new values and ideals shifted in favour of the metropole. Yet, following independence, Ireland explored other avenues for education such as the revalorisation of the Irish language and eventually other opportunities such as joining the European Union after leaving the Commonwealth years prior. As universities in Ireland have remained an integral part of the societal advancement it would be interesting to explore the possibilities and opportunities that select universities had at their disposal in the post-independence era. Such an investigation would be helpful in adding to the literature on policy analysis and higher educational reform in the post-colonial societies.

Rhody-Ann Thorpe is a PhD candidate at the Université du Littoral in France. Her research project focuses on higher education developments in Post-Colonial English-Speaking societies.

Special IES Presentation Room 7

Irish Educational Studies: 40 Years of Educational Research Publication in Ireland
Dr Tony Hall, Editor IES

2021 marks the 40th year of Irish Educational Studies: The Official Journal of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland, as Ireland’s flagship educational research journal. In this session, advice and guidance will be provided on preparing a submission for review and publication in the journal. New initiatives for Studies, including the College of Reviewers, will be outlined, as will emergent developments in academic publishing, e.g. altmetrics and Open Access.

Dr Tony Hall is Senior Lecturer in Educational Technology, Deputy Head of School, and a design-based researcher, School of Education, National University of Ireland, Galway. He is the General Editor of Irish Educational Studies, https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ries20/current, the Official Journal of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland, and serves on the editorial boards of leading international journals in the fields of education and educational technology, including the Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, TechTrends, Information and Learning Sciences and the International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning. He is co-editing a COVID-19 special issue of Irish Educational Studies: "COVID-19 and Education: Positioning the Pandemic; Facing the Future"
**Parallel Session 3 (Friday 26th 09.00-09.45)**

[P9] Using Digital Technologies  Room 2

[**P9.1**] How do undergraduate students evaluate online video for inclusion in assignment work?

*Peter Tiernan (DCU); Justin Rami (DCU)*

This paper investigates how students evaluate online video for use in a traditional written assignment, when they are provided with the tools and strategies to do so. The purpose of this work is to progress our understanding of digital literacy in practice using online video, which is one of the most ubiquitous forms of digital content used by students. A group of 80 students sourced video content for their written assignment using a customised video retrieval system (VRS), which provided a sophisticated way for students to filter through video content. Students then reflected on their choice of videos, submitting these written reflections alongside their assignment. The study examines the key areas influencing the use and evaluation of online video for assignments such as digital literacy, the learning value of video, strategies for integrating video, and the key features of VRSs. This paper examines students’ experiences using online video for assignment work and pays particular attention to their evaluation of video content and their reasons for selecting videos. Findings show that students select video based on its relevance to their existing knowledge, ability to develop their arguments, and on the source and quality of content. Students display key elements of digital literacy when provided with an authentic task, and the appropriate tools and content to accomplish this. The work also presents a series of recommendations and considerations for future work in the area.

*Dr Peter Tiernan* is a lecturer at the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies in the Institute of Education at Dublin City University. He lectures in the areas of digital media, personal development, entrepreneurship education, instructional design and teaching/training skills. He is the former of the B.Sc. in Education and Training and a member of the Further Education and Research Centre (FETRC) at DCU.

*Dr Justin Rami* is the former Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning and a lecturer and researcher in the School Policy & Practice, Institute of Education at Dublin City University. Dr Rami the Director of the Further Education & Training Research Centre (FETRC) in DCU and Chair of the Education & Training Foundation Programme (FET-HE) and the former Chair of the BSc in Education & Training. He is a graduate of the International University Leadership Management Programme (ULM) and has published significantly in the area of Assessment, Feedback and Curriculum reform.


*Wendee White (University of Dundee) & Paola Sangster (University of Dundee)*

Taught postgraduate (PGT) student experience is a complex journey influenced by institution-related, discipline-specific, and socio-culturally informed factors (Temple et al. 2014). Within the PGT student population, Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) students face unique challenges. They must adjust to an intensive 1-year PGT programme involving academic and practical elements. In addition to the rigorous demands of these assessed elements, many PGT students enter study with varied personal responsibilities including care commitments, part-time work duties, and financial obligations which impact focused time on study (HESA, 2019); COVID-19 has added challenges for this student population, who would typically engage with on-campus, face-to-face learning and practical workshops. This research explored PGDE student experience of remote learning through a year of COVID-19 to better understand and respond to the unique needs of this student population. A Delphi method design supported anonymous, structured communication between participants with expertise on the topic (Brady, 2015). This method addresses concerns related to unequal power dynamics that arise through researcher-participant interactions (Brady, 2015), making it a good choice for this study where members of the research team, work in the programme. Three-iterative rounds of data collection and analysis were used to explore student experience as a product of wellbeing, emotion, and eco-systemic facets of the student journey. Wellbeing, emotions and learning are closely related (Lazarus, 2000), influenced by an individual’s capacity to cope with daily life stresses (WHO, 2014a). Through this understanding, wellbeing and emotion are conceived as central factors in student experience. Our findings suggest remote learning has had significant impact on student experience. Students identified benefits and drawbacks to remote learning with implications on wellbeing. Benefits to daily life included financial savings; increased time with family; study-daily life balance; and the ability to remain safe from the threat of COVID-19 contagion. Students felt online-working meant more flexible access to resources, and small group interactions provided important support. Drawbacks, including feelings of isolation and too much screen time threatened motivation and wellbeing. The lack of opportunity to meet on campus was seen as a detriment to building relationships that would have otherwise strengthened peer support networks; and the demands of onscreen learning resulted in health-related issues including migraines, eyestrain, backaches, lethargy, and depression. Most significant in the study was that students expressed interest in balancing remote study with on-campus study, suggesting new lines for programme development unique to the needs of this student population.
[P10] CPD for Inclusion   Room 3

[P10.1] What do teachers in Irish-medium schools want to know more about in the area of special education?

Sinéad Andrews (DCU); Lorraine Connaughton-Crean (DCU); Pádraig Ó Duibhir (DCU); Joe Travers (DCU)

Due to the Covid19 pandemic, we have had to reconceptualise the way in which we deliver continuous professional development (CPD) to teachers. This is due to the difficulties that face to face sessions present during this time. Over the last number of years, it has been reported that there is a need for further CPD courses to be developed for those teaching in Irish-medium schools to help them meet the special educational needs of their students who are learning through Irish. Teachers in these schools often want more information as to how they can best meet the special educational needs of their students learning through Irish as a minority language. This presentation will discuss the development of an online CPD course in this area. Originally it was anticipated that this course would be delivered face to face. This presentation will discuss the recommendations that we received from primary and post-primary Gaelscoil and Gaeltacht teachers (N=132) through an anonymous online survey in relation to the development of the online course content. The data was analysed using SPSS. Further detail around these recommendations was obtained from individual interviews undertaken with 15 teachers. This data was analysed using thematic analysis. This presentation will provide an overview of the CPD needs of teachers in Gaelscoilleana and Gaeltacht schools and the suggested online methods of delivery of this content.

Sinéad Andrews is an Assistant Professor in the School of Inclusive and Special Education, Institute of Education, DCU.

Lorraine Connaughton Crean is a Post-Doctoral researcher in the School of Inclusive and Special Education, DCU.

Pádraig Ó Duibhir is the Deputy Dean of the Institute of Education, DCU.

Joe Travers is the Head of School of the School of Inclusive and Special Education, DCU.


Sinead O’Flynn (UCC)

This research examines the experiences of young people and families referred to the Educational Welfare Service in Ireland. This is a small-scale unique study based on seven case studies and includes in-depth semi-structured interviews with young people, parents, schools, external agencies and the Education Welfare Officers (EWOs). This qualitative study explores the factors contributing to poor school attendance from the perspectives of the young people and their parents, the research explores their response to these contributing factors and considers their engagement with the school and subsequent engagement with the Education Welfare Service (EWS).

A number of central themes emerge from the data as contributing to school absenteeism, these include; educational inequality, mental health issues including bereavement, anxiety and trauma and the impact of having a special educational need. The research highlights the effects of inequality and the lack of appropriate services for young people both in and outside of the school environment. The importance of a positive school climate and the importance of true and meaningful school inclusion also emerge from the research as being fundamental in ensuring continued engagement for marginalised young people within the education system. The research recommends the review of the current school attendance legislation, the review of practice methods used by schools and agencies to maintain young people within the education system and a targeted, holistic approach to effectively respond to the complex issues that lead to early school leaving. Consideration should be given to using a multidisciplinary approach with the potential to offer a range of services to support young people with their learning, with their emotional and mental health issues and include the provision of outreach options to marginalised families.

The research also explores the role of the Education Welfare Officer and focuses on the influence of power and social class on school attendance. This research explores the appropriateness of prosecution as a response to poor school attendance, given the complexity of the underlying issues that are illustrated by the cases presented. The role of the Education Welfare Officer is presented as the advocate for children and young people through the support and guidance offered to parents, schools and agencies.

Sinead O’Flynn is a recent PhD graduate of the School of Education in UCC. Her research looks at the work of the Education Welfare Service in Ireland through a number of case studies which capture the stories of young people and families referred to the Service.

Johanna Fitzgerald (MIC), Joe Lynch (LCETB), Angela Martin (LCETB)

This paper reports on findings from a research-to-practice pilot initiative involving a higher education institution and management body for post-primary schools in Ireland.

In response to recent changes to educational policy, six post-primary schools participated in a process to support the development of a whole-school systematic, collaborative response to inclusive and special education. Theoretically underpinned by Hornby's model of Inclusive Special Education (2015) and a conceptualisation of the SENCO role in the Irish context (Fitzgerald and Radford 2020), schools implemented a cycle of school self-evaluation to develop an integrated whole-school provision map, reflecting current provision to support learners identified with additional needs. The project also aimed to provide situated professional learning and build in-school capacity to respond to the diverse needs of learners.

An exploratory qualitative approach to the research was employed involving focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews with Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), Curriculum Leaders, and Principals.

While the project is still in its infancy, early findings from the pilot phase indicate that the initiative helped to raise awareness about inclusive and special education among staff and provide data-led approaches to provision for learners with additional needs at all levels across schools. Findings also report on the centrality of school leadership in promoting a whole school approach to inclusive special education. Finally, the importance of coaching, mentoring and community of practice approaches to professional learning were identified as critical to the change process in schools and building leadership capacity of SENCOs and Curriculum Leaders.

Johanna Fitzgerald is the Head of Department of Educational Psychology, Inclusive and Special Education in Mary Immaculate College. She lectures and supervises research across a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Her current research interests include educational leadership and the SENCO role; teacher professional learning; and the importance of inter-professional collaboration and education to improve outcomes for learners with additional needs.

Joe Lynch is a post-primary teacher in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB). He currently works with schools across LCETB as an advisor with the Leading Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LILTA) group to promote inclusive education. Having worked previously with the National Behaviour Support Service, Joe has particular expertise in relation to challenging behaviour.

Angela Martin is a post primary special education teacher in Castletroy College in Limerick. Angela worked as an Assistant national Coordinator with the National Council for Special Education Support Service for a number of years. She also lectures part-time on the PME and Post-graduate Diploma in Special Education at Maynooth University and is undertaking a PhD in Mary Immaculate College.

[P11] Facilitating Migrant Education

[P11.1] Seeking, Stateless and in School: Insights from Kurdish experiences in Germany.

Ailbhe Kenny (MIC)

The lives of children seeking asylum and refuge are complex; invariably both transnational and intersectional. Their educational needs and schooling experiences are often overlooked or lack nuanced understandings. This article focuses on Kurdish children’s school experiences in Germany which is contextualised within a geo-political space of both seeking asylum and being deemed ‘stateless’ due to their ethnicity. Such an exploration raises important questions: What are these school experiences, How are these children taught, What role do their parents/carers have to play within their schooling, How are teachers responding to ‘newcomers’ in classrooms and schools? What specific challenges arise as a result of their identities and (il)legal status? Qualitative data from multiple sources is presented to hear and amplify the voices of children living through these unique educational experiences. Data specific to a sibling pair’s school experiences is selected from one urban secondary (middle) school in Northern Germany. This includes: interviews with the children and mother, school observational visits, a teacher interview and a researcher reflective log. Their narrative is nested within a macro context of worldwide forced migration and how formal education is responding to this. The analysis reveals that the children were spatially, culturally, linguistically, racially, socially and politically marginalised. This was both implicit and explicit; embedded within policy and practice. The study highlights the school as a prime location where racial identity and (il)legal status intersects with the multiple realities of childhood, migration, and education.

Dr Ailbhe Kenny is a teacher educator at Mary Immaculate College. Ailbhe’s research is widely published internationally; she is a Fulbright Scholar, EURIAS fellow and holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge. Ailbhe is currently a PI on the HERA-funded project ‘Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe’ (NITE).
[P11.2] An injection of confidence? Immigrant Internationally Educated Teachers reflect on their involvement with the Migrant Teacher Project.

**Rory Mc Daid (MIE) & Garret Campbell (MIE)**

Teaching is an increasingly mobile profession (Bense, 2016; Cho, 2010). The recruitment and integration of migrant and/or minority ethnic teachers has been identified as an important policy objective both nationally (Government of Ireland, 2020) and internationally (European Commission, 2016). Despite these clear policy aims, there remains a persistent lack of diversity in the teaching profession in Ireland (Walsh and Mc Daid, 2019; Keane & Heinz, 2016). Census data, in addition to other sources, suggest a significant number of Immigrant Internationally Educated Teachers (IIETs) in Ireland (CSO, 2016). However, these teachers are not currently teaching in Irish public primary and post-primary schools (Mc Daid and Walsh, 2016), despite increasing issues of teacher supply in key areas (O’Doherty and Harford, 2018). The Migrant Teacher Project in Marino Institute of Education is tasked with increasing participation of IIETs in Irish schools. The project is funded by the European Asylum Migration and Integration Fund, through the Department of Justice and Equality, and the Department of Education and Skills. Drawing on a quantitative sample of 240 IIETs and concurrent qualitative work with primary and post-primary principals and IIETs generated through focus groups, course work, reflections and course evaluations, this paper identifies, briefly, some of the key barriers faced by these teachers, both in registering as teachers and in securing employment. The paper proceeds to interrogate the impact of these experiences in relation to IIET’s own identity as a teacher as they struggle to continue in their chosen profession in Ireland.

Dr Rory Mc Daid is the Head of the Department of Policy and Practice in MIE, where he lectures in Sociology of Education and Research Methods. He is the coordinator of the Migrant Teacher Project in MIE.

Dr Garret Campbell is the manager of the Migrant Teacher Project in MIE. He has worked as a researcher, teacher, lecturer and teacher educator in Ireland and India and has managed teacher education programmes in Ireland, India, Kenya, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Haiti. Garret is also CEO in a voluntary capacity and trustee of the education charity, Global Schoolroom.


**Amalee Meehan (DCU)**

Migration across Europe is an increasing reality over the last number of decades, affecting countries with long histories of immigration as well as countries newer to the phenomenon. Although education remains a key factor in receiving and integrating migrants, policies and practise differ among countries. Yet how contextual factors shape these differences is under-represented in the literature. This presentation reflects a top-level education policy study on receiving Newly Arrived Migrant Students (NAMS) in six European countries – Belgium, Ireland, Malta, Norway, Portugal and Romania. It examines how the context of each country shapes these policies.

It is not the aim of this presentation to compare and contrast policies or education systems (ie their relative strengths and/or weaknesses). Nor do we trace their evolution. Our aim is to analyse the differences and similarities between approaches as shaped by the national contexts, thus providing a cross-European snapshot in time of the sorts of migration issues facing different countries and national approaches to resolving these issues. The paper analyses educational provision for NAMS under the four thematic areas of linguistic support, academic support, parental involvement/outreach to parents, and intercultural education (European Commission, 2013).

The study is located in the wider work of the Transnational Collaboration on Bullying, Migration and Integration at School Level (TRIBES), a project focused on migrant experiences of school bullying across the European continent (O’Higgins Norman, 2020).

Findings are somewhat paradoxical, indicating both the contextual nature of top-level policies, and a trend towards policy homogenisation at a European level, despite very different national contexts. In other words, policy measures on education of NAMS in Europe tend to vary depending on countries’ broad historical, demographic and economic contexts, yet at the same time exhibit some common threads.

Amalee Meehan is Assistant Professor of Religious Education and Associate Researcher at the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre (ABC) at the Institute of Education, Dublin City University. Her most recent publications are in the area of Wellbeing and Religion.
[P12.1] Sainriachtanais an phríomhoide san iarbhunscoil Ghaeltachta, an comhthéacs cumarsáide nua a cruthaíodh de bharr cuínsí oibre na paideáime agus na hímpleachtaí don ghaol idir dhaoine.

Toirdealbhach Ó Lionáird (Coláiste Ghobnatan, Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Chorcaí)

Tá aird a thabhairt le tamall de bhlianta anuas ar an gceannaireacht scoile agus tá na dúshláin a ghabhann leis an bpost ag fás blain in ndiaidh bliana. Ag trácht ar na cúinsí a cruthaíodh de bharr na paideáime i 2020, ní fhéadfaí fós aonair na féidearthachtanna sa ghaol idir dhaoine, cuínsi agus áit san Oideachas a shamhlú. Chéanna féin, tá fás suntasaigh tagtha ar na dúshláin do gach príomhoide ach i gcomhothú an príomhoide san iarbhunscoil Ghaeltachta, tagann anthróga eile san áireamh. Má thógtar na dúshláin a bhaineann leis an gcomhthéacs Gaeltachta agus na riachtanais a chruithionn an Polasai don Oideachas Gaeltachta, is iomair cor a bhionn i saol an príomhoide san iarbhunscoil Ghaeltachta. Sa pháipéar seo, tabharfadh aghaidh ar an mbearna shuntasach sa litriocht atá dirithe ar dhaoine. Má thógtar na dúshláin a bhaineann leis an gcomhthéacs Gaeltachta agus na riachtanais a chruithionn an Polasai don Oideachas Gaeltachta, is iomair cor a bhionn i saol an príomhoide san iarbhunscoil Ghaeltachta. Ina dhiaidh sin, deantar cur síos ar na híomhanna a chur ar fáil ar an príomhoide san iarbhunscoil Ghaeltachta.

Leadership is a key policy imperative, a vehicle for global-local reform of primary school education. Reforms directed toward effective implementation of a collectivist culture of school-based learning (organisation), the release of social and cultural capital (e.g. trust, collaboration) for pre-set outcomes among young children. The literature review shows leadership as a contested construct, with distributed leadership preferred in neoliberal/elite times and less concern for moral leadership (Corvig, Ong, and Ledesma, 2012; Cranston, 2013; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001; Starratt, 2004, 2007).

The aim of this doctoral study is to problematize discursive spaces for moral leadership with a purposive sample of primary school principals in the mid-West of Ireland at a time of rapid and unprecedented policy reform. The study draws from critical sociology and Bernstein’s (2000, p.34) ‘pedagogic device’. The key question is to understand how principals view their role as moral leaders and autonomous agents in primary schools and to conduct a critical scrutiny of the spaces for critique and contestation between policy and practice. Bernstein’s ‘pedagogic device’ explains the relays of power and symbolic control operating within education and the necessity for spaces/gaps. Bernstein asserts that where the pedagogical field can make localised autonomous decisions independent of the official field then the endeavour suggests a vibrant system of education. Where the pedagogical field had no spaces for independent decisions then we are dealing with a totalitarian system.

This Bernsteinian analysis became an explanans lens to conduct a critical scrutiny of policy reforms (1998 to 2018) and a mixed methods study of the perspectives of primary school principals in the mid-West of Ireland, survey (n=103) and interviews (n=12), including reflexive insights from the author (Creswell 2014; Bryman 2008).

Findings reveal this cohort of primary school principals assume their role as moral leaders and generally adopt a pragmatic approach. Findings indicate strong resemblance to ‘servant leadership’, concerns with holistic education, building mutual trust, the ‘heart work’ of teaching and learning and having presence rather than adopting a business-like, functional and data driven logic. Tensions and contradictions were evident, just less than 50% of principals reported stress in how much longer they could maintain this leadership effort given the mounting policy pressure for production of the ideal child in the image of new labour market needs. Principals were generating new spaces for whole staff collaboration but, spaces seeking consensus rather than critique and philosophical inquiry.

Ciaran Sheehan PhD completed his doctoral studies at the School of Education in the University of Limerick on the moral development of school leadership in the mid-west of Ireland (2016). Since 1996, Ciaran is a teaching principal in Scoil Chriost Ri, Bilboa, Cappamore, Co. Limerick. Ciaran has a keen research interest in the interpersonal dynamics of the challenging and changing role of the primary school principal in Ireland.
Informal learning and the potential which informal learning might provide for CPD for teachers.

