Institute of Education
University of Reading

THE 2022 POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH (PGR) CONFERENCE

Wednesday 29th June 2022

Morning Session: 10:00 -12:20 (online only, Click here to join)

Afternoon Session: 13:15 – 15:15(in-person, ROOM L24 G06 LRC)

Theme: Doing research during and after the pandemic: Challenges, opportunities, and ideologies

UoR IoE PGR Conference

Conference Organising Committee (in alphabetical order)
Hongyan Zhang, Xiaobo Li and Xinrong Chen

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Post Graduate Research Student Annual Conference is one of the highlights of our academic year and one I personally very much look forward to. Now more than ever, we see just how important and powerful education is, with the current pandemic firmly placing education in the spotlight. Without doubt, it is the research that our doctoral students are actively engaged in that will be key to moving societies forward, post-pandemic - no matter the focus of that research. This conference is a thus a wonderful opportunity for us to come together and learn about this work, to celebrate the achievements of each other and to reinforce our identity as a community of committed researchers. As Head of School, I would like to thank you all; for your hard work, for the efforts of your supervisors and to our conference organizers for putting this important event together. Now let us bask in our many successes and enjoy what I am sure will be a most excellent event.

Professor Carol Fuller
Head of Institute of Education
University of Reading

PROGRAMME

MORNING PROGRAMMES (Online only)

10:00 – 10:05 Welcome

10:05 – 10:40 Keynote

10:45 – 12:20 Morning sessions (with one comfort break)

12:20 – 13:15 Lunch

AFTERNOON PROGRAMMES (In-person, ROOM L24 G06, London Road Campus)

13:15 – 15:15 Afternoon sessions (with one comfort break)

15:15 – 16:00 Social gathering

KEYNOTE TALK

Title: Research in a global pandemic: Challenges and opportunities

In her keynote, Dr Naomi Flynn will talk through the ways in which researchers have had to be agile and creative in their response to research during the global pandemic. Drawing on her own experiences, and those of her current Doctoral students, she will explore the explicit and implicit ways in which the pandemic has affected the research journey. Her reflections will highlight not just the challenges but the unexpected opportunities of real-world research in a crisis.

Associate Professor: Dr. Naomi Flynn
Research Impact Lead for the Institute of Education
University of Reading

MORNING SESSION PROGRAMME

Time	Name	Title of presentation	Venue
Welcome (10:00-10:05)	Committee member	Welcome	Teams link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
Keynote (10:05-10:40)	Professor Naomi Flynn	Research in a global pandemic: Challenges and opportunities	
Session 1 (10:45-11:00)	Yina Cai	Challenges and opportunities for generations to learn Pipa, A Chinese Traditional instrument during and after Pandemic	
Session 2 (11:00-11:15)	Lauren Vincent	"But you're not an academic, are you?" A study exploring the development of academic identity in dance lecturers.	
Session 3 (11:15-11:30)	Steve Gomersall	Resilience: Myanmar Students' Experiences of Overcoming eLearning Challenges During COVID-19 and Political Instability	
Comfort break (11:30-11:40)			
Session 3 (11:40-11:55)	Jiarun Ye	Digital vocabulary learning: The role of self-regulation and learning approaches	
Session 4 (11:55-12:10)	Huining Yang (Sunny)	The development of learners' listening comprehension, self-efficacy, and anxiety within an informal digital learning of English listening (IDLEL) context	
Session 5 (12:10-12:20) 3MT Pre-Recorded Presentations	Fei Lian	The Moon and Sixpence: A Qualitative Study of the Professional Identity Development of Highly-educated Female Teachers at Primary/Secondary Schools in Beijing	
	Paul Warrington	The impact (if any) on attainment and attitude of a secondary mastery-mathematics algebra intervention compared with a conventional approach.	
	Soliman Altamimi	Teachers' Knowledge of Autism in Saudi Arabia's Primary Schools.	
Lunch (12:20 – 13:15)			

MORNING SESSION ABSTRACTS

Keynote Talk: Research in a global pandemic: Challenges and opportunities
Dr. Naomi Flynn (Associate Professor in Primary English Education at the Institute of Education)
Twitter: @naomiflynn61

In her keynote, Dr Naomi Flynn will talk through the ways in which researchers have had to be agile and creative in their response to research during the global pandemic. Drawing on her own experiences, and those of her current Doctoral students, she will explore the explicit and implicit ways in which the pandemic has affected the research journey. Her reflections will highlight not just the challenges but the unexpected opportunities of real-world research in a crisis.

Challenges and opportunities for generations to learn Pipa, A Chinese Traditional instrument during and after Pandemic
Online live: 10 minutes (plus 5 minutes of Q&A)
Yina Cai (a first-year full-time PhD student-distance)

The worldwide pandemic has invaded all of our lives in ways we could never have anticipated. Music studies have also experienced considerable changes. Investigating the Kodály method apply to teaching the Pipa (Kodály Methodology is highly valued among music educators in developed countries) offers Pipa teaching the chance to redefine curriculum, set new goals for students, and consider new criteria for evaluation. Both personal and professional experiences inspired me in this research. The problem of improving pipa training in contemporary China is closely connected to a wider subject of identifying the most practical and at the same time in-depth methods and approaches toward enabling learners of different ages and backgrounds to expand their learning potential as far as pipa as a traditional Chinese instrument in the modern era is concerned. Based on experience, traditional teaching seems less efficient and creative. The use of the Kodály Methodology to teach music has been proven to positively impact music knowledge and skills (Georgios et al., 2017). The research will focus on applying Kodály Methodology to teaching Pipa and examining the impact of the method on participants' pipa teaching and learning. The study is expected to impact the pedagogical approach to teaching Pipa.

