

**THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION  
2019 POSTGRADUATE (PGR) CONFERENCE**

*Theme: Educational Research Impact*

Thursday 13 June 2019  
London Road Campus



**Organising Committee (in alphabetical order)**

Areej Aljahani, Beverley Jennings, Cecilia Muldoon, Chuyi Wang, Fatima Zahra Abbou,  
Gaston Bacquet, Meilun Yan & Dr. Natthapoj Vincent Trakulphadetkrai

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

I would like to welcome you all to the annual PGR Conference here at the Institute of Education, University of Reading.

What makes this event so special is that it is both organised and hosted by our students and is a celebration of the hard work and research carried out by them. We are also very fortunate to have extremely dedicated academic staff who both inspire and support our students throughout their PGR journey. The range and quality of research conducted at the IoE contributes to developing educational theory and practice at both national and international levels and the impact is truly global. With this in mind, it is fitting that this year's conference has a strong focus on the impact of our educational research and demonstrates our ability to transform lives around the globe.

I would like to thank each of you for attending the conference and bringing not only your expertise, but your dedication and passion to the field of educational research. May I wish you all an enjoyable conference and one in which we can support and learn from one another in a truly engaging environment.

Professor Catherine Tissot  
Head of the Institute of Education



## PROGRAMME

- 09:30-09:45 Arrival (L24 G06)
- 09:45-10:00 Welcoming remark by Professor Carol Fuller (L24 G06)
- 10:00-11:00 Keynote talk by Dr. Naomi Flynn (L24 G06)
- 11:00-11:20 Refreshment / Break (L24 Learning Hub)
- 11:20-12:40 Morning parallel sessions (L22 111 and L22 114)
- 12:40-13:40 Lunch / Poster presentation (L24 G06)
- 13:40-14:40 Afternoon parallel sessions (L22 111 and L22 114)
- 14:45-15:30 Celebration of achievement by Prof. Cathy Tissot and presentation of certificates by Dr. Holly Joseph and Dr. Daisy Powell (L24 G06)

## KEYNOTE TALK



### **What is research impact and why do I need to think about it? Dr. Naomi Flynn (Research Impact Lead, Institute of Education)**

Dr. Naomi Flynn is the Research Impact Lead for the Institute of Education, and a teacher educator who is very interested in how research can inform educational practice. In her keynote she will explain what research impact is, how it can be measured, and what it looks like when research has genuinely made a difference to stakeholders outside academia. Drawing on her own and others' impactful research, Naomi will demonstrate how to determine potential pathways to impact even if you are at the earliest stages of your Doctorate. She will also explain the challenges involved in engaging the public with research findings, and highlight some of the ways in which these might be overcome. Naomi hopes that her talk will be useful for PGR students whether they feel confident about impact or are as in the dark as she was while completing her own PhD.

## MORNING PARALLEL SESSIONS

### PROGRAMME

	<b>Improving Equity and Inclusion through Education (IEEE) Strand L22 111 Chair: <i>Meilun Yan</i></b>	<b>Language and Literacy in Education (LLE) Strand L22 114 Chair: <i>Beverley Jennings</i></b>
<b>Parallel Session 1 11:20- 11:40</b>	<p>Can students with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) solve mathematical word problems more efficiently by using Passively Received Visualisation (PRV) and Self-constructed Visualisation (SCV)?</p> <p><b>Fatemah Almuwaiziri</b></p>	<p>How do native Chinese speakers process anaphoric markers in English language academic texts: A mixed-method study</p> <p><b>James Wagstaffe</b></p>
<b>Parallel Session 2 11:40-12:00</b>	<p>Exploring teachers' curriculum decision making: Insights from history education</p> <p><b>Dr. Rebecca Harris</b></p>	<p>Exploring language factors in maths learning for EAL pupils</p> <p><b>Dr. Anna Tsakalaki</b></p>
<b>Parallel Session 3 12:00- 12:20</b>	<p>Secondary school principals' instructional leadership: Case studies in Turkish and English outstanding schools</p> <p><b>Meliha Sakin</b></p>	<p>Reading for meaning: Interventions to ameliorate children's reading comprehension difficulties</p> <p><b>Grace Elliot</b></p>
<b>Parallel Session 4 12:20-12:40</b>	<p>Stories of leading and being led: Developing collaborative relationships in an English research-intensive university</p> <p><b>Dr. Alan Floyd</b></p>	<p>Orthographic learning: A strength for bilingual learners</p> <p><b>Dr. Daisy Powell</b></p>