Education conference and various TeachMeet style events which provide continuous professional development (CPD) for educators.

Pamela O’Brien learning; how they intersect and what insights that will provide for the research to be completed.

Finally, I will present an evolving framework, that I propose to use, to look at the nature of informal learning; the two are inextricably inter-related.”.

The possibilities and potential for transformation of practice that is afforded when teachers are discerning consumers and active producers of research is closely aligned to high-quality teacher education and teaching. Therefore, the critical understanding of educational research, skills and application and the capacity of teachers to critically inquire into practice is best developed when embedded in the initial phase of teacher education programmes. This paper briefly summarizes relevant international conceptions on the role of research in initial teacher education (ITE) and charts these understandings to current policy in Ireland. Framing the policy discussion, is the Teaching Council’s (2020) published revised standards for ITE programmes Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education. One recurring aspect of these standards is that ITE programmes are research informed and research based, whereby creating possibilities for building capacity for research-rich teacher education. This research analyses and interrogates policy to highlight some of the alignments and tensions when documenting a case study of the respective role by one Irish Higher Education Institution in providing opportunities for primary and post-primary student teachers to engage with and in research in ITE programmes.

Fiona Giblin is an Assistant Professor in Early Childhood Education at DCU Institute of Education and contributes to undergraduate and postgraduate initial teacher education programmes, as well as masters of education programmes. Fiona’s teaching and research focuses on pedagogy across the early childhood to further education continuum.

PJ Sexton is an Assistant Professor in the School of Policy and Practice at the DCU Institute of Education. He is Chair of the Bachelor of Religious Education and History/English/Music Programmes and contributes to two MA (Chaplaincy Studies and Pastoral Work, Religion and Education Post Primary) and to the Doctorate of Education Programmes. PJ’s research interests include: teacher education, reflective practice, mentoring, supervision, religious education and lifelong learning.

[ECR Session 3] Room 6

[ECR3.1] Learning Moments and Cognitive Presence; a study in the nature and promise of informal and incidental learning.

Pamela O’Brien

Formal learning is typically institutionally sponsored, classroom-based, and highly structured. Informal learning, a category that includes incidental learning, may occur in institutions, but it is not typically classroom-based or highly structured, and control of learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner. Informal learning can be deliberately encouraged by an organization or it can take place despite an environment not highly conducive to learning. Incidental learning, on the other hand, almost always takes place although people are not always conscious of it (Marsick and Watkins, 1990, p. 12). Formal and informal learning appear to be at opposite ends of the spectrum with non-formal learning bridging the gap between the two. “While formal learning is associated with school or university education, non-formal is associated with some structured but out of school activities, informal is the learning received spontaneously during some other activities.” (Petkov, 2019). However, learning occurs along a continuum so, in reality the boundaries between the different forms of learning are not so clear cut. Malcolm et al (2003) contends that “there are significant elements of formal learning in informal situations, and elements of informality in formal situations; the two are inextricably inter-related.”.

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to explore how informal learning can be leveraged in teacher continuous professional development. The study is being undertaken to contribute to a better understanding of informal learning. The research at hand aims to explore what constitutes informal learning and the factors that influence how and when it occurs. In this context a mixed methods approach is more appropriate than either a strictly qualitative or quantitative approach. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data will offer a more comprehensive view of the topic of informal learning. An exploratory sequential mixed methods design will be utilised which will involve collecting quantitative data first and then exploring the quantitative results with in-depth qualitative data.

In this paper, I will explore some of the particular challenges and opportunities offered by this research problem. I will identify the nature of the problem and discuss how informal learning events, such as Teachmeets, can leverage mechanisms for exploring learning moments and cognitive presence. Finally, I will present an evolving framework, that I propose to use, to look at the nature of informal and incidental learning; how they intersect and what insights that will provide for the research to be completed.

Pamela O’Brien is a lecturer in the Information Technology Department of Limerick Institute. She is the organiser of the annual ICT in Education conference and various TeachMeet style events which provide continuous professional development (CPD) for educators across all levels of education in Ireland. Her organisation of these events has piqued an interest in the interrelationship between formal and informal learning and the potential which informal learning might provide for CPD for teachers.
[ECR3.2] Possibilities in peer-organised professional learning: perspectives from TeachMeet.

Mags Amond (TCD)

The purpose of this research has been to discover the niche of an emerging form of peer-organised participative professional learning, TeachMeet, a phenomenon that first appeared on the education landscape in 2006.

The research methodology is a sensemaking exploration of the world of TeachMeet and its participants, with data collection guided by the strengths-seeking principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) analysed via an insider-mediated Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA, which seeks to interpret the lived experience of individuals, was developed in the mid 1990s as a blend of systematic and naturalistic inquiry built on the three foundations of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography. The positional identity of the researcher as an informed insider is a key factor in the deployment of IPA.

The research questions focussed on three key aspects of TeachMeet: participants’ perceived characteristic elements and essence of TeachMeet; the motivations of those who organise it; and the ideas of participants on the current and future situation of the phenomenon. Fieldwork was carried out in 2020, collecting data from survey by (i) open observation of events (n. 15), (ii) anonymous questionnaire open to global participants (n. 302) and (iii) semi-structured interviews with organisers, founders, and pioneers (n. 15). This presentation outlines the initial findings from the IPA that has been applied to the interview transcripts, outlining the iterative process of the description and interpretation of patterns and common themes emerging from the analysis. The themes emerging reflect participants’ experiences of TeachMeet with respect to its role in their professional learning, and the analysis suggests a re-imagining of the possibilities in the realm of teacher professional development: possibilities founded on TeachMeet fundamentals of dialogue and connections between teachers and their peers.

Mags Amond is a retired second level teacher now researching the TeachMeet phenomenon for a PhD in the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, working with Dr Keith Johnston and Dr Richard Millwood. Mags volunteers with CESI, the Computers in Education Society of Ireland.


Bernadette Phillips (MU), Catriona O’Toole (MU), Sinead McGilloway (MU)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma are pervasive and have powerful far-reaching consequences on health and well-being. ACEs include, but are not limited to, exposure to such things as poverty, neglect, abuse, discrimination, inequality, victimisation and bullying. Childhood trauma refers to experiences which cause harm to a child’s physical and psychological well-being. It can include such traumatic experiences as exposure to war, natural disasters, including earthquakes/tsunamis, school shootings, as well as losing a parent or other close family member, forced separation from a primary caregiver or moving to a new location. Together, ACEs/trauma have been described as being among the world’s greatest public health challenges. Currently, there is increased recognition both nationally and internationally of the importance of trauma-informed practice (TIP), which is a type of practice that attempts to incorporate an understanding of past negative experiences and their impact on individuals, across many human service settings, including education. Historical data (i.e. primary sources) shows that early Montessori schools were internationally known as ‘healing’ schools, wherein children impacted by trauma were apparently ‘cured’ on a considerable scale.

This paper forms part of a PhD project, designed to help to support children impacted by trauma by examining past and contemporary Montessori practice and using the findings to inform the development of, and scientifically test, a TIP training programme for teachers in Montessori schools.

This paper will focus on an analysis of historical documents from three primary sources namely, (a) Montessori’s own original accounts of her early schools, (b) Eye-witness accounts of Montessori’s early schools and (c) Media Reports on Montessori’s early schools.

The findings from this documentary analysis indicate that the authentic Montessori Method was effective in the healing of children who were psychologically damaged from exposure to adversity and trauma. The findings also indicate that the original Montessori ‘prepared environments’ were ‘places of healing’, the early teachers were ‘sources of healing’ and the activities and materials were ‘tools of healing’.

These findings will be blended with contemporary understandings of TIP and will be utilised to inform the development of a new Montessori-attuned, trauma-informed training programme for Montessori/Early Years practitioners.

Bernadette is a PhD student funded by the IRC at the School of Education, the School of Psychology and the Centre for Mental Health and Community Research at Maynooth University. She has co-authored three books on Montessori education, one of which deals specifically with the healing of early childhood trauma using Montessori methods. Bernadette believes passionately in education as possibility, especially in dark times.

Dr. Catriona O’Toole is an assistant Professor in the Department of Education, Maynooth University.
[S2] Symposium

[S2] Symposium: Schools for the 21st Century: Are We Future Ready?

Seán Gleasure, (St. Mary’s on the Hill); Suzanne Parkinson, (MIC); Eoghan Linehan, (Scoll Barra)

The phrase ‘twenty-first century learning’ is oft used in contemporary educational debates surrounding curricular and systemic reform. This symposium aspires to situate the construct within both the Irish and international contexts by conceptualising it through a lens of the key competencies required for life now and into the future. Such key competencies, which include the analogous constructs of ‘learning to learn’ and ‘learning to be a learner,’ will be deconstructed and analysed, with a particular emphasis on the empowerment of a generation of lifelong learners by harnessing the emergent concept of ‘Learner Identity.’ This concept encompasses the new ‘Three Rs’ of recognition, responsibility, and reflection in the process of becoming and being a learner. In light of this, recommendations for policy and curricular reform will be made and implications discussed.

Seán Gleasure is a primary school teacher at St. Mary’s on the Hill N.S. in Knocknaheeny, Cork and lecturer in educational psychology at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. He holds a B.Ed. in Education and Psychology from Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick and an M.Ed. in Applied Studies in Teaching and Learning from West Chester University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Dr. Suzanne Parkinson is an educational psychologist based at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Her areas of specialism include learner identity, educational assessment & evaluation and professional training, and practice in educational psychology. She is the author of the award-winning series ‘My Learner ID’ an innovative framework for primary schools to nurture children becoming and being learners and is the recipient of the 2020 PSI Award for Contribution to Professional Practice.

Eoghan Linehan is currently teaching in Scoll Barra in Ballincollig, Co. Cork. He graduated from Mary Immaculate College in 2017 with a Bachelor of Education degree in Education and Psychology. He later studied in Frostburg State University and completed a Masters of Education in Literacy Education in 2019.

[P13] Pedagogy of Religion & Values


Aiveen Mullally (MIE); Patricia Kieran (MIC)

This paper introduces, contextualises and analyses emerging findings from a mixed-methods research project ‘The New Nones in Ireland (2019-2020)’ which explores pre-service teachers’ attitudes to non-religious beliefs. The paper introduces the research framework and reports on data collection through voluntary, anonymous on-line survey design and in-depth one-to-one interview among a total sample group of 400 Initial Teacher Education Students in two Catholic Colleges of Education in Ireland. The research uncovers surprising findings and presents a profile of an initial teacher education cohort who overwhelmingly self-identify as Roman Catholic with exceptionally high levels of sacramental initiation and relatively high levels of religious practice. An interesting aspect of the research to date reveals the complex multi-layered simultaneous religious and non-religious identities of the cohort, blending seemingly incompatible and binary beliefs. This fluidity of beliefs also incorporates traditional Catholic teaching and practices with a wide spectrum of religious and secular traditions from across the world.

It suggests that the belief identity for these future teachers is out of sync with ‘orthodox’ or conventional articulations of Catholic identity. The researchers reflect on what these preliminary findings might mean for educators teaching religious education in faith-based primary schools, and how connections, particularly with children who do not identify with any religious belief, can be encouraged.

Dr Aiveen Mullally is a senior lecturer in Religious Education at Marino Institute of Education and acting head of the department of Inclusion, Religious Education and Student Life. Her research interests are in the area of religious diversity in education.

Dr Patricia Kieran lectures in Religious Education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick and is director of the Irish Institute for Catholic Studies.
Religious and Belief views of those entering an ITE programme in a changing Ireland.

Daniel O’Connell (MIC); Maurice Harmon (MIC)

While the purpose for Religious Education in Catholic primary schools is outlined in the Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland (Irish Episcopal Conference 2015), it remains to be seen if there will be enough people to teach it in keeping with this purpose. The majority (89%) of primary schools in the state have a Catholic patron. This means that the vast majority of teaching opportunities for graduates from Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes will be in these schools. Will all these graduates have the required understanding, knowledge and ability to teach Religious Education in Catholic schools in a manner that is in keeping with the purpose as outlined in the Religious Education curriculum? This paper will explore preliminary data gathered over four years (2015-18) on the religious beliefs and practices of first year students entering an ITE programme in Ireland. Students (N = 1171) responded to a questionnaire with questions drawn from the Religion section of the European Values Survey (EVS), along with some other demographic questions. Findings indicated that the majority of these students identified as Catholic and a large proportion of them attend religious services on a regular basis. The data suggests that patterns of religious belief amongst those entering primary ITE today are complex. For instance, 85% of participants claim to believe in God, with only about a third of them believing in a personal God. While the vast majority of students do not believe the Catholic Church gives adequate answers to social problems, the problems of family life and the moral problems facing our country, many believe it gives adequate answers to the spiritual needs of people. This paper offers important insights into understanding the religious beliefs and practices of those who will be tasked with talking with children about God, exploring stories from the Bible, praying with children, getting to know the person of Jesus, teasing out what it means to be a member of the Church, wondering about the ethical significance of Christian faith and learning about and from other Christian denominations, faiths and worldviews. This paper explores how realistic this is today in a changing Ireland.

Dr Daniel O’Connell is a lecturer in Religious Education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. His research interests include the public significance of Christian spirituality, Catholic education and curriculum development. He has also co-authored three religious education textbooks for use in Irish primary schools, as part of the new Grow in Love programme.

Dr Maurice Harmon is a senior lecturer and Head of the Department of Learning, Society, and Religious Education at Mary Immaculate College (MIC), Limerick. He lectures in the area of religious education at both undergraduate and postgraduate level at MIC. His research interests include child’s voice, participatory based research, religious education, spirituality and pedagogy and curricula development in primary education.
Parallel Session 4 (Friday 26th 10.00-10.45)

[P14] Technology to Support Pedagogy       Room 2

Sabrina Fitzsimons (DCU); Margaret Farren (DCU)

Both practitioners and researchers concur that implementing digital technology, whilst offering great possibilities, is not without its challenges. And given our current circumstances, it is now more important than ever to thoughtfully reflect on and interrogate the challenges that we encounter as we embed technology within our pedagogy. This paper adds to the conversation by describing and documenting the findings from one ethnographic study into teaching and learning in a three dimensional virtual environment. The context for this research is an undergraduate programme of Initial Teacher Education in Ireland. This paper concurs with Salmon (2004) and Childs (2010) who argue that an online learning curve exists. It goes further to offer a virtual world adjustment theory. The theory, which draws from the literature on culture shock and cultural adjustment, has five interrelated phases: Orientation, Euphoria, Crisis, Survival and Transformative Learning. Each phase comprises key moments that reveal stages in students’ learning within the virtual world. This paper identifies why, and in what ways, students struggled with learning in the virtual world. It also identifies how, and in what ways, students were able to overcome their struggles and move towards new knowledge construction. In this way, the theory presented in this paper might provide a useful lens for us to reflect on our experiences of the shift to technology enabled teaching during the Covid pandemic.

Dr Sabrina Fitzsimons is Lecturer in the School of Policy and Practice in the Institute of Education, DCU.

Dr. Margaret Farren is an Associate Professor in the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies in the Institute of Education, DCU.

Seán Ó Grádaigh (NUIG); Annie Agnew (UTS Sydney); Brendan MacMahon (NUIG); Cornelia Connolly (NUIG)

COVID-19 is currently affecting change across all levels of the education landscape and posing specific challenges in the context of initial teacher education (ITE). In particular, the associated restrictions and constraints can inhibit teacher educators from physically observing pre-service teachers’ lessons while on school placement.

Developments in remote live-streaming technology, however, continue to influence and reshape conventional methods of classroom observation (Liang, 2015). Lessons with student teachers can now be observed by teacher educators in real time through digital networks without the need to physically visit school sites. Live remote classroom observation can moderate the level of subjective judgement by increasing the number of observers and variety of feedback sources (Liang, 2015), as well as reducing reactivity and the potential negative impact the physical presence of an observer can have on teacher confidence and classroom dynamics (Bolton, 2010; Wash, Bradley & Beck, 2014).

The approach can pose challenges however, from concerns in relation to child protection and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), to technological issues such as restricted internet access (Van Boxtel, 2017) and the limited perspective of the camera (Dyke, Harding & Liddon, 2008; Marsh & Mitchell, 2014). However, by facilitating access to authentic classroom contexts, enabling professional dialogue, social learning and the provision of credible feedback for immediate implementation and review, live technology has been shown to support the ongoing professional learning of student teachers and placement tutors (Mac Mahon, Ó Grádaigh & Ní Ghuidhír, 2019), and has the potential for stronger links between all stakeholders involved in pre-service teacher education.

This paper reports on a study, conducted in Ireland and Australia in the context of COVID-19, to evaluate factors that are perceived to significantly impact on the professional experiences of pre-service teachers and school placement tutors during placement virtual observations. Contextualised within teacher education programs in two University settings, this paper focuses on the dispositions of a cohort pre-service teachers and school placement tutors in Ireland and Australia, their learning needs in regard to remote observation and the extent to which they are being addressed. Findings generated from the analysis of both mixed methods studies reveal similarities and differences within the perceptions of the international sample, and offer direction for all teacher educators in a post-COVID era.

Seán Ó Grádaigh, Brendan MacMahon and Cornelia Connolly are lecturers in Teacher Education at NUIG

Annie Agnew is lecturer in Teacher Education at UTS, Sydney, Australia
COVID 19 represented a major challenge for many educators, with teachers needing to pivot rapidly to using online learning tools in order to stay connected with their students. This was particularly relevant for teachers in the process of completing their initial teacher education (ITE), whose programmes of study did not include online teaching components. In response, the author developed a module titled ‘teaching in online and blended learning environments’ for post-primary teachers currently completing their ITE. This study begins by examining the key areas impacting the delivery of online and blended learning. First, the author examines key online learning theories and approaches, followed by a review of the technologies needed to facilitate online and blended learning. Next the author explains the module in detail, outlining the tools, strategies and activities provided for students, including the online micro-teaching components - which formed a major part of students’ learning. Following completion of the module, students were asked to complete a series of reflections on their experiences using digital tools to facilitate online and blended learning, the learning achieved, the potential impact on practice, and remaining challenges. Findings from these reflections show that students engaged fully with the module, with a sense of relief and gratitude that support had been provided in a time of need. Many students were surprised by how quickly they adapted to delivering content online, feeling that the module gave them the push they needed to engage with online teaching. While challenges remain, for example (online) classroom management, students felt more prepared for online teaching. They noted that being introduced to the tools available for online and blended learning, held value not only during the COVID 19 crisis, but also as tools for their future teaching practice. The study also presents suggestions for future work in the area.

Dr Peter Tiernan is a lecturer at the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies in the Institute of Education at Dublin City University He lectures in the areas of digital media, personal development, entrepreneurship education, instructional design and teaching/training skills. He is the former of the B.Sc. in Education and Training and a member of the Further Education and Research Centre (FETRC) at DCU.

Dr Justin Rami is the former Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning and a lecturer and researcher in the School Policy & Practice, Institute of Education at Dublin City University. Dr Rami the Director of the Further Education & Training Research Centre (FETRC) in DCU and Chair of the Education & Training Foundation Programme (FET-HE) and the former Chair of the BSc in Education & Training. He is a graduate of the International University Leadership Management Programme (ULM) and has published significantly in the area of Assessment, Feedback and Curriculum reform.

[Room 3]


Peter Tiernan (DCU); Justin Rami (DCU)

Mathematics anxiety is a prevalent, negative emotion that fosters a dislike of mathematics (Baloglu & Kocak, 2006). The need to understand mathematics anxiety stems from its correlation with poor performance in mathematics and its impact on students at all levels of education. Mathematics anxiety can be debilitating for the student, impacting upon the ability to learn mathematics effectively (Boaler, 2016; Chinn, 2017). For mature students who have been out of school for some years, they may feel disadvantaged when faced with service mathematics in an undergraduate programme of study. Nevertheless, mature students persevere and are keen to maximise the time and energy they give to their education (Safford-Ramus, 2008). However, a higher level of mathematics anxiety may also cause mature students to employ strategies to get over the line in contexts of assessment. This paper uses a sequential explanatory mixed method approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) – employing the Mathematics Anxiety Scale – UK (MAS-UK) and mathematics life story interviews – to examine the impact of experiences of failure in mathematics on mature students with contrasting levels of mathematics anxiety. The findings show that those mature students with low mathematics anxiety expressed a determination to move on from the experience of failure with an impetus to learn from the experience, to understand the mathematics content more proficiently, and succeed at mathematics; whereas those with high mathematics anxiety were inclined to avoid mathematics or use coping strategies to get over the line with mathematics, even though they may not have understood the concepts.

Maria D. Ryan is a lecturer in Business at Mary Immaculate College, School of Post Primary Education. Maria’s research interests include mathematics anxiety among students studying service mathematics, as well as the use of the life story method to elicit mathematics life stories.

Olivia Fitzmaurice & Patrick Johnson are lecturers in Maths education at the University of Limerick

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**[P15.2] Addressing a ‘Missing Link’ in our Education System: Making Spatial Thinking Possible for All Students.**

**Diarmaid Lane (UL); David Tanner (UL)**

As our world becomes increasingly more connected and information rich, it is now more important than ever that people of all ages are equipped with the necessary skills to be able to understand and communicate about different forms of information. The skills associated with understanding and working with spatial information are now considered important for success across a range of different disciplines, most notably STEM (Atit et al., 2020; Uttal et al., 2013). However, the widespread availability and use of digital technologies such as GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to visualize layers of many types of data means that spatial skills are becoming increasingly important in the Humanities and Social Science domains. As field-based research in the area of spatial thinking has surged in recent years, we now know that students across many OECD countries, including Ireland, struggle when working with spatial concepts. Furthermore, females tend to struggle more than males in some measures of spatial ability, and this has triggered the attention of researchers and policy makers (Uttal et al., 2013).

In setting the foundation for the project, we created a profile of students spatial skills across more than 30 academic programmes in the university. Using a mixed methods approach, self-report questionnaires, an objective measure of spatial ability, and focus groups were employed to examine the nuances of spatial ability. Our findings show that male students outperformed female students in the objective measure of spatial ability and they also reported higher levels of confidence in their spatial abilities. In contrast, female students self-reported higher confidence in verbal abilities than male students. We also found that students entering Engineering and Technology Teacher Education programmes recorded the highest spatial scores.

The paper raises questions about the performance gaps that were observed in this study particularly in relation to the under-performance of female students and the lower scores observed in disciplines outside of Engineering and Technology. We make the case for infusing spatial thinking development across programmes where spatial information is prevalent. We conclude the paper by questioning how the ‘spatial gap’ can be addressed collectively by all stakeholders to ensure that our schools and colleges can facilitate the development of future spatial thinkers.

**Dr. Diarmaid Lane** is a Lecturer in the School of Education at University of Limerick. His current research is focused examined the cross-disciplinary importance of spatial thinking in schools and colleges.

**Dr. David Tanner** is a Senior Lecturer in Manufacturing Process Technology in the School of Engineering at University of Limerick. His current research is focused on CDIO (Conceive, Design, Implement, Operate) and other industrially relevant research projects in the areas of investment casting and brazing technology.

**[P.15.3] Mathematics Teachers’ Perceptions of the Grinds Culture in Ireland.**

**Mark Prendergast (UCC); Niamh O’Meara (UL); Laura Lynne Duffy & Isseult O’Rourke (Loreto Secondary School, Balbriggan)**

Grinds can be defined as education outside the formal schooling system where a tutor teaches a subject in exchange for a financial gain (Tansel & Bircan, 2006). The provision of grinds has become a widespread phenomenon both internationally and at all levels of the Irish education system in recent years, no more so than for the subject of mathematics. The awarding of an extra 25 CAO points for students who achieve ≥ 40% in the Leaving Certificate at Higher Level means that record numbers are now opting for the Higher Level paper at both Junior and Senior Cycle. However, many students struggle with the workload and pace associated with advanced mathematics, pushing them to rely on out-of-school grinds for extra help. This research, which is the first of its kind in Ireland, aims to investigate mathematics teachers’ perceptions of the grinds culture that is dominating the education landscape. In this paper we will seek to address the following research question: What are teachers’ perceptions of the scale, nature and driving forces of the grinds culture that currently exists in mathematics?

The data used to address this research question was gathered using an online survey designed by the authors and circulated to post-primary mathematics teachers in November 2020. Preliminary analysis of the data reveals that 77% of respondents (n = 305) believed that there has been an increase in the uptake of mathematics grinds in Ireland in recent years. The three main contributing reasons that were identified by > 80% of teachers as to why students get grinds were; students’ motivation to secure extra bonus points, students’ motivation to get into a college course, and parents'/guardians’ motivation. While only 38% of responding teachers identified as current parents/guardians motivators. While only 38% of responding teachers identified did not think that the majority of students who get grinds had a positive perception of the practice in mathematics. 71% agreed that they are necessary for some students and 82% agreed that they can increase students’ confidence in the subject. However, many teachers also agreed that grinds can be a substitute for students who do not pay attention during class (52%) or for students who do not want to figure out solutions on their own (61%).

**Mark Prendergast** is a mathematics educator in School of Education, University College Cork

**Niamh O’Meara** is a mathematics Educator in EPI*STEM, School of Education, University of Limerick

**Laura Lynne Duffy** is a Post-Primary Mathematics Teacher in a high school in Brooklyn. Graduate of Trinity College Dublin Professional Master of Education programme.

**Isseult O’Rourke** is a Post-Primary Mathematics Teacher in Loreto Secondary School Balbriggan. Graduate of Trinity College Dublin Professional Master of Education programme.

Noelle O’Dwyer (SOLAS - An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnáigh agus Scileanna)

How do we conceptualise and promote relational education in ways that are comprehensible and inspiring to policy-makers, funding agencies and learners alike? Greene (1988:54) warned of ‘systems [which are] posited to be regulated, not by what an articulate public may conceive to be worthwhile, but by calculable results, by tests of efficiency and effectiveness’

These systems will, in some cases, have grown to support worthy and well-intentioned initiatives. However, the language and administration around some systems can obscure the core intention. This in, turn, can close off interest and access to opportunities for those who need these most.

This paper explores “openings” (Greene, 1988) to opportunities in education and training which are underpinned by relational approaches to education and training.

Openings are explored in terms of: peer support, the care ethic in education, learner-centred ethos, localised responses, authentic language and learner stories.

The paper draws from an action research project on peer learning in a literacy programme and wider current evidence of the learner experience in Further Education and Training. These perspectives are interwoven with philosophical interpretations of relational learning (including Buber, Eisler, Noddings, Nussbaum, Greene, Palmer and Fishkin). This tapestry is then framed in the context of developments in Further Education and Training from the turn of the 21st Century to the present day.

The paper puts forward the view that the Further Education and Training Sector is strongly placed to deepen human connections and strengthen a caring and collaborative society and economy. This can be achieved by safeguarding existing approaches to relational learning and seeking, always, to find and secure more “openings”.

Noelle O'Dwyer has held roles in teaching, policy development and management in the Irish Further Education and Training sector over the past 20 years. She is active in the areas of educational leadership, literacy development and accessible arts and culture. Areas of particular interest include slow-paced learning and late blooming.


Leah Dowdall (AONTAS); Kalianne Farren (AONTAS)

The National Further Education and Training (FET) Learner Forum was designed to capture learner voice at a national level for the purposes of informing FET provision. Over 1000 learners take part in this project each year. Due to the complexity of the Further Education and Training sector and the diversity of learners taking part, capturing FET learner voice has always been a challenge. Employing the values outlined by leading learner voice researchers, such as Laura Lundy (2007), Michael Fielding (2010), and Paula Flynn (2017), the National FET Learner Forum created a structure in which FET learners could share their voice from their local community, in a safe and inclusive setting, and with a guarantee of anonymity. Feedback remained largely qualitative, with learner focus group discussions being transcribed and analysed to identify key recommendations for action. These were then reported yearly and shared with key stakeholders.

COVID-19, however, changed this structure. The rapid change to teaching and learning processes as a result of COVID-19 led to an increased level of significance to learner voice feedback within FET. The National FET Learner Forum, like many educational structures, moved into a virtual space. This change had an impact on both the types of learners who participated and the methods employed by the project. The project moved from being largely qualitative, based on face-to-face learner feedback, to a large-scale mixed methods project, utilising survey data with virtual focus group discussions.

This paper will explore two key topics: how the National FET Learner Forum changed and what the project revealed about FET Learner experiences during COVID-19. The paper will review new processes that were put into place as a result of COVID-19, how learner participation profiles changed, and how these changes impacted research findings. Additionally, the paper will analyse some of the findings that this new process revealed, thus offering insight into FET learner experience during COVID-19. Drawing largely from research shared through AONTAS’ COVID-19 Learner Report (2020) and Quality and Qualifications Ireland Report on Teaching, Learning and Assessment (2020), this paper will present findings from the 1429 learners who participated in 2020. The overall purpose of the paper is to reflect on what we have learned about the impact of COVID-19 on FET provision and learner voice processes within FET.

Leah Dowdall completed a PhD and MPhil at Trinity College Dublin. She also holds a Masters of Education Degree from Framingham State University and has experience teaching both in the United States and Ireland. She is currently the Head of Research at AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation tasked with the delivery of the National FET Learner Forum.

Kalianne Farren completed her Masters at the London School of Economics. She is currently a Project Officer at AONTAS working on the Research Team. She is responsible for the delivery of the National FET Learner Forum.
[P16.3] The role of education in the occupational career choice of Irish underage international footballers and how can a dual career path be supported?

Vincent O’Flaherty (TU Dublin)

The Irish education system requires students by law to commence compulsory education no later than six years old whilst continuing to sixteen years old or until the student has completed three years of second-level education (Amara et al., 2004; Department of Education and Skills, 2004; McCoy & Byrne, 2011; Street, 2011; O’Donoghue, Gleson, & McCormack, 2017; Child and Family Agency, 2018). A key distinction between the two secondary school cycles is the Junior Certificate sits within compulsory education whereas the Leaving Certificate takes place after compulsory education has been completed. This point is particularly relevant to the career decision-making processes of young talented footballers. Do they continue with their academic education when there is no legal requirement to do so and how is this decision influenced by the possibility of moving abroad to become a professional footballer?

Researching adolescents who participate in sport, particularly at an elite level, involves investigating their environment, social support structures and how they develop and maintain continuity in their lives during the many transitions they make. A key feature of my research is its sociological and longitudinal dimension which provides a window into the lives of young Irish underage international football players. Because this social world has never been examined before, a conscious decision was made to ensure the focus of the research harnessed the voices of the participants. The key reason for doing so was to illustrate how they view the elite sporting environment they are immersed in, their attitudes to education and their long-term career planning, all of which are encapsulated by the ambition to migrate from Ireland to a professional football club in the United Kingdom.

The participants of the study had all been members of one of the three underage international football teams under investigation. This included the Irish under fifteen, under sixteen and under seventeen football squads. This research is underpinned by a theoretical framework called careership theory, developed by Hodkinson, Sparkes and Hodkinson (1996). The application of this conceptual framework is particularly important because it examines the central relationship between structure (the objective) and agency (the subjective). In addition to this, the work of Pierre Bourdieau, Jean Côté’s Developmental Model of Sports Participation, Schlossberg’s (1981) model for analyzing human adaptation to transition and Scanlon and Doyle’s (2018) model for supported transition are utilised as they work seamlessly to build on careership theory. They are also used to plot and understand the transitions young international footballers believe they have to make to become full-time professionals.

Dr Vincent O’Flaherty is a Sport and leisure management lecturer in TU Dublin. Former FAI, Ireland Active and Rugby Players Ireland employee. PhD focused on the career decision making of Irish underage international footballers.

[P17] Policy and Practice 2 Room 5

[P17.1] School uniform, affordability and possibilities for reform in Scotland.

Rachel Shanks (University of Aberdeen)

Findings on the affordability of school uniform have been used to inform policymakers and provide possibilities for schools to review their guidance to ensure more inclusive and socially just policies.

The cost of school uniforms is important in Scotland because of the proportion of children who live in relative poverty. The Scottish Government is committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals which include ending poverty and ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all. While the Scottish Government is committed to ending child poverty by 2030, poverty has been rising and Scotland is not on course to meet interim child poverty targets.

Under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 s.54 education authorities must ensure that no child, attending a state school, is unable to take advantage of the education provided because of the inadequacy or unsuitability of their clothing. The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires Scottish Ministers to prepare a delivery plan including measures to take to support local authorities to consider the automatic payment of benefits and support. A national minimum school clothing grant of £100 was introduced in 2018. and

This paper presents findings from an applied research project which involved 12 students who learnt to use qualitative data analysis software NVivo while sourcing and analysing the school uniform and/or dress code policies of every state-funded secondary (post-primary) school in Scotland (n=357). Content analysis and thematic coding were performed on school uniform/dress code policies, school handbooks and other relevant documents. It was found that over 96% of the schools (n=343) had a compulsory uniform and almost 20% specified an exclusive supplier. At the schools with a compulsory uniform, 320 required a school tie, 235 required a blazer and 200 schools banned jeans.

From a review of the 32 Scottish local authority websites, it was found that 6 local authorities make automatic awards of the national minimum school clothing grant when families are applying for other benefits, and 9 local authorities roll over the school clothing grant into the next school year. Only 1 local authority appeared to have both automatic grants and rollover of school clothing grant.
Key recommendations from the research have been provided to the Scottish Government and members of the Scottish Parliament. These include statutory guidance on school uniform policies developed with affordability as a priority; regular reviews of exclusive supply arrangements; and pupil involvement regarding the development and review of uniform/dress code policies.

Rachel Shanks is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Aberdeen. Originally from Lisburn, Co. Antrim, she has studied and worked in England, France and Scotland. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) with responsibility for liaison with ESI.

[P17.2] Post-Primary School Choice and Inclusion: Parental Perspectives.

Kevin Cahill (UCC)

This study focuses on the issue of post-primary school choice for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Significant issues have emerged in recent years regarding issues of access to school places in particular parts of the country. This research is also significant in terms of a proposed policy shift in Ireland towards a full inclusion model. This research is also framed within the context of the recent Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 that specifically addresses issues relating to school choice for children with SEN, and the recent ratification (2018) of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Theoretically, the study is informed by theories of intersectionality and disproportionality as it seeks to explain the diverse experiences of parents and children in their school choice experiences.

This study investigates the experiences of families of children with SEN during the process of choosing post-primary schools for children with SEN. Specific objectives relate to investigating:

- the specific experience of parents of children with SEN in searching for, and enrolling in, post-primary schools
- the intersectional influence of Socio-Economic Status (SES) on the opportunities available to children with SEN, as well as the nuanced relationship between parents and schools as they set about securing school places for their children
- exploring the positive and negative experiences of parents in the school transition process

Data were generated for this research through an online questionnaire (n=50) and follow-up interviews (n=10) with parents regarding school choice, as well as the challenges presented by the transition to post-primary school. The analysis presented here is drawn mainly from the questionnaire data.

This study focuses on both positive and negative experiences of choosing a post-primary school. These experiences will be discussed in this paper. The first round of data analysis has revealed that:

- children with SEN sometimes face significant challenges in sourcing post-primary school places
- some schools still resist children with SEN despite the legislative imperatives imposed by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 20
- children with ASD in particular geographical areas face further challenges in sourcing an appropriate school place
- some emerging indicators of factors that contribute to a positive experience of post-primary school choice.

These findings will then be discussed within the context of the theoretical frameworks and policy landscape referred to above.

Kevin Cahill is a lecturer in the School of Education, University College Cork. He teaches across programmes, conducts research and supervises postgraduate work with particular emphases on inclusive education and the sociology of education. He is also Co-Programme Director of the Postgraduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs (PDSEN).

[P17.3] ‘Among Others’ and among other possibilities in education: reimagining initial professional education with student teachers and youth workers.

Angela Rickard (MU); Marianne O’Shea (MU)

Recent demographic and attitudinal changes in Irish society in recent years, have necessitated a reimagining of the professional practice of both second level teachers and youth workers. As educators, working in formal and non-formal settings, both sets of professionals play an important role in the lives of young people. However, in the Irish context, limited examples exist of teachers and youth workers coming together to address issues of shared concern. Moreover, few opportunities are available for both sets of educators to work together to develop an understanding of the principles, purposes and practices that underpin their respective professions. Examples of youth workers and teachers coming together to examine and address the issues facing young people, spaces in schools for youth workers or links from youth work settings back into formal educational processes are limited, ad hoc and seldom appear in educational research.

Seeking to develop and deepen a shared understanding among the two professions pre-qualification, lecturers on professional programmes at Maynooth University combined student teachers from MU Dept. of Education and youth work students from MU Dept of Applied Social Studies. Catalysed by participation the ‘Among Others’ project, a multi-annual trans-national project funded by the Erasmus Plus programme and scheduled under the auspices of a Social Justice Certificate, the lecturers set out to bring the students together to participate in a series of workshops. As an invitation to open a conversation that could facilitate a shared understanding of each other’s professional practice, values and objectives, the module sought to encourage collaborative approaches to working with young people to address and enhance diversity, equality and intercultural communication.
In Phase I of the research, initial data were collected through questionnaires and focus group interviews with their teaching. Following this, the project aims to implement a new Reflective Practice model and evaluate its effectiveness. To this end, the project aims to evaluate the current levels of student teachers’ reflections and obtain their views as to the placement based on the outcome of this research project. Critical reflection is evaluated in the larger theoretical decision-making context. To this end, the project aims to evaluate the current levels of student teachers’ reflections and obtain their views as to the value of it in their teaching. Following this, the project aims to implement a new Reflective Practice model and evaluate its effectiveness.

Angela Rickard is a lecturer in the Department of Education in Maynooth University and is Course Leader for Year 1 of the Professional Master of Education (PME). Her research interests include integrating education for social justice in Initial Teacher Education; supporting creative and collaborative approaches to teaching and learning and exploring how emerging technologies can be used to complement these approaches and LGBTQI+ experience in schools.

Marianne O’Shea lectures on the Community and Youth Work programmes at the Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University, where she works with students to explore the equality and human rights dimension of these professions. Her current research and practice interests include, examining community work as a rights-based practice locally and globally, the role of local institutions addressing inequality and the participation of excluded voices in local governance processes.

**[ECR 4] Room 6**

**[ECR4.1] Developing culturally responsive practices for students with EAL in Irish post-primary schools.**

*David Larkin (DCU)*

The rise of neo-liberal politics in a globalised, privatised and deregulated labour market (Giroux, 2013) has contributed to a utilitarian framework which has, consequently, excluded some of society’s most vulnerable groups. Culturally diverse societies are becoming the norm in many Western countries. The phenomenon of migration has become an international topic among academics and has required politicians to implement various public policies to ensure minority groups’ societal inclusivity. One of the most contentious of these public policies is education. Constructs such as curricula, inclusion, special education, assessment, pedagogy and culturally responsive classrooms have all caused leaders at meso and macro level to approach and adopt frameworks that are seen to be both inclusive for minority groups and egalitarian for the majority. Over the past twenty years, Ireland has shifted from a largely homogeneous white, Catholic nation to an increasingly diverse multicultural and multilingual secular society. It is estimated that over 12% of Ireland’s population are non-Irish nationals which comprise of over 200 nationalities and 182 different spoken languages (McGinnity, 2017).

My research is a dual comparative study which will attempt to analyse teachers’ experiences of implementing language and learning supports for students with EAL in a DEIS and non-DEIS school. The researcher’s hypothesis is that a continued absence of language and learning supports, a lack of continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers and the (un)availability of school resources contribute to the increasing exclusivity of students with EAL in schools.

This presentation will adopt a Gramscian and Bourdieusian theoretical framework which will attempt to convey that cultural hegemony and cultural reproduction ensures that the ideology of the dominant culture continues to be reproduced in educational institutions much to the disadvantage of students with EAL. The researcher will argue that to counteract Gramsci’s and Bourdieu’s concepts, the adoption of culturally responsive practices in schools best ensures that all students will feel valued, accepted and included in a safe learning space.

The key findings of this preliminary study is that current research shows that there a number of construct barriers in education for students with EAL. Constructs such as high stake exams, language and learning needs, pace of classroom instruction, a lack of resource supports and insufficient teacher education on multicultural/multilingual classrooms contribute to exclusionary practices for students with EAL.

David Larkin is an English and History Teacher in County Kildare. He is a third year EdD student at Dublin City University. His current research surrounds migration studies and inclusive and special education, and culturally responsive practices.