## MORNING PARALLEL SESSIONS

### ABSTRACTS

#### IMPROVING EQUITY AND INCLUSION THROUGH EDUCATION (IEEE) STRAND

##### **Can students with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) solve mathematical word problems more efficiently by using Passively Received Visualisation (PRV) and Self-constructed Visualisation (SCV)?**

*Fatemah Almuwaiziri (Third year full-time PhD student)*

This intervention study sets out to explore the impact of visualization on helping to make mathematical word problem solving more accessible to students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Specifically, the study examines the impact of two types of visualization: 1) Passively Received Visualisation (PRV) which is here referred to given images or visual representation of mathematical ideas found in word problems and 2) Self-Constructed Visualisation (SCV) which is here referred to images or visual representation of mathematical ideas relating to word problems that students have to come up themselves. Base on testing Papert's theory of constructionism where externalization or the projecting out of students' current understanding to the outside world deems as a more effective way of learning, the effectiveness of these two visualization approaches is tested by using an intervention experiment. The study's sample size is twenty 9-11 years old students (8 females and 12 males) who have been diagnosed with ADHD across two special needs schools in Kuwait. Through the analysis of a pre-test, a post-test and a delay test (taken one month after the end of the intervention), the result shows there was no statistically significant difference in the average scores of SCV and PRV group with respect to all tests ( $p > 0.05$ ).

##### **Exploring teachers' curriculum decision making: Insights from history education**

*Dr. Rebecca Harris (Associate Professor of History Education)*

This paper explores teachers' decision making by examining the topics that 11 history teachers from 10 schools in England chose to teach and how they approached teaching these topics. Data were gathered from curriculum documents and semi-structured interviews in which teachers' topic choices and approaches to history were explored. Most teachers adopted a disciplinary approach to history teaching but one focused on analytical structures rather than processes. Additionally, the findings suggest a large degree of uniformity in the topics chosen despite the freedom provided within the policy documents for history teaching in England. Few teachers had given much consideration to approaches that demonstrate the 'usability' of history for young people. This suggests a need to engage teachers more fully in robust curriculum debates given their central role in enacting curricula.

## **Secondary school principals' instructional leadership: Case studies in Turkish and English outstanding schools**

*Meliha Sakin (Second year full-time PhD student)*

In order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Turkish schools, the Ministry of Education has directed its attention to the role of school principals because school leadership contributes to school improvement significantly, and instructional leadership is one of the most powerful ways to support teachers' professional development and student achievement (Day et al., 2016). In this respect, the Ministry enacted a law requiring school principals to adopt instructional leadership roles by determining vision and mission of their schools, observing practices of teaching and learning in classrooms, and providing performance feedback to teachers (MoNE, 2016). However, despite this desire to shift toward a more instructionally oriented Turkish education system, research has highlighted that rather than instructional issues, principals in Turkish school spend most of their time performing managerial and bureaucratic issues such as completing government correspondence required by the Ministry, managing budgets, overcoming discipline problems, and controlling attendance. In a comprehensive study investigating primary-school principal's instructional leadership skills from teachers' perspectives across five cities in Turkey, Gumus and Akcaoglu (2013) explain why principals are more likely to focus on managerial issues and are less inclined to enact instructional leadership behaviours by citing three main factors: (i) principal recruitment policy, (ii) principal's job description, and (iii) the school inspection system.

## **Stories of leading and being led: Developing Collaborative Relationships in an English Research-Intensive University**

*Dr. Alan Floyd (Associate Professor of Education)*

As the higher education landscape continues to rapidly evolve, senior university leaders are reflecting on whether their organisational structures and leadership models are fit for purpose. Several external pressures, such as globalization, international league tables, changes to institutional funding, and an increasingly competitive research and knowledge transfer environment, have impacted on how higher education institutions are organised and managed. These pressures have led to a call for more flexible leadership models, based on notions of collaboration and shared value systems, to be explored. By drawing on data from 30 qualitative research interviews with 15 Academic Leaders (ALs) and 15 Assigned Academics (AAs) the paper will explore how one university has implemented a new distributed leadership model and look in particular at academics' expressed notions of 'good' leadership in times of change and challenge. Unlike most previously published work exploring higher education leadership, the research presented here will crucially examine the impact of the model on both those who are leaders and those being led and show how both parties have attempted to develop positive and collaborative relationships to achieve their professional goals.