**[ECR4.2] The Case for a Phenomenological Vision of Reflective Practice: Revealing the Spectrum of Meaning Potentials in Initial Teacher Education.**

*Shane Hanna (UL)*

The focus of this paper is to consider a Logotherapeutic and Phenomenological perspective on the reflective practice process with the aim of informing how teacher educators might engage student teachers in reflection. The paper represents the initial findings of a research PhD evaluating the model of reflective practice used on school placement. The research aims to propose an alternative model to school placement based on the outcome of this research project. Critical reflection is evaluated in the larger theoretical decision-making context. To this end, the project aims to evaluate the current levels of student teachers’ reflections and obtain their views as to the value of it in their teaching. Following this, the project aims to implement a new Reflective Practice model and evaluate its effectiveness.

In Phase I of the research, initial data were collected through questionnaires and focus group interviews with student teachers. Initial
analysis of data attempted to take into account the breadth and depth aspects of Reflective Practice. By examining what students were asked to “see” and what they saw, the question is posed: how might student teachers “see better”? Phase II has involved the creation of a series of seminars on Reflective Practice which are being taught online using Microsoft Teams with Year 1 Professional Masters in Education students. Grounded in the principles of Phenomenology, Logotherapy and Existential Analysis, the seminars aim to remotely establish a Community of Inquiry and to evaluate the impact this process and this community has on student teachers’ reflections and their engagement with the reflective process on school placement.

By focusing on individual meaning and what student’s perceive on their horizon of significance, teacher educators can broaden student teachers’ fields of vision and help them to see beyond the limits of context. A Community of Inquiry is offered as a framework for teacher educators to engage student teachers in meaningful dialogue and inquiry as a means to: examine assumptions and expectations; illuminate broader historical, socio-political and moral perspectives; find individual meaning.

The paper attempts to move beyond an analysis of the content of reflection and attempts to open up the process of Reflective Practice and make explicit the latent characteristics and attributes at the core of this decision-making process, revealing the options and opportunities which exist for teachers educators and student teachers alike.

Shane Hanna is a Physical Education and English teacher in Limerick with experience in teaching in a variety of countries and contexts and with a particular interest in International Education. He is a part-time PhD student, and a qualified Logotherapist and Guidance Counsellor with an interest in philosophy, inquiry-based pedagogy and reflective practice.

[ECR4.3] Unearthing Pedagogy: Recitative to reasoned practice.
Colm Dooley (MU)

A generation of policy publications, focussed on lower secondary education in Ireland, are now operational for a number of years. This generation of policies mandated a fundamental shift in the pedagogical practice of the Irish post-primary teaching profession. This research explores the theoretical influences on this policy formation and traces the general Irish pedagogical experience, as commented on by national commentators and international observers over the preceding five decades.

The policies outline a constructivist, learner centred, outcomes oriented curriculum, quite a pivot from the classical humanist structure which it replaces. The cognitive and affective transformative process required for the pedagogical transition desired by these policies has been observed in other jurisdictions to be complex and multifaceted.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) has often been lauded as the stage in the teacher education continuum which permits the highest level of attitudinal and practice change in teachers. For this reason, this research explores the levels of pedagogical understanding and enactment amongst a cohort of neophyte teachers in an ITE programme in Ireland. This exploration takes the form of a Qualitative Content Analysis of the student teacher’s reflective portfolios and a semi-structured focus group.

The research framework employed has been comprised of Shulman’s revised Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) construct (2012) and Loughran’s PCK enactment mechanisms. It is argued that this chosen frame reflects significant influences on this generation of policy formation and the research benefits from it informing the qualitative content analysis stage also.

Throughout this explorative study, efforts have been made to gather evidence and experience that may contribute to the construction of an artefact, concerned with the promotion of pedagogical clinical reasoning in ITE and other stages of the continuum. The results of these efforts are included at the end of this study.

Colm Dooley is a school leader, teacher, teacher educator, student and researcher. His primary research interests are in curriculum and teacher education with a specific focus on pedagogy. He is the 2021 recipient of Maynooth University School of Education’s inaugural Professor John Coolayan Scholarship Award.

[P18] Language and the Curriculum Room 7

[P18.1] The Effects of Vocabulary Depth on English Reading.
Gene Mehigan (MIE)

Vocabulary as a major component of language learning has been the object of numerous studies each of which has its own contribution to the field. Many empirical studies have demonstrated that there is a close relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading (e.g. Beck et al. 2002; Laufer & Aviad-Levitzky, 2017; Nation 2013; Qian 1999, 2002). In grappling with the complexities of vocabulary language specialists have developed a number of descriptive frameworks. One of the best known is the distinction between size or breadth of vocabulary knowledge (in simple terms, how many words are known) and depth or quality of vocabulary knowledge (i.e., how well those words are known (Li & Kirby, 2015).
The Primary Language Curriculum (NCCA, 2019, p 26) identifies the ability to ‘acquire deep and broad vocabulary knowledge to facilitate independent comprehension of texts’ as a learning outcome for vocabulary under the reading strand.

This paper explores the effects of vocabulary depth (the richness of word knowledge) on different aspects of English reading.

Conceptualizing Vocabulary Depth

Anderson and Freebody (1981) first made the distinction between two dimensions of vocabulary knowledge: breadth and depth. They argued that vocabulary depth is ‘the quality or depth of understanding’ (p. 93). In other words, depth of vocabulary refers to how well a person knows words. Size of vocabulary knowledge is relatively straightforward to conceptualise, as it is basically counting known lexical items. In contrast, there are a large number of overlapping ways in which depth of knowledge can be conceptualized. The diversity of depth conceptualisations makes it difficult to know how to approach depth from a theoretical perspective. Thus, the conceptualisations discussed in this paper will be largely driven by what measures of depth have been used in the research (Beck et al., 2002; Biemiller, 2009) and can relate to knowledge of individual lexical aspects (e.g., knowledge of multiple polysemous meaning senses, morphology) as well as more holistic mastery (e.g. collocations, semantics, register).

The presentation will examine how one might “know” a word along a continuum from no knowledge to mastery (i.e., appropriate use of the word in different contexts). It will also outline the multidimensional nature of vocabulary depth, which suggests that there are many facets to word knowledge including, but not limited to, knowledge of collocations, syntactic information, register, and associations to other words.

Dr Gene Mehigan is Vice President for Education and Strategic Development at Marino Institute of Education. His research interests are in early literacy development, motivation, struggling readers, and in teacher education. Recent research has focused on the impact of fluency oriented reading on the motivation of struggling readers in disadvantaged settings.


Céline Healy (MU)

One of the four over-arching goals of Languages Connect, Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026, is to diversify and increase the uptake of languages learned in Irish schools and to cultivate the languages of the new Irish. 13% of the population speak a language other than English or Irish at home. The strategy seeks to diversify beyond the current curricular languages and to support the new Irish in maintaining and growing their capacity to communicate in their own languages. Actions 2.D.1 and 2.D.2 sets out plans to develop Leaving Certificate specifications in Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, Polish and Lithuanian.

In Spring 2019, the Leaving Certificate Foreign Languages Development Group was established, by the NCCA, to begin developing these specifications. The specifications were developed with reference to the Common European Framework of Reference Companion Volume (CEFR CV). This represents a re-imagined approach to modern languages learning, teaching and assessment in Irish post-primary schools with an emphasis on using an action-oriented approach to develop learners’ plurilingual and pluricultural competence across the four modes of communication. A framework approach, including the introduction, aims, expectations for learners, and assessment approaches, was used across each of the specifications. Portuguese, Polish and Lithuanian are broadly aligned to levels A2-B1 of the CEFR CV. Mandarin Chinese is broadly aligned to levels pre A1-A1.

The specifications were approved by the minister for education and skills and introduced to Irish post-primary schools as curricular languages in September 2020. The first cohort of students will sit their Leaving Certificate in these languages in 2022. This presentation, given by the development group’s chair, will outline the steps taken in developing the specifications for Portuguese, Polish and Lithuanian, the decisions made, and the theoretical and practical considerations underpinning these. Participant observation was employed as a research approach.

Findings and recommendations will centre on the use of the CEFR as a guide to developing a modern language specification, the development of a framework approach, and the consultation process with language learners and teachers, curriculum development experts and the public.

Dr Céline Healy is a lecturer in education at Maynooth University Department of Education where she teaches and supervises across a range of programmes from initial teacher education to PhD. Céline is a member of the Foreign Languages Advisory Group which advises on the implementation of Languages Connect – Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-22. She is chair of the Leaving Certificate Foreign Languages Development Group, for the National Council for Curriculum & Assessment, which recently developed new senior cycle specifications in Lithuanian, Mandarin Chinese, Polish and Portuguese and is currently developing a specification for Arabic.


Sylvaine Ní Aogáin (MIC)

Abundant international and national research studies celebrate a myriad of benefits associated with immersion education. One such benefit of immersion education acknowledges that immersion students generally surpass their mainstream counterparts in the second
language (L2) acquisition process, without hindering first language (L1) development (Baker & Wright, 2017; Tedick & Lyster, 2020). Although it is widely maintained that immersion students achieve high levels of proficiency in relation to their L2 receptive skills, research indicates that oftentimes, students’ L2 productive skills do not develop to a similar standard (Allen et al., 1990; Lapkin & Swain, 2004). Interestingly, similar findings have been mirrored in the Irish context (Ó Duibhir, 2018).

Fortunately, ample research studies have been conducted over the past decade to investigate pedagogical possibilities to enhance immersion students’ L2 development. In brief, researchers, both nationally (Ó Duibhir, 2018) and internationally (Day and Shapson, 1991; Lyster 2007; Stern, 1990), suggest that drawing students’ attention explicitly to linguistic forms throughout the immersion day, during content/meaning focused lessons, provides opportunities for students to develop L2 proficiency. In an attempt to build on Irish research, the current paper aims to report on a study that investigated Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) as a pedagogical possibility to support and develop immersion students’ L2 productive skills. FFI may be considered an umbrella term for pedagogical approaches that draw students’ attention to target language features that otherwise, may go unnoticed or perhaps unused in “communicatively orientated classroom input” (Lyster & Saito, 2012, p. 596).

In the current study, eight fifth-class immersion teachers received continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to proactive and reactive (Ranta & Lyster, 2018) FFI approaches. Subsequently, teachers then implemented the innovative, newly acquired FFI approaches in their own classroom practice. Guided by a pragmatic paradigm within a sociocultural theoretical framework, qualitative data were gathered through teacher interviews (n=8), student focus groups (n=32) and observational routines conducted by the researcher. This paper reports significant findings from the unmapped terrain of participants’ perspectives regarding the possibilities for teaching and learning, emerging from implementing FFI pedagogical approaches to enhance more accurate L2 acquisition among immersion students. The paper also highlights the benefits and challenges, reported by teachers, of implementing such approaches, systematically, in Irish immersion primary school classrooms. The implications for immersion pedagogy, initial teacher education (ITE), CPD and future research are also discussed.

Sylvaine Ní Aogáin is a lecturer in Education in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Her major research interests are second language acquisition, immersion education, initial teacher education and professional development for primary teachers.

[P19] Support and Mentorship in ITE Room 8


Richard Bowles (MIC); Anne O’Dwyer (MIC)

There are many parallels between teaching and sports coaching. Both have a distinct pedagogical focus and, increasingly, the emphasis on learning in approaches such as athlete-centred coaching aligns with attempts to be student-centred in educational contexts. The two researchers in this study work as teacher educators and also coach together in a voluntary capacity. Accordingly, they became interested in the concept of learning within landscapes of practice, where “knowledgeability manifests itself in a person’s relations in a multiplicity of practices across the landscape” (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015, p. 13).

The central aims of this research were to (1) explore how each coach learned to coach better where one was very experienced and the other was relatively inexperienced, and (2) examine if learning in this context informed their teacher education practices also. Using landscapes of practice and Noddings’ (2012) ethic of care as a theoretical framework, the researchers sought to make connections between their individual and collaborative learning in coaching and teaching contexts.

Adopting a collaborative self-study approach, two coach-researchers explored their own learning as they coached together for two seasons. Data generation involved completing individual weekly reflective practice documents (n=80), audio-recorded and transcribed discussions with a critical friend (n=8), and writing annual coaching philosophy statements that each coach updated at the start, middle and end of each season. The coaches held hour-long weekly meetings where they shared and discussed their written reflections. The data were analysed thematically following Braun and Clarke’s (2013) 6-step procedure.

The collaborative nature of the coaching practices supported each coach through different stages of their learning journeys. An informal mentoring relationship developed, where each coach was able to support and challenge the other. By engaging in shared reflective practice throughout, they develop greater empathy for the players they coached and for each other as members of a small community of practice. They identified how their learning to coach better in this context also helped them to teach better in their teacher education context.

Richard Bowles is a physical education teacher educator, with an interest in self-study as research methodology. Current research projects include the exploration of the concept of meaningful PE, and the embedding of reflective practice in athlete-centred coaching settings.

Anne O’Dwyer is a teacher educator in the area of Science Education. Her research interests include Science Education, pre-service teachers’ perceptions of teaching and learning, and teacher empowerment and education. She is also interested in self-study as a research methodology in teaching and coaching.
This paper presents interim findings of assessment and feedback research in a teacher education context within a higher education institution in Ireland. Echoing the ESI 2021 conference theme of, ‘Possibilities in education: Reimagining Connections with People, Purpose and Place’, this research aims to unravel the use, impact and possibilities of Video Feedback in Higher Education towards a model of community and social presence (Mahoney et al 2019).

Carless (2020) suggests that audio and video modalities, ‘enable the production of peer feedback, and are particularly useful in remote emergency teaching or in fully-fledged online learning’ (p.5). The research examines the current feedback conceptualisations related to closing the ‘loop’ between to teaching and learning. It seeks to develop a model of sustainable dialog within the feedback (feedforward) process. Handley, Price, and Millar (2011) suggest that learners frequently report frustration about the transferability of feedback to future work which can then lead to disengagement (p.893). John Dewey (1916, 1938) suggested that knowledge emerges only from situations in which learners have to draw them out of meaningful experiences. From these meaningful experiences feedback can be provided, accepted, taken-up, interpreted (meaning-making) and utilized by the learner in preparation for another ‘loop’ (Tai et al, 2018).

Opening and closing these ‘feedback loops’ (Sadler, 1998) creates opportunities for the evaluative judgements (Tai et al, 2018) within the feedback process in order to use the information for future work (both at generic and content specific level), thus closing the loop. The implications of these interim findings look firstly to the learner embarking on a professional teacher education programme where the development of professional competence is at the heart of their future career.

This research highlights the complexities of feedback and feedback literacy as barriers to dialogical communication and feedback. Borup, Graham, and Velasquez (2011) assert that complex and difficult communications are best suited to media rich in verbal and nonverbal cues. The paper suggests that by creating the conditions towards the design of a sustainable model in which dialogical feedback/forward, it can develop, the function of feedback to be be mutually understood and utilised. Students may then have the ability to build capacity for meaning-making, which is influenced by their interaction and the student/teacher relationship within the curriculum (Ajjawi and Boud 2017; Esterhazy and Damşa 2017).

The second phase of this research focusses on the dialogical framework (Rami & Lorenzi, 2016, 2020) to re-examine the nature of teacher feedback, learning lessons from the use of audio and video feedback from Filius et al (2019); Espasa et al., 2019; Mahoney et al., 2019; Boud and Soler 2016.. With the increase in the use of virtual lectures, tutorials and feedback the next phase of the research will focus on the impact, benefits and barriers to recorded or live feedback using video as part of the dialogical process for students teachers. At the heart of the theoretical framework is the learner-teacher relationship, therefore any future design of an integrated dialogical model would have to ensure that the student is part of this process and that there are shared responsibilities (Winstone et al, 2017) between the learner, the peers and the teachers for this to be an equitable process and result in a sustainable model (Rami & Lorenzi 2020).

**Dr Justin Rami** is the former Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning and a lecturer and researcher in the School Policy & Practice, Institute of Education at Dublin City University. Dr Rami is also the Director of the Further Education & Training Research Centre (FETRC) in DCU and Chair of the Education & Training Foundation Programme (FET-HE) and the former Chair of the BSc in Education & Training. He is a graduate of the International University Leadership Management Programme (ULM) and has published in the area of Assessment, Feedback and Curriculum reform.

**Dr Peter Tiernan** is a lecturer at the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies in the Institute of Education at Dublin City University He lectures in the areas of digital media, personal development, entrepreneurship education, instructional design and teaching/training skills. He is the former of the B.Sc. in Education and Training and a member of the Further Education and Research Centre (FETRC) at DCU.

In 2020/2021, a team of lecturers from Dublin City University came together to form a team with the aim of supervising the final year projects of the final year students on the B.Sc in Education and Training in the new context of remote learning online.

These lecturers met the challenges presented to them by Covid 19 as they worked together online in the first time with each other as a team and also with the final year students to facilitate the students desk- based final year projects. These projects were in a diversity of contexts such as further education, in primary school education, in secondary school education and in training. The lecturers research interests were used to support each student project.

This paper highlights the challenges faced and addressed by the lecturers and it highlights in particular the team-based approach used by the lecturers to support each other and the students. The paper highlights the new challenges and opportunities initially presented to both the lectures and students by remote learning online.
The paper also highlights the response of the students to this new approach to supervision of their final year projects. In particular, it highlights the challenges and the opportunities presented to them by remote learning on line and how a team-based approach to the supervision of their projects developed a community of learning between the students and the lecturers.

This is an innovative initiative which had as its aim to support and develop lecturer and student relationships as a partnership and team-based approach together. It now brings the potential to be developed as a team-based approach to learning for the future. This is to promote deep learning, transformational learning and opportunities for students to develop their own possibilities in the workplace in the future. This is in terms of viewing this team-based approach as supporting them in the welfare and wellbeing of students and teachers they encounter in the future.

**Dr Trudy Corrigan** is a member of the School of Policy and Practice in the Institute of Education, DCU. She is the coordinator of the final year student on the B.Sc in Education and Training DCU. She works as part of a team with fellow lecturers to supervise the final year undergraduate student projects in teaching and learning.

**Dr Justin Rami** is a member of the School of Policy and Practice, DCU. He is a lecturer on the B.Sc in Education and Training Programme. Justin is part of a team of fellow lecturers who supervise the final year undergraduate student projects.

**Dr Jane O’Kelly** is a member of the School of Policy and Practice DCU. She is chair of the B.Sc in Education and Training Degree. Jane is part of a team of fellow lecturers who supervise the final year undergraduate student projects.

**Dr John Lalor** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Policy and Practice, Institute of Education, Dublin City University. He is also a researcher in the DCU’s Further Education and Training Research Centre (FETRC). He teaches at both undergraduate and postgraduate level in the disciplines of Values, Identity and Intercultural Learning, Citizenship Education, Curriculum Evaluation and Research. John is the Teaching and Learning convenor for the School of Policy and Practice.
[P20] Pedagogies


Mairead Nally (TCD); Karin Bacon (MIE); Carmel O’Sullivan (TCD)

Inquiry-based learning (IBL) is a child-centred approach to teaching and learning designed to promote children’s curiosity, creativity and skills for learning (Ciarrocco, 2011; Saunders-Stewart et al, 2015; Jeskova et al, 2016). IBL has come to the fore in educational research in recent years, with advocates claiming it as a means of provoking deeper engagement and learning (Short, 2017; Murdoch, 2015). IBL foregrounds the social context of learning: the building of a community of inquiry is central to inquiry.

Teacher agency has also become prominent in recent years. It has become a principle of curriculum reform in several countries, such as Scotland, New Zealand and Finland (Priesley, Biesta, Philippou & Robinson, 2015). Ireland appears to be following this trend with teachers positioned as agentic professionals in the new draft Primary Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2020).

The achievement of agency may be complicated for teachers by such factors as an extensive, prescribed curriculum; accountability measures; large class sizes, and limited resources (Priestley et al, 2012; Sahlberg, 2015). The recent changes in schools necessitated by Covid-19 may also have implications for teacher agency, as they work to follow mandated hygiene protocols and class arrangement systems.

Communities of practice can support teachers in developing and transforming their teaching (Dogan et al, 2016). Such a community can resonate with IBL’s emphasis on social learning. This paper will offer an in-depth critical examination of the literature reviewed as part of a doctoral thesis into IBL and teacher agency. It will analyse the available literature on IBL and communities of practice as potential facilitators of teacher agency. The paper will consider how the development of a community of practice in a primary school might serve to re-imagine connections with colleagues – at a time when Covid protocols keep teachers more separated than before – and connections with place, as the primary school setting becomes reframed as a community of inquirers.

Mairead Nally is a primary school teacher with 13 years of classroom experience. Her engagement with inquiry-based learning (IBL) began during a Masters in Early Childhood Education and has continued through her classroom work, as well as her teaching on a module on IBL in Marino Institute of Education. She is currently in the second year of a Doctorate in Education in Trinity College, focussing on IBL, teacher agency and curriculum.

Karin Bacon is a lecturer in the areas of Science and Social Studies education at the Marino Institute of Education, an associate college of education of Trinity College Dublin (TCD). She also co-ordinates a Masters Programme on Inquiry Based Learning (IBL). She spent seven years at the Munich International School before returning to Ireland in 1999 to work in the area of professional development and later was the first head of the International School of Dublin, which remains the only PYP school in Ireland.

Professor Carmel O’Sullivan works in the School of Education in Trinity College where she is the Convener of the Arts Education Research Group. Carmel has particular expertise in the areas of creativity and inclusivity in education, working with students, academics, practitioners and policy makers from the worlds of education, health, business, arts, and community. She is currently developing Career LEAP, an arts based work-readiness programme for hard to reach young adults who face significant barriers to entering the workplace.


Mary Masterson (UL); Timothy R. N. Murphy (UL); Mary O’Sullivan (Thomond Community College, Limerick); John Corry (Thomond Community College, Limerick)

This paper reports on a research collaboration between the School of Education at the University of Limerick and an urban secondary level-school meeting the needs of students who are challenged by socio-economic disadvantage. Teaching in a disadvantaged school context brings additional demands and challenges to teachers’ work. It is not untypical for teachers and educators to give-up on students in disadvantaged contexts. However, Greene (1995) in her book on: ‘Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change’ suggests that in such contexts it is very important to apply “initiating, constructing mind or consciousness” (p. 23). This study affirms this through its recognition that teachers benefit from opportunities to discuss matters relating to Teaching and Learning through participation in Teaching and Learning Communities (TLCs). The aim is to identify best-practice strategies to nurture the potential for teacher collaborative reflective practice in the context of Teacher Learning Communities. It is intended that this research will begin to develop more informed understandings of Teacher Learning Communities and Teacher Reflexivity for the enhancement of teaching and learning for the project participants, for the whole-school community and for the wider education community in Ireland and abroad who
The significance of this has been highlighted by both the Department of Education and Skills (DES, 2015), as well as the Teaching Council (2016). In its Framework for Junior Cycle (2015, p. 32), the DES acknowledged ‘the importance of professional development and collaboration between teachers for informing their understanding of teaching, learning and assessment.’ In the Teaching Council’s Framework for Teachers’ Learning (2015), it is acknowledged that a ‘dedicated space and time for individual and collaborative learning and reflection on same’ would be beneficial for enhancing teaching and learning in schools (p. 5). The findings from the focus group interviews with several members of the second-level school are presented in this paper. Adopting a grounded-theory approach, the researchers identified emergent themes, which were then further explored through engagement with the related literature. Qualitative results indicated the varied opportunities for promoting teaching reflexivity through teacher engagement in TLCs. The value of building a shared purpose to enhance and sustain teacher reflexivity was identified. However, results suggest that careful attention be paid to relationship building within a TLC to foster a trusting and fruitful culture, where teachers can begin to engage in reflection on their nuanced teaching experiences.

Mary Masterson is a lecturer in Education at the University of Limerick. She was awarded her PhD (magna cum laude) in intercultural education & foreign language pedagogy from the University of Kassel, Germany. Her research focuses on teacher well-being, linguistic & cultural diversity, interactive technologies, and curriculum development.

Timothy R. N. Murphy is a lecturer in Educational Research and Policy for the School of Education at the University of Limerick. He completed his doctoral work in education at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York and a Masters in Educational Research (MRes) from the Education and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Manchester Metropolitan University. His research interests include education policy and reform, equity and disadvantage in education and teacher well-being for teaching and learning.

Mary O’Sullivan is an assistant principal in Thomond Community College, Limerick. She provides personal, educational, and vocational guidance in her role as school guidance counsellor. She has taught both in Ireland and abroad and is an experienced practitioner researcher.

John Corry is an assistant principal in Thomond Community College, Limerick. He has taught English for many years and is the current Year Head for First Years in his school. He is experienced in conducting classroom research that explores the enhancement of teaching and learning.


Craig Skerritt (DCU); Joe O’Hara (DCU); Martin Brown (DCU); Gerry McNamara (DCU); Shivaun O’Brien (DCU)

This presentation is based on recently published research in International Studies in Sociology of Education (see here https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09620214.2021.1886594?src=)
School self-evaluation is a low-stakes policy mandated in Ireland in 2012 and while schools are becoming more consistent in engaging in this internal mode of evaluation, their engagement has not been uniform. Subscribing to the view that policies are not simply implemented but enacted through the creative processes of interpretation and translation, this research shows how school self-evaluation is being performed in Irish schools in various ways by various people. We identify numerous policy actors in our qualitative data: narrators, entrepreneurs, outsiders, transactors, enthusiasts, translators, critics, and receivers. This assortment of actors comprises heterogeneous entities with varying characteristics, levels of experience, and motivations, meaning it is simply not possible for school self-evaluation to be implemented as policymakers envisage.

This research aimed to involve the three main post-primary school models in Ireland: voluntary secondary schools, Education and Training Board (ETB) schools, and community/comprehensive schools. We draw on interview data gathered from senior leaders, middle-managers, and classroom teachers in five post-primary schools in Ireland.

Craig Skerrit attended University College Cork and University College London. He is a former post-primary school teacher and school leader now working in the higher education sector in Ireland. He is currently the Policy and International Programmes Manager at the Royal Irish Academy and a researcher and teacher educator at the Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection, Dublin City University.

Prof Joe O’Hara is President of the European Educational Research Association and holds the Chair of Education and is a member of the School of Policy and Practice in the DCU Institute of Education. He is Director of EQI - The Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection and a member of the Centre for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.

Dr. Martin Brown is an Associate Professor, School of Policy and Practice, the Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection (EQI) DCU Institute of Education and elected member of the Centre for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign is a specialist in educational evaluation and assessment.

Dr. Gerry McNamara is Professor of Educational Evaluation at the School of Policy and Practice, DCU Institute of Education. He is Director of the University Designated Research Centre, EQI, the Centre for the study of Quality, Evaluation and Inspection in Education and a member of the Centre for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. From 1997-2007 he was Head of the School of Education Studies, DCU. He founded and was course director of the Doctorate in Education, a taught doctoral programme in the field of educational leadership and evaluation.

Dr. Shivaun O’Brien is an associate professor in the DCU Institute of Education, School of Policy and Practice. She is he Associate Dean for Partnerships and is an active member of DCUs Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection (EQI).

[P21.2] The realities and challenges of innovative assessment in initial teacher education.

Ann-Marie Young (UL); Ann McPhail (UL); Deborah Tannehill (UL)

Globally there is a shift towards increased accountability and assessment in schools and this is echoed in an Irish context. De Luca et al (2019) found that assessment is a neglected area of study in teacher education programmes with beginning teachers subsequently being unprepared to implement assessment in schools (Herpich et al., 2018; Looney et al., 2018). It is imperative that pre-service teachers are educated to make assessment decisions that will engage and motivate students and, as a result, enhance learning. That is, improve teacher quality and demonstrate impact on student outcomes. We suggest that a teacher educator’s confidence in assessment literacy is central to determining the extent to which they are committed to producing teachers capable of meeting the assessment challenges of schools.

The aim of this project is to explore the extent to which a suite of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes introduce pre-service teachers to experiencing and developing assessment practices that are informative, realistic and scalable to the school context. In doing so it presented the realities and challenges teacher educators faced in the teaching of effective assessment philosophies and practices.

Thirteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with course directors from a variety of ITE programmes. The interviews explored, on behalf of the ITE programme to which they were aligned, the teaching and promotion of assessment philosophies and practices to pre-service teachers within the programme.

Three overarching themes, each with several subthemes, were identified and include 1) Situating assessment: Functional and philosophical considerations, 2) Assessment literacy, and 3) Modelling assessment. The findings showed some evidence of enhanced assessment discourse and innovative collaborative teaching of assessment practices, however, teacher educators were less comfortable, or unable, to discuss the deliberate ways in which programmes prepare pre-service teachers to effectively assess school students. Teacher educators conveyed the impact of policy implications, the need for assessment literacy CPD and the argument for standalone assessment modules versus an embedded approach.

Ann-Marie Young is the Academic Director of School Placement in the School of Education at the University of Limerick. Her main research interests are initial teacher education with a focus on the development of the school placement process, specifically looking at the role each of the key stakeholders play in the development of student teachers and the development of a structured and formal approach to supervision in school placement.

Kathryn Corbett (Bishop Galvin NS); Geraldine Mooney-Simmie (UL)

This research study aims to critically examine the policy enactment process of using portfolios for teachers’ learning, in the context of a national policy reform pilot study during teacher induction in the Republic of Ireland (Ireland).

The policy reform drive to tightly correlate teachers’ learning with pupil outcomes has resulted in the emergence of a new approach to appraisal mechanisms that focus on narrow modes of public accountability, rather than a generative transformation of practice and mediation with the wider world (Ball, 2003, Brady, 2016). A literature review reveals wide research on teacher portfolios, which are a deeply contested construct, where purpose, audience and ownership appear to determine the process and outcome (Granberg, 2010, Orland-Barak, 2005), resulting in a dual purpose of improvement and public accountability (Fitzpatrick and Spiller, 2010, Van Tartwijk et al, 2007). The theoretical framework for this critical interpretivist study (Bryman, 2012) draws from the complexity of practice (McIntyre, 1985, 1988), positioning (Fielding, 2007, Gunter, 2001) and teachers’ learning (Mezirow, 1988, Wenger, 1998) to identify four specific domains: Instrumental, Scientific, Humanistic and Critical.

A mixed method design (Creswell, 2014, Bryman, 2012) was used which included a critical interpretation of policy texts (Teaching Council, 2011, Teaching Council, 2013, OECD, 2013, OECD, 2016, European Commission, 2018), empirical data comprised of online questionnaires (n = 99) and semi-structured interviews (n=13) from a purposive sample of NQTs, and critical reflexivity of the researcher (Pillow, 2003). The findings offer new knowledge; a theoretical construct for a critical examination of teacher portfolios and the significance of teacher positioning on the type of portfolio constructed. The mechanism itself presents as a confused concept, with limitations for teachers’ learning by standardising the process for the ‘terrors of performativity’ (Ball, 2003), rather than for an existential purpose (Brady, 2016) and transformative possibility (Biesta & Miedema, 2002). This study has wide implications, not only for the continuum of teacher education, but for education’s social responsibility for public interest values.

Kathryn Corbett completed her doctoral study in December 2019 with the University of Limerick with this research. She is a principal of a large primary school in Dublin.

Dr. Geraldine Mooney Simmie is a Lecturer in Education, at the Department of Education and Professional Studies, University of Limerick, where she lectures in Policy Studies to doctoral students and is Course Director of a Master’s in education (mentoring).

[P22] Social Inclusion and the Role of Education Room 4

[P22.1] Learning to navigate ‘unsettlement’: three stories of how refugee youth in Greece re-imagine and re-make their futures through education.

Lucy Hunt (University of Oxford)

In recent years, Greece has seen a steady flow of young forced migrants arriving at its hardening borders. Having often left conflict-affected or impoverished areas, their dream of life in Europe is one of safety and possibility: whether educational, social or financial. However, despite having family or hopes in Northern or Western Europe, they find themselves caught in Greece behind both physical and administrative borders. They do not know if or when they will be permitted to leave this context of ‘unsettlement’, which forces them to readjust their plans; whilst simultaneously navigating marginalisation and the uncertainty of the ‘here and now’. As they do so, educational spaces become implicated in various ways, as they offer possibilities for both present and future stability.

This presentation thus explores the role of education in young refugees’ navigation of their new and unsettled social ‘seascape’ (cf Vigh), as they re-imagine and re-make their futures. It draws from ethnographic data generated over nine months of fieldwork with refugees in Thessaloniki - involving interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation as a volunteer teacher - for a DPhil project which explores the challenges and meaning of learning spaces for forcibly displaced youth (aged 15-25). The presentation is based around three young people’s stories, and as such follows Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot’s portraiture technique. Overall, it aims to demonstrate how rather than being passive victims of circumstance or under-achievers, refugee youth are in fact active and strategic navigators of their constantly shifting environment. Furthermore, the portraits exemplify how education can provide both immediate support and a basis for ‘multiple possible futures’ for young newcomers (cf Dryden-Peterson).
**Lucy Hunt** is a DPhil Student at the University of Oxford’s Department of Education. Her ethnographic research explores how socio-spatial factors impact young refugees’ and asylum seekers’ decisions to engage in post-compulsory education.


**Declan Mc Kenna (UL); Geraldine Mooney Simmie (UL)**

The problem of Early School Leaving (ESL) among young people, especially youth from socially disadvantaged backgrounds has become a prominent issue in recent years and has attracted state funded interventions with varying indicators of success. We argue that the framing of ESL interventions matter, especially framing that goes beyond ESL as an issue of the individual and/or their community. We conduct a critical literature review of ESL to examine different interventions and to offer alternative framings to a human capital focus.

The paper is set within a conceptual framework drawn from perspectives of Paolo Freire’s Pedagogy of Hope (2017) and Maxine Greene’s (1988) concept of wide-awareness, both offering a view of education as a practice of freedom and transformative possibilities. A framing with a realistic chance for youth to overcome ‘limit situations’ and not capture youth in an iron cage of determinism, and instead to offer hope against acceptance of fate and pre given futures.

This critical study aims to reveal the rhetoric-reality tensions and contradictions in the School Completion Program, done using two phases, a Critical Policy Analysis of texts and a case study at one school in the North East in Ireland. It asks:

I. What are the key international as well as national policy responses/interventions to the phenomenon of Early School Leaving (ESL)?
II. How can ESL offer hope and resistance against a seemingly dominant hegemony of human capital theory in this regard?

The critical literature review followed guidance from Creswell (2014) in relation to reviews that come from a stated perspective. We wanted the fullest spectrum of responses to the key questions guiding this search. We finally selected the review based on the key words ‘Early School Leaving’. We conducted the search from 2000 to 2020 and this yielded 368 results.

The critical literature revealed that mainstream interventions have a preponderance of neoliberal deficit models (Valencia, 2012) where educational failure is equated to failure of the individual (Bradshaw et. al., 2008). There were studies that went beyond a human capital view. Studies that held back from offering silver-bullet solutions to what is a complex problem of social and political importance. The studies shared that for ESL interventions to be successful, they at least need to be holistic, use a whole school and wider community partnership approach and take into account out-of-school factors such as social, political and economic inequalities (Choules, 2007). Pedagogies of hope and resistance were demonstrated showing that non-acceptance of meritocratic deficit based models in ESL are possible, practicable and realistic.

**Declan Mc Kenna PhD is a project worker with North Monaghan School Completion Programme. Declan’s areas of interest include social justice, youth and diversity in education and transformative and emancipatory programmes aimed at alleviating disadvantage in society.**

**Geraldine Mooney Simmie PhD. is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Education, University of Limerick where she lectures on Policy Studies to doctoral students. Geraldine’s research interest is in emancipatory teacher professional learning and development and the intersectionality between teacher education and democracy.**

**[P22.3] Creating connections through school networks. The role of two networks of DEIS schools in building social capital and enhancing professional learning and wellbeing of members.**

**Ruth Bourke (MIC)**

Drawing on case study PhD research, this paper explores the role that two networks of DEIS schools have played in enhancing the social capital, professional development and occupational wellbeing of individual members by breaking down the walls of ‘solo practice’ (Bryk 2015) to support them in their role as either DEIS principal or Home School Community Liaison Coordinator. Social capital theory views the interactions and relationships developed between members as assets or resources. Through bonding social capital (Putnam 2000), members have formed trusting relationships with others in similar roles who have become an important source of information, advice and peer support. This has involved openness, vulnerability and a willingness to share with others (Rincón-Gallardo and Fullan 2015).

The networks have also enhanced the professional capital (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012) of members through a process of social learning in which they share vital knowledge and experience, as well as access external expertise, that helps to build capacity and resilience to fulfil their roles. In this sense, it can be argued that the networks are akin to Communities of Practice (Wenger 1998, Wenger et al. 2002 and Wenger-Trainner and Wenger-Trainner 2015) that enhance the professional learning, growth, development and leadership skills of members. It is evident that the opportunities that the networks provide for members to connect meaningfully and engage with others in similar roles in the ‘safe space’ of supportive CoPs play an important role in their professional development and occupational wellbeing. Additionally, the connections formed are integral to a ‘divergent approach’ (Stoll 2010) to intractable social issues that face education.
systems globally, including changing demographics and a variety of complex social issues, and the urgent need for teachers and school leaders to develop their knowledge, capacity and skills to respond to the same (Rincón-Gallardo and Fullan 2015; Schleicer 2016; Fullan 2019; Brown and Flood 2020). The implications of the learning from this research will be considered with particular reference to the way in which the networks continue to support members a year on from the onset of the COVID19 pandemic.

**Ruth Bourke** is Acting Coordinator of the Transforming Education through Dialogue (TED) Project, Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College (MIC), Limerick where she facilitates networks of DEIS schools and engages in research and intervention projects. She is also a doctoral student in the Department of Learning Society and Religious Education, MIC, and her research is a case study analysis of two networks of DEIS schools.

**[P23 ]Practitioner Research**

**Room 5**

**[P23.1] Making Connections with People, Purpose and Place through Living Educational Theory research.**

Jack Whitehead (University of Cumbria)

In Living Educational Theory research (A, 1985, 1989, 1994, 2008, 2020) individual practitioner-researchers generate and share their explanations (living-educational-theories) of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understandings with values of human flourishing. The background includes a summary of some 50 years of educational enquiry into the question, ‘How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice as an educator and educational researcher?’

The research aims are focused on the academic legitimation of the explanations produced by educational practices of their educational influences in learning within their sites of practice, their workplaces. These include the Living Theory doctorates of four founder members of the Network Educational Action Research Ireland (NEARI) and the ESI SIG on Values-based Practitioner Action Research (v-PAR). The academic legitimation from Universities around the world is also focused on over 40 Living Theory doctorates publicly available from https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml

The methods draw on those used in the methodologies of Action Research, Narrative Inquiry, Autoethnography and Self-Study for use in enquiries of the kind, ‘How do I improve what I am doing?’ They include processes of validation for strengthening the comprehensibility, evidence, sociocultural and sociohistorical understandings and authenticity of the explanations of educational influences in learning.

Data Sources include the explanations from practitioner-researchers of their educational influences in learning. They include digital visual data for clarifying the meanings of the embodied values expressed by educational practitioners and used as explanatory principles in their explanations of educational influence. These data include the relationally dynamic values and connections expressed between participants through the virtual ZOOM conferences stimulated by the coronavirus pandemic. They include contributions to NEARI and the International Professional Development Association (IPDA).

The key findings are focused on the nature of the unique constellations of relationally dynamic values that are used by educational practitioners as explanatory principles to explain their educational influences in learning. The implications of the findings for the continuing professional development of educational practitioners are analysed in terms of making connections with people, purpose and place through Living Educational Theory research in India, Nepal, USA, UK. Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Pakistan, Hawaii and Canada. The analysis is focused on the generation of a global movement of Living Educational Theory researchers with values that carry hope for human flourishing. These values include those that unify in the ‘One’ and those that show unique differences in the ‘Many’.

Jack Whitehead is the originator of idea of Living Educational Theory research. 50 years of publications on continuing professional development at https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/writing.shtml. Former President of the British Educational Research Association.

**[P23.2] Exploring the local environment through inquiry: community, connection, action and understanding.**

Sandra Austin (MIE); Karin Bacon (MIE)

Inquiry as a theme of educational research and practice has attracted considerable interest particularly in recent years. There is a growing recognition of the role and importance of inquiry-based learning throughout education. This can be seen in the revisioning of the primary and post-primary curriculum in Ireland. Inquiry-based learning (IBL) offers a conceptual approach to teaching and learning that builds a community of inquiry, acknowledges the importance of choice and agency for the learner, and connects us to and deepens our understanding of the world around us. Bringing inquiry outside the classroom gives learners the opportunity to directly experience their local natural and built environment, and to connect the local with the global. Through inquiry, learners are empowered to take positive environmental and/or social action.
Promoting inquiry in teacher education gives teachers the confidence to embrace these principles in their own classrooms. However, deeper analysis, not only of the context and purposes of inquiry, but more significantly of analytical frameworks that can be used by teachers and students to examine their practice and learning, are not very evident in educational literature. In this paper, we will provide examples of inquiry-based learning in the local environment, examine the processes involved, and show how these enable the development of a community of inquiry, how they connect learners with their environment, and how they move them towards action informed by conceptual understanding.