## LANGUAGE AND LITERACY IN EDUCATION (LLE) STRAND

### **How do native Chinese speakers process anaphoric markers in English language academic texts: A mixed-method study**

*James Wagstaffe (Second year full-time PhD student)*

The internationalisation of education is a growing phenomenon that has perhaps seen its clearest expression in the rise of educational courses delivered in English to non-native students. One area that has been particularly affected by this trend is the university sector, which has seen a significant increase in the number of courses being offered to second language (L2) students. However, despite the opportunities this widening access to UK university education offers, fears exist that where second language students have insufficient language skills to fully participate in their courses, educational outcomes may suffer. Given the linguistically challenging nature of academic texts, the question of how to help L2 students develop the necessary reading skills is one which deserves attention. This need to rapidly develop L2 reading skills may be of particular concern to Chinese students, owing to the linguistic distance between English and Chinese. The current project seeks to address one facet of this issue, by investigating the reading comprehension skills and strategies of Chinese university students studying in the UK, using a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. It is hoped that the results of the project may inform the development of reading comprehension courses in the future.

### **Exploring language factors in maths learning for EAL pupils**

*Dr. Anna Tsakalaki (Lecturer in Education)*

Anna is going to talk about her participation in a recent collaborative research project showing the effect that different levels of language ability have on the performance of Y5 children who speak English as an additional language (EAL) in comparison to peers who speak English as their first language (EFL) in mathematics. She will talk about factors that play a role in accessing maths and what to look out for when teaching mathematics or other subject areas not traditionally related to language teaching. She will also give a preview of her current project on creative ways to increase exposure to mathematical vocabulary while celebrating linguistic diversity in the classroom.

### **Reading for meaning: Interventions to ameliorate children's reading comprehension difficulties**

*Grace Elliot (Third year part-time EdD Student)*

It is vital that secondary school students have a good level of reading comprehension, and that teachers have evidence-based interventions to improve the reading comprehension of their students. Research indicates that oral language training is effective at improving the reading comprehension of primary age children, however, it is not clear whether this also applies to secondary age children. This randomised control trial examined the efficacy of text based (TB) training and oral language (OL) training on the reading comprehension of 150 students

between the ages of 11 and 13 who have poor reading comprehension, when compared to a waiting list control group (C). The parallel intervention programmes were delivered for an hour each week over a period of eight weeks. OL training included vocabulary, reciprocal teaching with spoken language, spoken narrative and figurative language. TB training included metacognitive strategies, written narrative and inference. There were statistically significant gains in reading comprehension for students who received both the TB and OL intervention when compared with the waiting list control. There was a small, significantly greater effect of the OL intervention than the TB intervention, and the improvements made by the OL group were not mediated by improvements in vocabulary. This research provides further evidence that the specific difficulties faced by poor comprehenders of secondary school age are partly due to underlying difficulties with oral language, and these difficulties can be overcome most effectively with OL training.

### **Orthographic learning: A strength for bilingual learners**

*Dr. Daisy Powell (Associate Professor in the Psychology of Written Language)*

In Malaysia, children learn to read simultaneously in Malay (L1) and English (L2). Both use the Roman alphabet but Malay's orthography (writing system) is highly consistent, unlike English. The aim was to investigate orthographic learning (learning of words' spellings) in Malay-English bilingual children to explore a) whether vowel ambiguity in English presented particular challenges and b) the within- and across-language predictors of orthographic learning. 71 Malay-English bilingual children, aged 8-9, participated in the study. Children completed several language and reading measures in L1 and L2, and a two-phase orthographic learning task. The incidental learning phase involved exposure to 8 target nonwords (e.g. ferd), each presented either 1 or 4 times, embedded in a larger set of words/nonwords. Children first read each item, and then decided whether it was a word or nonword. In the test phases (immediate and delayed), participants had to select each target from a set of four very similar, one phonological identical, nonwords (e.g. ferd, furd, ferb, furb). Performance on the orthographic learning task was high, in fact at least as high as a group of *older* monolingual English children who participated in a previous study. Expected effects of exposure (1 < 4) and testing time (immediate > delayed) were obtained. Performance correlated with English (but not Malay) vocabulary, phonological awareness, RAN and word reading. Performance was relatively high in this group of bilingual learners, with no direct effect of English vowel pronunciation ambiguity. Findings are discussed in light of other recent reports of bilingual strengths in L2 literacy.