**Dr. Sandra Austin** is a lecturer in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education at Marino Institute of Education, Dublin. She spent almost two decades as a cardiovascular research scientist in Ireland and the USA, receiving a Ph.D. (Pharmacology, NUI) in 2001, before moving into teacher education, completing her M.Ed. (Teaching and Learning, DCU) in 2017. Her research interests include garden-based and outdoor learning; inquiry-based learning in science and environmental education; education for sustainability; the potential for learning beyond the classroom.

**Karin Bacon** is a lecturer in the areas of Science and Social Studies education at the Marino Institute of Education. She also co-ordinates a Masters Programme on Inquiry Based Learning (IBL). She spent seven years at the Munich International School before returning to Ireland in 1999 to work in the area of professional development and later was the first head of the International School of Dublin, which remains the only International Baccalaureate PYP school in Ireland.

**[P24.3] Rich Pictures: three uses of a painting.**

**Helen Hallissey (UCC)**

Presently, I am conducting doctoral research into the writing and reading of playscripts by 10 year students. My main research question requires students and me to generate protocols for the class teacher to practically apply in her day-to-day writing or reading lesson. This is about literacy pedagogy. However, a tension arises between the teacher’s needs for a ‘low anxiety’ environment and students’ expectations of staging a play to an audience. My second question examines how two qualities in playwriting, the ‘affective’ and humour, make it an attractive form of creative writing. There are five sets of participants: students, class teachers, focus group, research peer group, critical friend. I will record ‘moments’ in this research through Rich Pictures. Conceptually, my interpreting of paintings or 2D works of art or Rich Pictures come from the stable of art appreciation. In the 1999 Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum (NCCA, 1999, p.121), we read about openness and sensitivity, time to reflect on and interpret what students see. In the 1999 ‘Introduction’ booklet (NCCA, p.16), we read about students: ‘analysing, making inferences...interpreting figurative language and imagery’. These operations are at play in Rich Pictures. An arts-based research approach, a/r/tography further informs my study as it combines art-making and writing.

Methodologically, I use Rich Pictures for data collection with research colleague in a ‘live’ context, setting up a scenario or ‘research moment’. I introduce a Rich Picture which has some ironic, quirky twist. I raise questions and colleagues give me written feedback (data). Second, I use Rich Pictures in data analysis, as road signs for deciding which data is ‘worthy’ in isolation or in juxtaposition with other pieces. Previous images are used. I use the image of a crystal (Richardson 2000) as a metaphor for constructing meaning through analysing the multiple interpretations and angles offered by the data, creating a montage of juxtaposed pieces. The crystal and the painting strike like an anvil, moulding data this way and that, sparking, colliding, and forging new, surprising connections. The third use of ‘Rich Pictures’ is to encapsulate or represent findings or ‘moments’ at conference level. Rich Pictures make my presentation more entertaining than speaking only. Four other research methods are used but only Rich Pictures can best probe those inaccessible areas of mind where meaning is fragmentary, fragile, subjective, and most likely visual.

**Helen Hallissey** is primary school teacher and a current PhD student at University College Cork. She has presented at several international conferences and has completed 4 Masters research programmes at the University of Cambridge (2017), Oxford University (2012), Trinity College Dublin (2007) and University College Cork (1994). In December 2020, She received a Coolahan Research Award hosted by the Teaching Council of Ireland for her research into effective literacy instruction.

**[ECR 5] Room 6**

**[ECRS.1] Does mentoring assist in developing new principals’ leadership skills?**

**Tiernan O’Donnell (MU)**

The purpose of this general qualitative research study is to explore the influence of mentoring on the development of leadership for learning (LfL) practices (Murphy et al., 2007; Hallinger 2011) of newly appointed principals (NAPs). This study is timely, considering the growing emphasis on the value of professional development opportunities for school leaders, especially in the context of recent policy initiatives.

To investigate NAPs perceptions of mentoring, the data were collected sequentially using semi-structured individual interviews (ten participants) and a focus group interview (five participants). Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (1977) is used as a theoretical framework to explore mentoring as a form of social learning for post-primary school principals.

This study employs thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2008) to develop four key themes relating to NAPs experiences and perceptions of...
mentoring that support/hinder the development of LfL practices, including mentoring as a supportive relationship, mentoring as a shared learning experience, mentoring that promotes emotional awareness and NAPs commitment to the mentoring process. In practical terms, mentees learn the relevance of creating the school vision, managing the curriculum and assessment programme, shared leadership, building teacher capacity and fostering a positive school environment. For mentoring to influence the development of LfL practices of NAPs, the findings allude to the importance of the matching process between the mentor and mentee, developing trust and confidence, and receiving feedback.

As this is a general qualitative study with a small sample size in a country where mentoring for school principals is a relatively new concept, the findings should be interpreted with caution. That said, this research may influence policymakers and support services to gain insights on the relevance of mentoring strategies that embrace Social Learning Theory in developing LfL practices of NAPs.

Mentoring is not researched widely, particularly with reference to the development of LfL practices of NAPs. This study provides post-primary school principals, school leadership support services and policymakers with new knowledge implicit to the benefits of mentoring NAPs.


Conor Reale (DCU)

The rights of children to participate in decision making processes which impact their lives is well enshrined as a human right on an international, regional and national basis. When Ireland signed up to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992 the ‘participation rights’ (Gal 2017) contained in Articles 12, 13 and 17 focusing on expression, information and the right to be heard in all matters affecting children were brought into focus. The ‘protectionist stance’ through which childhood has traditionally been viewed (Payne 2019) is being challenged by the belief that engaging young people with the institutions that shape their lives and building their capacity as social actors can be a critical factor in their development as individuals (Chaskin, McGregor and Brady 2018). Indeed, one of the key goals and outcomes of the National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision Making 2015-2020 (DCYA 2015) is to listen and involve children so that they are connected, respected and can contribute in a meaningful way. However, persuading young people to engage effectively with democratic institutions can be problematic. The dominant narratives and perceptions have been that decisions will be made for them by adults who are best placed to affect change. I am proposing to implement a novel programme of engagement involving young people and key decision makers. Using a Participatory Action Research model young people will be trained in how to identify issues in their school community, research the nature of these issues and take on responsibility in developing and presenting policies to key decision makers who will be able to act on these findings. This research will use both Harts ‘Ladder of Participation’ and Lundys ‘Model of Child Participation’ to illustrate how the leadership, research and participatory capacity of young people can be developed and used to bring about meaningful transformation on policy decisions which impact young people from 13-18. These years should be seen not as a transition to adulthood but a distinct stage where they are in fact effective agents of change and paternalistic approaches to engagement need to reform.

Conor Reale is the Parliamentary Education Officer for the Houses of the Oireachtas. I am particularly interested in researching student voice in decision making.


Maria Barry (DCU)

This paper draws on a qualitative doctoral case study that critically analysed Global Citizenship Education (GCE) teaching and learning practices within the situated context of Irish post-primary formal education classrooms. Teaching and learning processes, particularly participatory forms of pedagogy, are a defining and distinctive feature of GCE and its associated adjectival educations (Bamber, 2020; Bourn, 2020). This feature is associated with pedagogical innovation (Goren et al., 2019) and is connected to GCE’s roots in critical pedagogy (Freire & Ramos, 1996). In recent times, the pedagogical challenges that GCE poses for teachers and classroom practice has been highlighted in a small number of studies (Bentall, 2020; Pashby & Sund, 2020). However, it is an aspect of this emergent field that remains under-researched (Bamber, 2020, Sant et al 2018).

Situated within the study’s conceptual framework and derived from an analysis of classroom observations, teacher interviews and student focus groups, this paper presents a typology of GCE practices within formal education contexts. Built around three core pillars of pedagogy, purpose and person, the typology seeks to classify distinctive aspects of GCE teaching strategies, in order to amplify important characteristics of and differences in GCE classroom practice. In particular, it is focused on the empowering and emancipatory intent of GCE and draws on key theoretical work related to power and position in the classroom and student voices (Bizzell, 1991; Cook-Sather, 2006; Devine & McGillicuddy, 2016; Ellsworth, 1989; Freire & Ramos, 1996; hooks, 1994). I argue that students’ experiences of and positioning within GCE classroom practices vary considerably and are significantly dependent on a number of teacher stances and orientations, as demonstrated through an exploration of the typology.
Maria Barry, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies in DCU's IoE. She is a teacher educator and researcher in the fields of history education and global citizenship education. Current scholarly interests include, dialogue and discussion in the classroom, making connections between history education and citizenship education, climate change education and social justice pedagogy.

[S3] Symposium Room 7

Possibilities and challenges for Communities of Practice in Disembodied (COVid) Space.

Maeve O’Brien, (DCU); Gareth Burns, (MU); David Gibson, (DCU); Rory McDaid (MIE); Paul King (DCU); Andrew O’Shea (DCU); Cora O’Farrell (DCU)

The absence of the assumed or given relational dimension of traditional face-to-face teaching, though ‘navigable’ in the short term, poses sustainability challenges for all educational institutions. The primacy of relationships of care, trust, integrity and respect, as the context in which all teaching develops, is now disembodied, disrupted, and multi-locational.

This Symposium brings together members of Special Interest Group ‘Teacher Education: Critical Pedagogy and Praxis for Social Justice’ to discuss how we have experienced and attempted to model a community of inquiry and praxis since March 2020. Drawing on an analysis of 12 meetings, facilitated through zoom, we share extracts of our discussion of praxis, meaning-making, motivation and wellbeing/fililbeing, to facilitate a conversation about the challenges of sustaining meaningful education and community in a time of crisis.

Three themes drawn from our meetings guide our symposium:

I Teacher Educator Identity and Subjectification in Disembodied Times
II Shifting professional responsibility and vulnerability in COVid times
III Narratives of purpose and possibility: finding space for dialogue in teacher education

[P24] SEN Room 8

[P24.1] The views of parents/carers on their child’s experience of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) process in mainstream schools in Northern Ireland.

Noel Purdy (Stranmillis University College, Belfast); Gillian Beck (Stranmillis University College, Belfast); Diane McClelland (Stranmillis University College, Belfast); Celia O’Hagan (Stranmillis University College, Belfast); Lois Totton (Stranmillis University College, Belfast); Jonathan Harris (Stranmillis University College, Belfast)

This paper reports on the findings of a major study commissioned by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) as part of their ‘Too Little, Too Little’ review, and was carried out by a team from Stranmillis University College between March and September 2019. The research set out to obtain the views of parents/carers about their and their children’s experience of accessing or attempting to access services and support for a SEN or suspected SEN in mainstream schools in Northern Ireland. The research was situated within a rights framework as set out, for instance, in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006). The research adopted a mixed methodological approach involving an overview of the current legislative and policy context in Northern Ireland, followed by a detailed online survey (n=608), ten focus group interviews held in eight locations across Northern Ireland (n=55) and a further six individual interviews with parents/carers. Survey results highlighted significant failings in terms of each of the key Children’s Rights Benchmarks Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, Adaptability, Quality/Impact, Participation and Cooperation. These summary results were expanded upon in the focus group and individual interviews where the majority of parents and carers spoke of their growing sense of frustration as they were forced to ‘fight’ to access services in the first instance, often having to wait for lengthy periods and/or resort to phoning on multiple occasions to speak to professionals. Parents/carers also spoke of their own growing frustration, anxiety, confusion and alienation from a system which many found unnecessarily complex and protracted, and where guidance and support, although promised, was often inadequate or absent. This had an impact on their mental health, relationships, home life and ability to work. Six key recommendations are made to improve provision for children with SEN within mainstream schools in Northern Ireland.

Dr Noel Purdy is Director of Research and Scholarship at Stranmillis University College, Belfast where he is also Director of the Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement. In July 2020 he was appointed independent chair of the Ministerial Expert Panel on Educational Underachievement in Northern Ireland. He is a parent governor of a special school outside Belfast.

**Finbar Horgan (DCU) & Neil Kenny (DCU)**

This presentation will discuss the outcomes of a systematic literature review that synthesised qualitative evidence pertaining to the perspectives and experiences of autistic children and young people enrolled in mainstream/inclusive second-level education. Despite increasing recognition of the importance of including the voices of all children and young people regarding matters that affect their lives, research exploring the experiences of students on the autism spectrum pertaining to their educational experiences remains sparse. Moreover, the views of key adult stakeholders are often prioritised in existing research leading to a gap in knowledge around the most effective methods to garner the views and perspectives of this group. The aim of this review was to answer the follow two main questions:

Firstly, what are the experiences and perspectives of young people on the autism spectrum regarding their mainstream secondary school placement? and Secondly, what methods have been used to elicit the voices of this group? Data was synthesised thematically using a thematic framework which resulted in the emergence of four overarching or analytical themes based on what the young people had to say about their educational experiences. The themes include social inclusion, academic inclusion, environmental impacts and impact on well-being. In terms of data collection methods, the most common form of data collection was semi-structured interviews. Only a small number of studies utilizes multiple methods to gather the views of this heterogeneous group. A small number of the included studies used a multi-modal approach including adapted semi-structured interviews, pupil diaries, photo elicitation, pupil drawings and participatory activities. This review highlights that when their voices are prioritised and appropriate well-considered data collection methods are implemented, students on the autism spectrum can give detailed accounts of their experiences. Furthermore, the young people often offer practical solutions to overcome the challenges they face and suggest how support may be improved. Lastly, this review highlights a distinct need for further research in this area, particularly, in-depth qualitative research that prioritizes the voices of this group in the Irish context. A well-considered, participatory approach will allow students to discuss their concerns as well as their suggestions regarding inclusion for autistic students in mainstream secondary education moving forward.

**Finbar Horgan** is a PhD researcher in the School of Inclusive and Special Education at DCU. His research explores learner voice and the experiences of autistic young people in mainstream education.

**Dr. Neil Kenny** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Inclusive and Special Education at DCU's Institute of Education. He is Chair of Master of Education in Autism.

[P24.3] An investigation into collaborative practices between the class teacher, the special education teacher (SET) and the speech and language therapist (SLT) to identify and meet the needs of students with SLC difficulties in Irish primary schools.

**Tara Concannon (MIC); Margaret Egan (MIC)**

The Department of Education have identified a need to foster collaborative practices to support student language acquisition. This research involves an exploration into collaborative practices to identify and meet the needs of students with speech, language and communication difficulties in Irish primary schools. It investigates stakeholders’ perspectives of collaborative practices in the contemporary school environment, focusing particularly on the interactions between the class teacher, the special education teacher (SET) and the speech and language therapist (SLT) to enable students with additional needs in language to access, participate in and benefit from the curriculum. The research is situated within the theoretical framework of Community of Practice (CoP) (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and a social constructivist paradigm was adopted for the investigation. As this research is predominantly qualitative research, the researcher utilised semi-structured interviews as her primary data collection method. The research findings highlight that stakeholders perceive collaboration as a valuable tool in improving student learning, establishing effective partnerships and sharing knowledge and skills. A wide spectrum of approaches to ‘collaboration’ practiced by stakeholders were identified in this research. It was evident that the classification and level of collaboration varied from participant to participant. The primary reason for this is that there is no concrete definition at policy level. Furthermore, the research identified a breakdown in communication between stakeholders within the school environment and outside of the school environment. It became apparent that the primary causes of this breakdown is the fact that teachers and SLTs are employed by different departments and are trained in isolation. The data from this research may inform future collaborative practices in education, approaches to initial teacher education (ITE) and continued professional development (CPD) for teachers in Irish primary schools.

**Ciara Concannon** is a primary school teacher, currently teaching Junior Infants in St. Brigid’s Girls National School in Killester, Dublin. She graduated from Mary Immaculate College, Limerick in 2016 with a First Class Honours degree, with a specialism in Special Education. She received a presidential scholarship for attaining the highest results in the SEN cohort. Her Final Year Project was the runner up to the Peadar Cremin Medal for outstanding research under the supervision of Dr. Margaret Egan. She commenced a Masters by Research in September 2017 with Dr. Margaret Egan. In April 2018, the researcher was brought before the Transfer Board at the Research and Graduate School in Mary Immaculate College, where she presented her study. The researcher was granted permission to continue her study at a PhD level due to the calibre of work completed. This year Ciara received a Departmental Assistantship from MIC and is supporting the Psychology of Education team in the delivery of lectures and tutorials. Her research involves an investigation into collaborative practices to identify and meet the needs of children with speech, language and communication difficulties in Irish primary school.

**Margaret Egan** (Dept. Educational Psychology, Inclusive and Special Education) is a Lecturer in Inclusive and Special Education at Mary Immaculate College. Her research interests are in Inclusion Policy and Practice; Language and Literacy for students with additional needs.
Parallel Session 6 (Friday 26th 14.30-15.15)

[P25] Primary Education  Room 2


Niamh O’Toole (ETNS); Mary Cunneen (UCD)

Coaching, a concept most noticeably associated with those in the areas of business and sport, is a relatively new initiative adopted by leaders in education who consider it an extremely beneficial leadership development tool. The study explored the role of coaching for primary school principals in the Republic of Ireland. The participants came from a variety of contextualised settings yet with the same overarching ethos as they were all principals of Educate Together Schools.

The extent to which primary school principals accessed a coach and determined how coaching had been utilised was the overall aim of the study. It interrogated the role of coaching in addressing the challenges faced by educational school leaders as well as the opportunities it provided for those who engaged with it.

The underlying objectives of the study were:
1. To explore the essence of what ‘coaching’ means to principals in their role as school leaders.
2. To determine the needs of principals in accessing the coaching service.
3. To investigate the coaching experience of the participating principals
4. To examine the gaps or key unknowns in relation to principals in utilising and/or in practising ‘coaching’ in their role.

An interpretive paradigm methodological approach was used to gain an in-depth understanding of interpreting primary school principal’s experiences of coaching as it concerns itself with “understanding the world from people’s subjective experiences” (Waring, 2017:18). Six principals were selected for interview as this allowed for an in-depth exploration of the direct experiences, reflections and emotions of the principals as they described how they accessed coaching and how it impacted their lives both personally and professionally.

The findings from this study suggest that Irish primary school principals in Educate Together Schools were cognisant of the importance of accessing coaching as a support network in order to cope with educational change and the perceived challenges encountered within their role. The principals valued coaching as a leadership development tool and were willing to access it, be it for personal and/or professional reasons, to support themselves as leaders – empowering staff and gaining a more successful work/life balance was high on their agenda. They communicated that both their professional and personal lives had been positively impacted by their experience of coaching.

Having recently completed her Masters in Education (Specialism in Leadership) at Maynooth University, Niamh O’Toole was appointed principal to Killester Raheny Clontarf ETNS. She brings an array of teaching experience both in the ETNS sector and African and Australian communities to her new role. Her qualifications also include a Certificate in Multi Denominational and Ethical Education as well as a Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership.

Dr Mary Cunneen is lecturer and acting Assistant Professor/ Director of the BSc in Mathematics and Science and Education with the School of Mathematics and Statistics at UCD. Her research interests lie in the field of mathematics education and school leadership for STEM education with a gender focus.

[P25.2] Considering the ethos of the Church of Ireland primary school: the student voice.

Jacqui Wilkinson (DCU)

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states there is a legal requirement to listen to and value the views and experiences of children in matters which affect them. Typically referred to as the student voice, this rightfully includes students’ views on school ethos. The Education Act (1998) required all schools to consider their characteristic spirit, determined by ‘the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school’. In primary schools, ethos or characteristic spirit is articulated through both explicit and implicit components. A
recent call for the Education and Training Board to provide an ‘explicit articulation of characteristic spirit’ for its schools to avoid local confusion (O’Flaherty, Liddy, & McCormack, 2018) suggests that all schools require new guidance and support in their consideration of characteristic spirit. Published guidelines for schools to self-evaluate their ethos were recommended by the Advisory Group’s report of the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector (2012), these were to be informed by the views of young people.

There has been a lack of research showing the input of students in discussions about school ethos, this study aims to fill the gap by reporting on the student voice from Church of Ireland primary schools.

A sample of 3249 4th, 5th, and 6th class students attending 92 Church of Ireland primary schools completed a survey in 2019. One instrument was composed of nine Likert-type scales, designed to assess the students’ attitudes toward specific aspects of the ethos of their school, including attitudes toward Christian ethos, teachers, relationships in school, the environment, assembly, and religious education.

The data demonstrated the reliability of the nine measures, subsequent analysis showed that more positive attitudes toward school ethos were associated with being female, being younger, attending church, praying, having higher wellbeing scores, and having a positive attitude toward Christianity. Overall, the students in the sample displayed positive attitudes toward the ethos of their schools, however attitudes towards religious education and school assembly were less positive. It is concluded that the student voice, specifically their attitudes towards and their lived experiences of school ethos, should be given full recognition and inclusion in the process to formally articulate an individual school’s ethos.

Jacqui Wilkinson is Assistant Professor in the Institute of Education, Dublin City University. She lectures in Religious Education and is currently working for a doctoral degree in the University of Warwick.

[P25.3] What's the (gender) difference?: Views on male primary teachers in Northern Ireland.

Jonathan Harris (Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement, Stranmillis University College, Belfast, NI)

Northern Ireland, like most developed countries, has experienced a long-term decline in the proportion of male primary teachers, to around 15%. The question of males in teaching has been connected in public discourse to the long-standing problem of underachievement lying particularly with working class, Prote.

Three key themes emerged from the project data. Firstly, it is clear that gender equality is a strong shared desire across all stakeholders in the primary school. Secondly, male teachers were seen as particularly ‘fun’ by pupils, parents and teachers alike. Thirdly, the theme of male teachers providing vital role models for children coming from disadvantaged and/or single-parent households was strong in parents’, principals’ and teachers’ interviews.

While this small pilot study cannot claim to provide generalised conclusions, the rich qualitative data gathered here goes some way to supporting calls to work harder to change the prejudicial views in society which appear to discourage males wishing to embark on a career in teaching, especially in primary schools and, most acutely, working with children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Further research could explore the issue of the impacts of teacher gender in primary education across a wider range of schools of different management types and in different community settings across Northern Ireland and further afield.

Jonathan Harris is the Research Fellow at the Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement based in Stranmillis University College. His background is in geography, and he is currently working on a range of research projects related to social justice and equality in education in Northern Ireland.

[P26] Educational Policy in Practice Room 3

[P26.1] Inclinations of habitus and the challenge of changing dispositions: critical literacy as a social imperative.

Donna Hazzard (St Mary’s University College Belfast)

There are ‘several myths that currently parade as silver bullets’ in the field of education’ (McLaren, 2015:217). One such myth is meritocracy, a neoliberal concept hallmarkked by individualism and competiveness that assumes that education is society’s great equaliser (McLaren, 2015). Even though research shows that one of the most powerful determinants of educational success is socioeconomic background and that marginalised pupils continue to experience opportunity gaps in our schools, many student teachers believe that
education is for all pupils regardless of gender, race or class (Zion, et al, 2015). This meritocratic illusion ignores the politics of poverty and disposability and reinforces structures and patterns that see groups of learners alienated (Giroux, 2004). As products of the system, student teachers tend to be incurious and unquestioning of its norms (Cieslik and Simpson, 2015). Bourdieu’s (1977) key conceptual tools expose this meritocratic illusion and explain how the field of education reproduces inequity in often taken-for-granted social practices and power relations while Mills (2008) suggests that Bourdieu’s theories hold possibilities for teachers at all levels to improve the educational outcomes of marginalised students. Drawing, therefore, on a Bourdieusian analysis, I argue that having a critical literacy perspective is vitally important because it fosters tendencies that dispose student teachers to work in the direction of social justice and in so doing, has the potential to help mitigate some of the barriers exacerbating inequality. Though the literature on critical literacy is expansive, there is a significant gap in studies about how to develop pre-service teachers’ knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach critical literacy for social justice (Skerrett, 2010; Mosely, 2010). Specifically there has been little empirical exploration of how structural processes have an effect on critical literacy acquisition (Collins, 2000; Marsh, 2006).

In this research I consider how developing a critical literacy perspective can nurture student teachers’ ideas and understanding about teaching for social justice. The challenge is that we all ‘perpetuate political values, beliefs, myths and meanings about the world that have real social and material consequences’ (Darder, 2017:21). Being critically literate, however, can provide philosophical principles that help student teachers connect what is done in schools with the wider social world and has the potential to reframe student teachers’ perceptions about the world and a possibility of a more just education system (Luke, 2000). This action research study was conducted in a teacher education college in Belfast, Northern Ireland. It involved evaluation of eight self-selecting undergraduate teachers’ experiences as they participated in a literacy module infused with critical literacy.

Donna Hazzard is a Principal Lecturer at St Mary’s UC, Belfast, where she has responsibility for teaching undergraduate Primary and Post-Primary Literacy degree courses. Donna is Director of the College’s M-Level Programme.


Thomas Walsh (MU)

Alignment and coherence within the curriculum between vision, content, pedagogy and assessment are critical components of successful curriculum design (Kelly, 2009). Equally important is an alignment and coherence between the curriculum and wider education policies. Understanding policy as both text and discourse (Ball, 1993), interpreted and redeveloped recursively across a variety of stakeholders and within a multiplicity of contexts, policy alignment and coherence are challenges within complex education policy ecosystems. ‘Crafting’ (Honig and Hatch, 2004) such coherence in a time of policy change is an ongoing, dynamic and intricate process for all actors and sectors in the education system as they adapt to make connections with and integrate reforms within their professional practice. In the Irish context, education policy is centralised relative to many jurisdictions (Coolahan, 2017). More recently, policy development has been devolved to a wide range of educational agencies, with varying levels of autonomy, under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills. This has led to a messy and fluid diffusion of policy at the centre, where there is often an insufficient awareness of how various policies relate to and cohere with one another.

In the context of the redevelopment of the primary school curriculum by one such agency, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2020), this paper explores the complex and diffuse education policy landscape in Ireland and its implications for curriculum redevelopment and enactment in schools. Framed at the interface between the curriculum and wider education policy, the paper critically analyses the multiple and dynamic influences on curriculum redevelopment within the wider policy ecosystem and the power dynamics inherent in these relationships. It does this by mapping the current policy education landscape in Ireland from the supranational to the micro levels. The paper concludes with key messages and implications for the Irish context. Among these is the need for policy and curriculum development within the framework of a ‘competent system’ (Urban et al., 2011), where there is synergy and reciprocity between the various actors across all levels of the system. Moreover, the paper argues for opportunities for teachers, individually and collectively, to make meaning of, negotiate connections with and gain an ownership over the curriculum reform to support sustainable integration in the context of their existing policy, practice and professional identity landscapes.

Dr Thomas Walsh is a lecturer and deputy dean of the Department of Education in Maynooth University. His research interests include history of education, curriculum policy development and early childhood education. He is a member of the NCCA Advisory Panel on the redevelopment of the primary school curriculum.

[P26.3] The Positioning of the good teacher in Irish education, an educator or instrumental learning manager.

Joanne Moles (UL); Geraldine Mooney Simmie (UL)

The teacher’s role in Ireland has changed several times and in unprecedented ways in recent years. Policy imperatives for learning outcomes changed the education system towards a State centred system of performativity (Ball, 2003). Bernstein’s (2000) distinction between the Official Recontextualising Field (ORF) and the Pedagogical Recontextualising Field (PRF) indicates how a teacher’s role reflects the strength of the State’s control.
Here we conduct a philosophical critique of the contemporary positioning of the good teacher in Irish education, a system traditionally dominated by Essentialism and Consensualism and largely concerned with obedience and preparation for the workforce (Lynch et al., 2012). The key question in this critical scrutiny asks whether pedagogy enacted by the good teacher as an educator for a practice of freedom, for engaging in one’s own life project and learning to live well with others in the world (Biesta, 2020; Todd, 2016) is compatible with the good teacher as an instrumental learning manager for a performativity, limited exclusively to the criteria of assessment (Giroux, 2013). Our position is that teachers should be ethically informed and committed to rigorous critical debate and philosophical inquiry which inform autonomous decisions based on virtue ethics relevant to their own context.

We illustrate our argument by drawing on two exemplars of pedagogical constructs in which education practices in Ireland reflect a regulatory discourse which rewards performativity. The practice in classrooms of students raising their hands in response to a teacher’s request is a clear indication of hierarchy being enacted.

The second exemplar reflects on assessment practices and associated concerns with meeting grading criteria. There is concern that within Irish education too much concern is given to the summative Leaving Certificate examination, and that this impacts negatively on the post-primary school experiences of young people. (OECD, 2020) We contend that this favours a less critically reflective outlook on knowledge and less personalised learning experiences.

As one set of practices constrains or curtails full human development, we seek to strengthen a case for teaching in a way which promotes positive attitudes to self, others and the planet. We concur with findings that simplistic managerialism which does not take account of teachers’ unique abilities or the complexities of their local contexts is not conducive to producing good teachers (Thrupp and Wilmott, 2003).

Joanne Moles PhD is a (mostly) retired Physical Educationist who retains an interest in how education is perceived and enacted and how State policies impact on people’s ability to make sense of their lives. She strongly avers the importance of philosophical critique and informed debate about what, how, why and for whom education is undertaken.

Geraldine Mooney Simmie PhD is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Education, University of Limerick where she lectures on Policy Studies to doctoral students. Geraldine’s research interest is in emancipatory teacher professional learning and development and the intersectionality between teacher education and democracy.

[P27] Policy Room 4

[P27.1] “I would rather more work on teaching phonics” – an exploration of the struggles facing teacher educators in the Sociology of Education.

Aimie Brennan (MIE); Angela Canny (MIC)

Many countries over the last decade have moved their ITE programmes towards a model based less on academic preparation to one that incorporates more school-based experience. The balance between theory and practice has shifted, with the term ‘theory’ being reconceptualised as theory linked to what works in the classroom – a reorientation driven by the OECD. Simultaneously, there has been a growing acknowledgement of the value of contesting knowledge; of opening up education. Advocates of reform suggest that ‘analytical reasoning, critical thinking, the ability to generate fresh ideas, the practical application of theory etc.’ should even be included in reform of post primary education (Hyland, 2011). We present evidence from over 100 undergraduate student teachers which suggests that students are deprioritising engagement with the Sociology of Education in favour of practice knowledge. Against the backdrop of this new data we discuss the unique challenges facing teacher educators who work within the foundation disciplines, including; An increased practice-orientation in the ‘new’ Bachelor of Education programme; limited contact time with students; the erosion of subject specialist teacher educators, the lack of assessment of foundation dispositions within the school placement model and the struggle to engage prospective teachers with ‘contested knowledge’. We acknowledge the importance of centralising professional knowledge in a professional degree programme, but we note the move towards a model of ‘education’ rather than ‘training’ in ITE and advocate for challenging students to explore the individual and institutional reproduction of racism, gender inequality, socio-economic marginalisation, privilege, authority, power and conformity, at a time when openness and criticality are most needed.

While the foundation studies strictly hold an important place within the structure of initial teacher education in Ireland, recent policy and structural changes to the B.Ed. are negatively impacting the quality and depth of theoretical development in the programme. Furthermore, 92.2% of student teachers in our sample say that the Sociology of Education is relevant for teachers, but few can identify the links between Sociology and other pedagogical subjects (i.e. linking theory with practice). The findings presented in this paper are part of a broader longitudinal study on student teacher engagement with foundation studies, which looks at student attitudes towards the foundation studies; the pedagogy of Sociology in professional practice and the position of the foundation studies in ITE policy.

Dr Aimie Brennan is a lecturer in education policy in Marino Institute of Education, founder of the STER project (student teacher educational research) and convenor of Sociological Association of Ireland study group ‘Pedagogy of Sociology in Professional Practice’. Her research interests are in education policy, the development of education research and the position of foundation studies in initial teacher education.

Dr Angela Canny is Assistant Dean of Education in the Faculty of Education, Mary Immaculate College. Angela lectures and researches the Sociology of Education across early years and initial teacher education programmes.
[P27.2] Whose knowledge matters in the policy cycle? Critical insights to the field of education on how we might interrogate assumptions about knowledge that frame policy development

Martin Galvin (UL), Geraldine Mooney Simmie (UL)

Education is at a time of change and contest in its practice, theory and policies. Given the international crises of democracy, which has foregrounded a crisis of knowledge, the challenge to reimagine connections with people, purpose and place is timely. This paper offers some critical insights to the field of education on how we might interrogate assumptions about knowledge(s) that frames the global, national and local policy cycle. Fuelled by a tight scientism (Hyslop-Margison & Naseem, 2018) and meta-discourse of technical, evidence-based knowledge and expertise; policy increasingly limits what counts as knowledge and marginalises lay, situated, experiential, consensual, indigenous and other alternative ways of knowing. Taking the example of an Urban Regeneration Partnership, we investigate an expert and lay knowledge distinction in the policy cycle as a site of discursive struggle and contradiction (Engeström, 1987). The data set discussed includes a discourse analysis of a policy text and in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of citizens and community workers (n=26). We found that epistemological practices through which the state negotiates policy creates structural and symbolic barriers privileging rationality and excluding alternative episteme situated in community, place and experience. Of concern is the reproductive effect dominant assumptions have in such contexts, particularly their capability to disorganise the potential of citizens to develop themselves and their communities on their own terms. We argue Education has a pedagogical and political imperative to engage with people and communities to offer alternative critical forms of social organization grounded in epistemic justice (Fricker, 2007) that recognise multiple ways of knowing. Our findings caution against colonising forms of logical rationalism that fail to acknowledge or agonise about issues of contradiction, differential power relations, diverse cultural and value systems, and variegated knowledge forms.

Dr Martin Galvin is University College Corks Civic and Community Engagement Officer, where he leads UCC’s community engagement strategy and partnerships. An affiliated researcher, with the Institute for Social Science in the 21st Century (ISS21), his research examines questions of power and empowerment pertaining to citizen participation in policy processes. Martin was a visiting researcher at the University of Helsinki with Professor Yrjö Engeström, and has a background in education disadvantage, and community development. From 2008 to 2016, he managed an initiative of the University of Limerick in support of communities undergoing regeneration in Limerick City.

Dr Geraldine Mooney Simmie is a Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Education, University of Limerick, where she lectures in Policy Studies to doctoral students. Geraldine’s research interest is in emancipatory teaching and teacher professional learning and the intersection between education and democracy. Her book Democracy and Teacher Education written with a colleague in Sweden is published by Routledge.

[P27.3] The Irish Language in the North: from education policies to learner experiences and motivations

Leanne Henderson (QUB), Janice Carruthers (QUB)

The provision of Irish language learning at school in the North is primarily as a main curricular language alongside French, German and Spanish, despite its unique position as an indigenous language across this island. The main difference is that Irish language provision is divided along community lines, whereby it is taught in largely-Catholic and integrated schools and not in largely-Protestant schools. In addition, there is a very small but growing Irish-Medium sector (<1% of schools): with this type of provision more common at Primary level, there is inadequate continuity at Post-Primary transition. Against a backdrop of serious overall declines in language learning (with significant variation between individual languages) at the post-compulsory phase, Irish uptake appears to be somewhat more stable.

This paper draws on data from a larger study across the four curricular languages to provide an in-depth analysis of the position of the Irish language in the school system in NI. Using secondary data sources, including policy documents and official statistics, and original research with a cross-sectional sample of post-primary pupils, we discuss inconsistencies in the education policy environment, differential provision across the school sector and document how Irish language provision is viewed and experienced by young people.

Our data provide insights into provision of Irish language learning and qualifications, and Irish-medium education in NI. We discuss learner opportunities and motivations with regard to language choice and continuation, including commentary on the content and difficulty of formal qualifications at GCSE (Age 16) and A-Level (Age 18). Our findings show Irish uptake to have less stark inequities by school-type (grammar / non-grammar) and socio-economic status (Free School Meal Entitlement) than the other main curricular languages. However, despite the apparent stability of GCSE uptake, we show variations over time in the proportions studying Irish as a ‘first’ (L1) and ‘second’ (L2) language. We also comment on the absence of an A-Level L1 Irish qualification which compares unfavourably to provision for indigenous languages in other contexts, such as the Republic of Ireland and Wales. We show that despite ongoing policy commitments to promote Irish-Medium education that current provision does not meet demand.

The paper concludes by outlining policy interventions which have the potential to improve curriculum and qualification provision for the Irish language in the North. Our proposals also address the renewed commitment to legislate to support Irish made in the recent New Decade New Approach agreement (Northern Ireland Assembly 2020).
This need through the development of the Teaching Online Programme (TOP). This multifaceted initiative introduced student learning that had heretofore not been witnessed in Irish education (Mohan et al., 2020). One of the many consequenc

In March 2020 the closure of educational institutions in the Republic of Ireland as a result of Covid

Ronan Lynch (DkIT); Peter Morris (DkIT)

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it a seismic shift in the way that education has taken place in Ireland since early 2020. This shift to teaching in an online, remote mode has been a steep learning curve for most third level educators. Amid a new reality of muted microphones, inoperative webcams, barking dogs, crying babies, slamming doors, and everything else in between, the challenge of engaging learners remains critical.

This article highlights the experiences of higher education teachers amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the currency of the situation, little is known about these experiences, save from anecdotal evidence. The unparalleled changes in education since the emergence and proliferation of the pandemic has resulted in greater numbers of educators now teaching in the online, remote space. For this study, a questionnaire was completed by 72 participants, third-level educators, focusing on their experiences of moving to online, remote learning, under a wide-ranging series of topics, including: (i) planning class, (ii) classroom techniques, (iii) the learner, (iv) supports and (v) the teaching space. This article details findings that specifically relate to new classroom techniques adopted by educators that aimed to better engage the remote learners online. In the thematic analysis that ensued, the findings extracted two main themes and a number of respective sub-themes. Firstly, there was a variance of new teaching practices, including a greater emphasis on peer-to-peer collaborative learning; the need of the teacher to build relationships with and among learners; the elicitation of learner-teacher engagement; the adoption of new classroom activities; the emergence of new teaching approaches; and the changing role of assessment. Secondly, the embracing of technology, including the role of breakout rooms; the creation of more downloadable content; and the use of new teaching tools. Conversely, some participants made no changes to their pre-Covid approaches to learner engagement. Each of these findings are examined in this article.

This article provides a close examination of the experiences of higher education teachers with changing to online and remote learning at a third level institution in Ireland amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This article primarily focuses on the means of strengthening learner engagement. The findings aim to provide valuable insights into the field during the pandemic, and with that prove useful for policy and development in higher education, both nationally and internationally.

Dr Ronan Lynch is a lecturer and programme director in the Department of Visual and Human-Centred Computing in Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT). Ronan’s Ph.D. centred on Alternate Reality Games, culminating in Plunkett’s Pages, an interactive narrative that taught players about the 1916 Easter Rising. Ronan has completed a MA in Learning and Teaching, focusing on the experiences of DkIT lecturers with blended learning.

Peter Morris is a lecturer in the Department of Visual and Human-Centred Computing, in Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) and supports his colleagues as Technology Enhanced Learning Leader. Peter is accredited as a Certified Member of Association for Learning Technology (CMALT) UK, with the specialist area of Staff Training, having also completed a MA in Learning and Teaching.

Enda Donlon (DCU); Marie Conroy Johnson (DCU); Audrey Doyle (DCU); Elaine Mcdonald (DCU); PJ Sexton (DCU)

In March 2020 the closure of educational institutions in the Republic of Ireland as a result of Covid-19 precipitated a rapid move to remote learning that had heretofore not been witnessed in Irish education (Mohan et al., 2020). One of the many consequences of this has been a greater focus upon online pedagogies in Initial Teacher Education programmes, with a view to preparing student-teachers to engage in emergency remote teaching at primary and post-primary levels should the need arise in the future.

This paper outlines the experience of one post-primary concurrent ITE programme (--removed for peer review --) and how it responded to this need through the development of the Teaching Online Programme (TOP). This multifaceted initiative introduced student-teachers to both the theory and practice of synchronous and asynchronous online teaching via a tutor-supported and structured online peer-teaching...
experience. A central focus of this programme is student-teachers’ creation of ‘presence’ in these online environments, a factor which has been identified as critical for effective online teaching and learning (Ni Shé et al., 2019).

To that end, this paper considers how these novice student-teachers facilitated and experienced this sense of presence in an online peer-teaching environment. It utilises the Community of Inquiry framework (Garrison et al., 2010) as a lens to focus on three specific but interrelated forms of presence - teacher presence, social presence, and cognitive presence - and how these manifested and contributed to the experiences of teaching and learning in an online environment. Data were obtained via focus group interviews conducted with student-teachers who engaged in this online peer-teaching programme. These interviews were transcribed and coded both deductively (using the aforementioned Community of Inquiry framework) and inductively (using thematic analysis).