## AFTERNOON PARALLEL SESSIONS

### PROGRAMME

	<b>Improving Equity and Inclusion through Education (IEEE) Strand L22 111 Chair: <i>Areej Aljahani</i></b>	<b>Language and Literacy in Education (LLE) Strand L22 114 Chair: <i>Chuyi Wang</i></b>
<b>Parallel Session 5 13:40-14:00</b>	ELT teachers' professional learning in Turkey  <b>Zeyneb Butun</b>	Adolescent reading practices: A corpus linguistics approach to defining success  <b>Beverley Jennings</b>
<b>Parallel Session 6 14:00-14:20</b>	By chance or by plan? The academic success of non- traditional students in higher education  <b>Dr. Billy Wong</b>	Learning vocabulary through listening: The role of linguistic proficiency and strategy use  <b>Dr. Pengchong Zhang and Prof. Suzanne Graham</b>
<b>Parallel Session 7 14:20-14:40</b>	Researching the identities of mathematics specialist through graphical and narrative approaches  <b>Nasreen Majid</b>	Evidence-based practice: Implementing listening strategy-instruction for Algerian EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs  <b>Keltoum Mansouri</b>

## AFTERNOON PARALLEL SESSIONS

### ABSTRACTS

#### IMPROVING EQUITY AND INCLUSION THROUGH EDUCATION (IEEE) STRAND

##### **ELT teachers' professional learning in Turkey**

*Zeyneb Butun (Third year full-time PhD student)*

Today, teachers are expected to act as change agents who not only become autonomous learners in the pursuit of professional learning (PL), but also make necessary changes in their practices for better learning outcomes. In order to help teachers achieve that, top-ranking education systems promote reflective practice and collaborative working; and this study aims to explore how these concepts are given place in Turkey. This paper presents the findings of a pilot study conducted with three English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers working in public schools in Turkey. The data were collected through life histories, critical incidents and semi-structured interviews to explore how reflective practice and collaborative working were experienced, and how much power the teachers felt they had over their PL. Two phrases emerged from the data describing the teachers' attitudes towards PL; namely, "I try no matter what" and "I try if". While the teacher in the first category showed a quite high level of motivation to pursue her PL regardless of the circumstances, the other two teachers in the second category lacked motivation and felt motivated only in certain circumstances. The study gained insights into what particular collaborative and reflective activities facilitated PL, what contextual and individual factors contributed to the engagement in PL activities, and how the interplay between those factors affected the extent of power felt over PL. Since the teachers' sense of agency was found to change according to their ecological contexts, providing opportunities for individual and collective learning seems to be very critical for all teachers.

##### **By chance or by plan? The academic success of non-traditional students in higher education**

*Dr. Billy Wong (Lecturer in Widening Participation)*

In the UK, a 'good' undergraduate degree is understood to be a 'first-class' or an 'upper second-class', which is achieved by three-quarters of students. The need to distinguish oneself from others is ever more important in an increasingly crowded graduate market, although a 'first-class' degree is most likely achieved by privileged students. Informed by Bourdieu's theory of habitus and capital, this study explores the educational experiences and trajectories of 30 final-year high-achieving non-traditional (HANT) students through in-depth interviews. These include working-class, minority ethnic and/or mature students at university. We found that prior development in academic study skills and the desire to prove oneself, often in response to previous negative experiences, are key ingredients in academic success. Our HANT

students also seem to find inspiration or support from significant others, an educational capital, although these resources are often by chance rather than by plan. Implications for policy and practice are suggested.

### **Researching the identities of mathematics specialist through graphical and narrative approaches**

*Nasreen Majid (Final year EdD student & Lecturer in Primary Mathematics)*

Identity is a complex concept. A person's identity is context specific and made up of complex layers. Identity develops over space and time and arguably keeps shifting and changing and therefore is not a static entity. This research set out to explore mathematics specialist teachers' identities in a group of twelve primary teachers in England. The research used a unique two-part narrative process to collect data. This proved to be a powerful, reflective process to collect in depth, rich data. Therefore, the methodological approach in its uniqueness offers a helpful framework in studying emerging identities of individuals going throughout their careers. The study of this metamorphosis from generalist to specialist teacher has enabled a deeper understanding of mathematics teachers' careers and the continuing professional development that can be made available to teachers in primary schools in England to develop mathematics expertise. The study has found that many primary teachers have a challenging relationship with mathematics, this develops through their own learning of mathematics, whilst attending school. The findings suggest that negative perceptions around mathematics can and are reversed, through positive influences later on in life and these lead to successful careers in mathematics education.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY IN EDUCATION (LLE) STRAND**