Situated within an evolving educational policy context within the Republic of Ireland, this paper provides a timely account of one ITE programme’s approach to preparing student-teachers for the possibility of emergency remote teaching, and the experiences of student-teachers who engaged in this. The findings around ‘presence’ are also considered with regard to the key issue of teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Izadinia, 2012), and to student-teacher perceptions of ‘being a teacher’ in light of these sudden and unexpected circumstances that are widely expected to have long-term implications for teacher education (Flores & Swennen, 2020).

**Dr. Enda Donlon** is a member of the School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies at the DCU Institute of Education. His teaching and research interests include teacher education and digital learning, with a particular focus on where these intersect.

**Ms. Marie Conroy Johnson** is Director of School Placement for the BReEd programme, and lectures in the area of curriculum, methodology and teacher professionalism in DCU Institute of Education.

**Dr. Audrey Doyle** is an assistant professor in the School of Policy and Practice at the DCU Institute of Education. Audrey completed her PhD in July 2019; the thesis was entitled “Curriculum becoming in the assemblage of lower secondary education in Ireland”. She was principal of a post-primary school for nine years.

**Dr. Elaine McDonald** is Head of School, Policy and Practice at the DCU Institute of Education. Research interests include gender in education, history of education, educational disadvantage, teacher professional identity and role assumption.

**Dr. PJ Sexton** is a Lecturer in the School of Policy and Practice at the DCU Institute of Education and is currently the Director of CREATE21 (Centre for Collaborative Research Across Teacher Education for the 21st Century). He is Chair of the Bachelor of Religious Education and History/English/Music Programmes and contributes to two MA (Chaplaincy Studies and Pastoral Work, Religion and Education Post Primary) and to the Doctorate of Education Programme.

**[P28.3] Re-imagining new possibilities for Teacher Placement for post-primary student teachers: the role of the assessor in Classroom Based Assessments**

**Audrey Doyle (DCU); Marie Conroy Johnson (DCU); Elaine McDonald (DCU); PJ Sexton (DCU); Enda Donlon (DCU)**

In 2012, the new Junior Cycle curriculum for lower secondary education in Ireland proposed major pedagogical changes not only in the classroom but specifically to how Initial Teacher Education prepared new teachers to become curriculum makers (Biesta, 2017; Loooney et al, 2017; Priestley and Drew, 2016). The Junior Cycle dualistic approach to assessment proposed an important shift from a teacher’s focus on summative assessment to also integrating formative assessment practices in the classroom (NCCA, 2012). This paper maps an initiative to reimagine the student teacher’s role as assessor during the Teaching Online Programme 3 (TOP3) in the Bachelor of Religious Education and English/History/Music (BREHM) degree in Dublin City University during the Covid-19 restrictions. Central to this process was reimagining the possibilities of how modules, assignments, tutor guidance and support, and the planning and teaching of the CBA could encourage the development of a new identity for the student teacher as an assessor incorporating professional judgement, agency and creativity.

The overall framework for this study is Pollard’s (2015) understanding of pedagogy as a science, craft and an art. It will also draw on elements of change management (Bundy et al., 2016) and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). The study uses case study methodology (Yin, 2014) and the data presented is based on the views of a sample of TOP tutors (n=10) and Year 3 students (n=20) obtained through focus groups of up to five participants via Zoom.

Inductive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) allowed for the emergence of key themes and learning as a result of the process. Enabling and inhibiting factors were illustrated diagrammatically using Lewin’s (1951) force field analysis model.

Findings that are emerging demonstrate that curriculum making is a complex process with many layers of knowledge, understanding, skills and values to be developed over a period of time for the student teacher. The role of the assessor in curriculum making is highly complex and demands agency and creativity. Extra time and module space needs to be expanded for its inclusion during the training of student teachers. Making an evaluation on which descriptor should be given to each CBA was very challenging for the students as they navigated between personal and professional judgement. The SLAR meeting was viewed as an essential space of dialogue where standards were discussed and developed. The transferability of the learning, firstly as a student preparing the CBA and then a teacher evaluating the CBA, was viewed by the student teachers as one of the most important achievements through the reimagining of TOP 3. Overall, the process allowed the merging of theory and practice that did not previously exist.
[ECR6.1] Better understanding of social reality with social actors building this reality.

Javid Jafar (University of Münster)

From a critical perspective, the aims of knowledge production should include contributing to society by addressing social justice, challenging power relationship, oppression and domination existing in society. However, empirical education research has mostly ignored the perspectives of those who have been excluded from the positions of power in the research world. As it is argued in this paper, one of the marginalized groups whose perspectives have either been ignored or overlooked in empirical research is young people. In this sense, transformative research paradigm provides an overarching framework for empirical research to address issues of social justice, power relationships and oppression in societies. According to the beliefs underlying transformative paradigm, to know realities, it is necessary to have an interactive link between the researcher and the participants in a study (epistemology), different realities can emerge because different levels of unearned privilege are associated with characteristics of participants and researchers (ontology), beneficence is defined in terms of the promotion of human rights and an increase in social justice (axiology) and a researcher can choose quantitative or qualitative or mixed methods, but there should be an interactive link between the researcher and the participants in the definition of problem (methodology). Built on these beliefs, transformative paradigm calls researchers to conduct research ‘with’ participants instead of ‘on’ participants. Empirical research with this participatory character is often called participatory action research that is explicitly aimed at social transformation. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how participatory elements are incorporated into empirical research. This paper draws on the mixed methods study with participatory-social justice design examining the perspectives of young people on their citizenship education. However, the empirical data presented in this paper is based on two students’ research advisory group discussions that were organized before and after the data collection for the study. The participants of these groups advised on focus group guide and discussions. This paper argues that including members of marginalized groups into empirical research as research partners help achieve deeper understanding of social reality to address social justice and promote more democratic and equitable society.

Javid Jafar is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Educational Science, University of Münster in Germany and is also working as an associate lecturer at the same university.

[ECR6.2] What are Teachers’ Perspectives of Lesson Study as a Vehicle to Support Professional Development in STEM Education in the Early Years of Primary School?

Bridget Flanagan (MIC); Mairéad Hourigan (MIC); Aisling Leavy (MIC)

With increasing focus on primary curricular reform in Ireland, growing understanding of the importance of education in the early years has led professional development organisations to consider the effectiveness of STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) education for young children. The research seeks to explore the potential of lesson study as a vehicle to promote and support collaborative professional development in a rural, multi-grade primary school. Three teachers were introduced to and participated in four cycles of lesson study over the course of one school year. Lesson study was utilised to design and implement integrated STEM lessons in Junior and Senior Infants (ages 4-7 years). Using an action research methodology, qualitative data were generated from interviews, lesson plans, collaborative weekly meetings, observation sheets, and the researcher’s reflective journal and field notes. Analysis suggests that due to iterative and collaborative lesson study processes teachers began to develop new pedagogical practices. Findings also reveal insights into the knowledge demands related to designing and implementing STEM lessons. Successive and collaborative cycles enabled teachers become more confident in their teaching of STEM education and they believed they had a greater understanding of the children’s learning. While teachers perceived lesson study to be a beneficial form of professional development, factors that constrained teachers’ engagement included practical challenges, cultural challenges and sustainability challenges. The work concludes by contemplating the place of lesson
[P29.1] An assemblage of mechanisms for surveillance: how teachers are coming to be monitored in schools.

Craig Skerritt (DCU)

This presentation is based on research recently published in International Journal of Leadership in Education (see here: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13603124.2020.1823486)

It draws on interview data gathered from five teachers who have worked in marketised, accountability-driven and business-like education systems to highlight the assemblage of surveillance tools and techniques being used in contemporary schools to control and monitor the work of teachers. The data show how teachers face three different but overlapping forms of surveillance: vertical surveillance involving both top-down monitoring from management in the form of lesson observations and bottom-up monitoring via student voice initiatives; horizontal surveillance by way of peer observations and parents commenting on teacher effectiveness; and intrapersonal surveillance through teachers engaging in the act of self-surveillance and management analysing their paperwork and student performance data. A key contribution this paper makes is that it demonstrates that teachers are aware of the different forms of surveillance and aware that this surveillance takes place at all times. Significantly, some teachers are willing participants in their own surveillance. With the element of opacity removed from the surveillance process, it is argued that the popular panopticon often cited in the literature is no longer an appropriate metaphor for scholars to use to convey the intense monitoring teachers face – we have now entered the post-panoptic era.

Craig Skerrit attended University College Cork and University College London, He is a former post-primary school teacher and school leader now working in the higher education sector in Ireland. He is currently the Policy and International Programmes Manager at the Royal Irish Academy and a researcher and teacher educator at the Centre for Evaluation, Quality and Inspection, Dublin City University


Derbhile de Paor (UL); Geraldine Mooney Simmie (UL); Dorothy Morrissey (MIC, UL)

‘Stories from School!’ is an Arts based narrative inquiry which explores people, purpose, and place in the shifting Teacher Education policy landscape in Ireland. The core theme is teacher education through and the school as a site for teacher education in an era of globalised educational policy and change is the setting. Influenced by neoliberal discourse, the Global Education Reform Movement and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development the policy shift has been driven by the Department of Education and Skills through the agency of the Teaching Council of Ireland.

The power of story to create new knowledge and understandings about teachers’ everyday experiences at the site of their professional practice is central to the inquiry. The overall aim is to interrupt the current policy space to ensure that teachers’ personal and professional stories of practice are heard and have an impact on the future stories of teacher education policy in Ireland. The quest is to bring the voices and experiences of practitioners teachers into the light in a way that may lead to the exploration of new possibilities in school-based teacher My story, which includes, the self who teaches, the self who leads, the self as policy maker, the self as teacher educator and the self as researcher is presented as a personal autobiographical interpretative framework (PAIF), and this provides the lens through which we come to know teachers’ stories. Beginning by asking, “Who is the self that teaches?” (Palmer 2007) three narrative conversations were held with each of six teacher storytellers during one academic year. Using arts based narrative inquiry methods (Kim 2016) and thinking with theory, I explore ways of ‘speaking personally, academically’, using creative approaches to articulating the stories. Believing that ‘Writing is validated as a method of knowing’ (Richardson 1994) and “a well written story has the potential to be long remembered” (Leavy 2013), I present the stories in both poetic form as performance scripts and as prose using creative non-fiction (Leavy 2013).

The stories provide policy makers and teacher educators with ‘razor sharp glimpses’ (Craig 2018, p. 310) of teachers pursuit of an ethic of care. They provide evidence that teachers are experiencing “a growing sense of ontological insecurity” (Ball 2015, p. 1054) and are
navigating “epistemological dilemmas” (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) as they negotiate the fault line (Craig, 2018) between policy and practice.

**Derbhile de Poar** is an experienced teacher and school leader and at present is an associate teacher in the School of Education in the University of Limerick. In addition to her work in School Placement, she is actively involved in the national and international educational leadership programmes. Derbhile’s research interests are in the use of arts-based research methods and narrative inquiry in teacher education.

**Geraldine Mooney Simmie** PhD. is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Education, University of Limerick where she lectures on Policy Studies to doctoral students. Geraldine’s research interest is in emancipatory teacher professional learning and development and the intersectionality between teacher education and democracy.

**Dorothy Morrissey** has been a lecturer in drama education at Mary Immaculate College since 2002. She is coordinator of the College’s MA in Education and the Arts (META). Prior to this, Dorothy worked with the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP), providing professional development and curriculum support for teachers in the areas of English, visual arts and learning support.

**[P29.3] Positioning Teacher Learning in Contemporary Times: a linear system of performance management or a cultural endeavor imbued with transformative possibility?**  
**Geraldine Mooney Simmie** (UL)

The question of whose knowledge matters in the field of education has traditionally varied throughout historical cultural timelines. Philosophers first held the upper hand, from the late 1880s until the late 1950s when positivists started to gain control (Arhendt, 1961; Biesta, 2020; Carr, 2006). Since the start of the 21st century, a globalized world is in play as nation states and transnational agencies join forces, such as, the OECD, UNESCO, European Commission (EC) and World Bank. Current crises in the economy, and the global Covid-19 pandemic, propel educational policymakers and politicians into urgent global searches for silver-bullet hyper-rational and big-data solutions in teacher learning and development.

The ethico-political question at issue in this paper is how best to position Teacher Learning (TL) in a global world of uncertainty. Does the answer lie in a data driven system of performance management or beyond this linear project of modernity? First, I draw from critical feminist perspectives of Freire, Greene and hooks to theorize teacher professional learning and development not only as a cultural endeavor imbued with transformative (emancipatory) possibility but also necessitating conversations between research (science), philosophy (ethics, theory) and criticality (critique). Second, I use this lens to conduct a critical scrutiny of the contemporary framing of TL in global policy reports of one transnational policy influencer, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2018, 2019, 2020).

The critical interpretive research conducted here combines a conceptual framework (Freire (2018, 1970); Greene (2017), hooks (1994) with a critical scrutiny of OECD reports (2005, 2018, 2019, 2020). Paul (2005) argues that the ‘critical researcher is expressly working for emancipation of the less powerful by revealing the dynamics of power and ideology and questioning the justification of power and ideology’ (p.76).

Findings reveal limitations, epistemological fallacies in relation to whose knowledge counts, what the construct of practitioner researcher involves and loss of public interest values with TL positioned for an organizational, rather than an occupational view of professionalism and as a slippery slope into scientism when embedded in the normative and empirical consensus of a data-driven system of performance management.

**Geraldine Mooney Simmie** PhD. is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of the School of Education, University of Limerick where she lectures on Policy Studies to doctoral students. Geraldine’s research interest is in emancipatory teacher professional learning and development and the intersectionality between teacher education and democracy.

**[P30] Macro Philosophy and Impact of Religion and Values** 
**Room 8**

**[P30.1] Decolonising RE in Ireland.**  
**Patricia Kieran (MIC); John McDonagh (MIC)**

This paper explores key theoretical perspectives, educational debates and policy shifts surrounding the decolonisation of the RE Curriculum in the Republic of Ireland (ROI). It situates the formal, informal and hidden RE curriculum in the context of major ‘waves’ (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin, 1995) in a continuous and evolving decolonising process (Ngugi 1986; Kiberd 1992; Bhabha 1990; Spivak 1988; Fanon 1968). The first decolonising waves preceded and succeeded the foundation of the national system of education (1831) and the establishment of the Irish Free State (1922). This encompassed both particular moments in history and a continuous re-evaluation and re-negotiation of the
educational, political and social practices of the coloniser vis a vis the colonised (Connolly 2004; Graham 1994). Through decolonising ‘mimicry’ (Bhabha 1985) the informal RE curriculum re-established Catholicism as a powerful manifestation of native culture in the post-colonial era (Fanon 1968). The Catholic hierarchy became the neo-colonial power, replacing the Anglican anglophone coloniser. The more radical, recent and intense wave of decolonising the RE curriculum reflects the changed social, cultural and educational landscape ushered in by internationalisation, economic prosperity, secularisation and increased educational opportunity manifested in a series of referenda which removed the constitutional ban on divorce (1995) and legalised same sex marriage (2015) and abortion (2018). RE moved inexorably away from the former markers of Irish identity such as Catholicism and heterosexuality embodied in the doctrinal teachings of the Catholic Church and laid out in the early decades of the Free State (Maher and O’Brien 2017; Fuller, Littleton and Maher 2006; Twomey 2003). Rights based multidenominational (Learn Together 2004), multibelief (GMGY 2018), interdenominational, Church of Ireland (Follow Me 2001), confessional (Islamic and Jewish) curricula were generated. The paper argues that Ireland is at a radical and crucial juncture in the process of decolonising the RE Curriculum. Undoubtedly the contestation of former dominant perspectives has brought opportunities yet as RE’s perceived hegemonic status as a curricular subject is challenged its very existence within the curriculum is in jeopardy, and it faces a form of ‘cultural oblivion’ (Ngugi 1986). The hybridity (Lacan 1966; Derrida 1978) of curricular styles and content is symptomatic of the decolonisation process.

**Patricia Kieran** teaches Religious Education at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. She is Director of the Irish Institute for Catholic Studies and she has co-written and edited books on a range of topics including Catholic theology, Religious Education in an Intercultural Europe, Children and Catholicism & Trends and Challenges in Education. Her most recent book Connecting Lives: Inter-belief Dialogue in Contemporary Ireland (2019) focused on dialogue among belief diverse communities.

**Dr. John Mc Donagh** is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. He is the author of books on Irish poets Brendan Kennelly (2004), Michael Hartnett (2005) and Paul Durcan (2016). His anthology of contemporary Irish poetry, A Fine Statement - An Irish Poets’ Anthology, was published in 2008, and Polish-Irish Encounters in the Old and New Europe was published in 2011.


**Catherine Stapleton** (MIC)

Globalisation, socio-political shifts, immigration, repeated scandals within the Catholic church and access to the internet are increasing the religious and belief diversity of Irish society. The focus of this research was to give voice to post-primary students of minority beliefs and religion teachers to understand how this flux is experienced in a traditionally Catholic school system. The aim was to identify current experiences, practices and perspectives and to enable a deeper discussion on current practice and possibilities of Religious Education (RE) into the future.

The research methodology was mixed-method. The study included interviews with 18 post-primary students of minority belief and 11 RE teachers. While 214 RE teachers participated in an online survey. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data while the quantitative data was statistically analysed.

The findings report a kaleidoscope of perspectives, practices, and experiences of religious education in Irish post-primary schools. The diversity of practice is supported by teacher agency and autonomy within the RE classroom as most schools do not teach RE as a state examined subject. Both students and teacher data evidences RE teachers’ efforts to differentiate and address students’ needs and interests. However, teachers differed in their opinions on what they considered to be the main goal in teaching RE and reported a lack of resources compounded schools’ ability to provide for minority belief students during RE. Some students of minority belief reported that they had no alternative but to attend RE classes and to acquiesce with Catholic norms including an expectation to attend Catholic prayers and services. The RE teacher surveys and interviews concurred with these findings, which raise serious concerns regarding how schools uphold the human right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion for all students (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 18, 1949). Despite challenges faced by students, they all expressed a desire to learn about different religions and beliefs together rather than be segregated on religious grounds. The findings raise questions on the role and possibilities of religious education in the future.

**Catherine Stapleton** is a lecturer in Education In MIC, St.Patrick’s Campus, Thurles. Particular interests include addressing diversity in education and developing student teachers as researchers. Current research projects address religious education and diversity from the experiences and perspectives of students and teachers and are funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and SCoTENS.

**[P.30.3] Religious book authors as educators in the public square. An Irish Perspective.**

**Donna Doherty** (St Angela College, Sligo); **PJ Sexton** (DCU)

Religious book publishing has a notable presence in Ireland and beyond. However, it is an area which suffers from a dearth of academic research with “a conspicuous absence in scholarship” in what is “an enormous and uncharted field” (Smith, 2015, p. 5). If we accept that books are crucial to the educational endeavour, it is noteworthy that little research has focused on non-fiction authors who write on religious themes or linked their role to religious education that is lifelong and life-wide (Moran, 1998, p.18).
This paper addresses this deficit through presenting the findings of a research study which investigated how thirty-four Ireland-based authors of books on topics linked to religion understand their role and whether they view their work as contributing to lifelong religious education (LRE). Each research participant had published at least one non-fiction book associated with religion within the decade between 2005-2015. The publishing categories of primary and secondary RE and catechetical textbooks were excluded from the research for the reason that the study focused principally on LRE which takes place outside the primary and post-primary classroom settings.

Situated within a descriptive interpretivist paradigm and underpinned by the theoretical framework of constructivism, this qualitative study employed a research instrument in the form of a cross-sectional survey design supplemented by a number of follow-up interviews. Data was analysed using content analysis which uncovered four main themes.

Research findings suggest that religious book publishing in Ireland emanates predominantly from the Roman Catholic tradition. Participants defined religious writing as implicitly or explicitly God-centred, and as encompassing religion, and its dimensions, including faith and belief, the spiritual nature of living, prayer, liturgy and scripture. They understood their author role variously as supporting religious, theological, biblical and liturgical education, encouraging critical thinking, offering pastoral support and providing theological reflection in the light of Vatican II. Their purpose was also to advocate for church renewal and reform, to promote right relationship (including social, gender and ecological justice), and to foster dialogue and common cause between those of religious and non-religious worldviews in the service of the Gospel. Over two-thirds of the cohort considered themselves to be religious authors but the remainder did not, and for some, the word “religious” is an encumbered one. The findings also showed that participants drew close parallels between the aforementioned features of their role, their understanding of education and their conceptualisation of religious education in a lifelong context.

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