### **Adolescent reading practices: A corpus linguistics approach to defining success**

*Beverley Jennings (First year part-time PhD student)*

This study is concerned with defining what reading practices enable adolescents to achieve the levels of comprehension that are required for a successful education. The proposed research will use corpus linguistic tools and methods to: analyse GCSE English language exam texts; compare these to reading materials that students may be expected to have encountered; and survey actual students' reading practices to see how far they align with expected reading and with what is needed for the GCSE unseen texts. This research will work mainly with two theories of reading: the lexical quality hypothesis (Perfetti & Hart, 2002), which proposes that processing is efficient when words are understood quickly and accurately – a process that is possible only when the word has been encountered multiple times in varied contexts; and the lexical legacy theory (Nation, 2017), which suggests that current reading ability depends on past reading experience and that unless prior reading experience provides adequate preparation for a text that needs to be comprehended, the reader's chance of success is severely compromised. This presentation will report on the initial findings of phase one of the project: an analysis of a corpus of GCSE English language exam texts.

**Learning vocabulary through listening: The role of linguistic proficiency and strategy use**

*Dr. Pengchong Zhang (Lecturer in Second Language Learning) and Prof. Suzanne Graham (Professor of Language and Education)*

This study explored the impact of pre-existing vocabulary knowledge (PVK) and listening proficiency on the vocabulary learning through listening of 104 Chinese learners of English, when provided with three types of oral vocabulary explanations: L2, code switching (CS), and contrastive focus-on-form (CFoF). It also investigated through stimulated recall the strategies learners used in response to the explanations. Higher PVK learners benefited more from the L2 and CFoF approaches, lower PVK learners from the CS approach. Contrastingly, less proficient listeners were helped more by the CFoF approach and more proficient listeners from the CS approach. Moreover, compared with the CS and L2 groups, the CFoF group attended more specifically to the target words and engaged in more metacognitive reflection and evaluation of the teacher's explanations, leading potentially to deeper processing and hence greater vocabulary gains. Higher proficiency learners overall displayed more complex strategic behaviour. The study's theoretical and pedagogical implications are discussed.

**Evidence-based practice: Implementing listening strategy-instruction for Algerian EFL teachers' self-efficacy beliefs**

*Kaltoum Manssouri (Third year full-time PhD student)*

While research into second language listening is on the increase (Renandya & Hu, 2018), teacher cognition in relation to listening remains a neglected area (Graham, 2017). Teachers' self-efficacy for listening instruction is especially under-researched. As a result, our understanding of a variable that potentially influences listening pedagogy and outcomes is limited. In response to this gap in research, this paper presents findings from a study that explored the listening self-efficacy beliefs of ten EFL teachers in two Algerian universities. Five of these teachers experienced professional research-based training on implementing listening strategy-instruction and metacognition for listening while five did not. Data were collected from both groups of teachers at two time points, once before and once after the administration of the training. Both quantitative and qualitative instruments were used, including questionnaire and interview. The data suggest that at the start of the study the majority of teachers had limited knowledge about how to teach listening. The results from the self-efficacy beliefs for teaching listening inventory showed that levels of self-efficacy varied, while interviews suggested that self-efficacy was related to teaching conditions and length of experience. The presentation concludes by considering implications for future classroom practice and research.

## POSTER PRESENTATIONS

(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER OF PRESENTERS' LAST NAME)

**A narrative study of leadership identity and empowerment of female academics in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

*Areej Makki M Aljahani (Fourth year full-time PhD Student)*

**Experiences of leadership in rural schools in Saudi Arabia: Opportunities and challenges**

*Emad Matar M Alotaibi (First year full-time PhD Student)*

**Reading comprehension proficiency and self-efficacy among Algerian EFL students within collaborative strategic reading approach and attributional feedback intervention**

*Nezha Badi (Third year full-time PhD Student)*

**Spoken interaction in second language classrooms: A three-case study**

*Barbara King (Fourth year part-time PhD Student)*

**Use of research findings in classroom practice: The impact of strategy-instruction on Algerian EFL teachers' and students' listening self-efficacy beliefs**

*Keltoum Mansouri (Third year full-time PhD Student)*

**Missing: Adolescent Autistic girls absent from school**

*Ruth Moyse (Third year part-time PhD Student)*

**A study of the motivation of adult learners who learn Chinese as a foreign language in the UK**

*Chuyi Wang (First year full-time PhD Student)*

**What is the impact of parental migration on left behind children's psychological well-being?**

*Meilun Yan (Third year full-time PhD student)*

**Mid-career academic women in higher education in China: Barriers and strategies**

*Jiayi Zhao (Second Year full-time PhD student)*