"But you're not an academic, are you?" A study exploring the development of academic identity in dance lecturers.
Online live: 10 minutes (plus 5 minutes of Q&A)
Lauren Vincent (a fourth-year EdD student)

Dance is a discipline which many people have an opinion on, but this rarely includes an association with academia. The Cartesian duality of the body and mind is arguably still evident in the hierarchy of disciplines in the academy and particularly when it is suggested that dance can be an academic subject. With increased marketisation in the Higher

Education (HE) sector pushing universities to 'sell' degrees based on graduate outcomes and the continuous threat of 'low value' degrees, dance's place within this hierarchy is further brought into question. This study sought to explore the career journeys of fourteen dance lecturers from seven HEIs, focusing on their transitions into HE and their ongoing identity development. Whilst research exploring academic identity development exists in other disciplines such as nursing and teaching, there is a paucity of research in the creative disciplines. As the data analysis is not yet complete, this presentation will give an overview of the literature that has informed this research and rationalise the choice of narrative life-history interviews and interpretive phenomenological analysis. Positive adjustments made to the data collection due to the pandemic will also be detailed.

Resilience: Myanmar Students' Experiences of Overcoming eLearning Challenges During COVID-19 and Political Instability.
Online live: 10 minutes (plus 5 minutes of Q&A)
Steve Gomersall (a second-year EdD student)

In 2020, COVID-19 forced global education online. Especially in developing countries, this change presented a challenge for those with limited access to devices and reliable electricity and Internet. Whilst some students struggled to adapt, others thrived with eLearning. This study explores the experiences of one group of students who succeeded in overcoming not only the restrictions of Covid-19, but also significant political instability. The group has a mix of first year and second year students in a pre-university program. The second-year students in particular are noteworthy as despite the adversity faced, they have now successfully transitioned to university studies. The data from twelve semi-structured interviews was analysed and inductively coded and organised into categories and themes (Lichtman, 2010). In particular, the themes from this study outline how personal goal orientation, coping mechanisms acquired in previous adverse situations, and a desire to serve their communities combine with external influences from families and communities and basic need fulfilment to enable the students to persevere and thrive. The implication is that as students draw on previous experiences, these five core concepts should be incorporated into general education to build the students' capacity for resilience.

Digital vocabulary learning: The role of self-regulation and learning approaches
Online live: 10 minutes (plus 5 minutes of Q&A)
Jiarun Ye (a first-year full-time PhD student)

The aim of the research is to enhance second language vocabulary learning of Chinese junior high school students through digital learning (e.g., using electronic devices such as computer/mobile phone for studying). Focusing on improving learners' receptive vocabulary knowledge and learning motivation, the research will compare two main digital vocabulary learning activities (digital flashcard vs. podcast) and explore the effect of self-regulation and repetitions on vocabulary learning.

The development of learners' listening comprehension, self-efficacy, and anxiety within an informal digital learning of English listening (IDLEL) context
Online live: 10 minutes (plus 5 minutes of Q&A)
Huining Yang (Sunny) (a first-year full-time PhD student)

The worldwide spread of the epidemic in recent years has significantly increased the demand for technology in education. Technology-assisted language learning has quite a long research tradition but with less focus on informal digital learning of English listening (IDLEL). This mixed-method research aims to fill the gap by investigating the role of frequency (i.e., the time that learners spend on IDLEL activities), diversity (i.e., the range of IDLEL activities that learners engage in), and self-regulation in learners' development of listening comprehension, self-efficacy, and anxiety through Chinese undergraduates' IDLEL practices.

The Moon and Sixpence: A Qualitative Study of the Professional Identity Development of Highly-educated Female Teachers at Primary/Secondary Schools in Beijing
Online pre-recorded: 3 minutes (Part of the IoE's new 3-minute Thesis Competition)
Fei Lian (a second-year full-time PhD student)

Involution is a phenomenon in China that the threshold of recruitment is becoming higher than the real needs of employment. Thus, there are issues with the devaluing of educational qualifications. Since the involution in Chinese education has grown fast in recent decades, it is becoming impossible to ignore the fact that as a consequence. How these teachers perceive their role and their future careers in education is seldom discussed. This research focuses on highly-educated female's identity formation as teachers' in primary/secondary schools in Beijing. The aims of this research is to apply a feminist lens to explore factors, such as economic and gender and the possible influence on identity formation, their own perception of their current roles at school and their attitude towards training and future plans. The research will be embedded in the paradigm of constructionism in terms of ontology as well as epistemology using narrative enquiry on the basis that the research focuses on the dynamic process of this cohort of teachers' identity formation. This research hopes to make a significant contribution to knowledge by offering insights of identity formation and possible suggestions on professional training of this cohort of teachers.

The impact (if any) on attainment and attitude of a secondary mastery-mathematics algebra intervention compared with a conventional approach.
Online pre-recorded: 3 minutes (Part of the IoE's new 3-minute Thesis Competition)
Paul Warringtont (a Second-year part-time PhD student)

For UK secondary schools, raising the attainment of students in mathematics remains a priority. In order to help achieve this, the use of intervention teaching is widespread, especially for topics considered more difficult, such as algebra. This proposed

mixed-methods research is aimed at measuring the impact on attainment (if any) and impact on attitude towards the subject of mathematics (if any) of a mastery-based algebra intervention. The research is set in two Yorkshire secondary schools and includes a proposed sample size of 96 participant students, who will follow a six-hour intervention. A pragmatic definition of mastery mathematics is sought that reflects the influence of "Shanghai maths", but also recognises contemporary broad use of the term by mathematics practitioners and the origin of the term in research. Issues of implementation of a mastery-based intervention on a teacher and institutional level are a further research area.

Teachers' Knowledge of Autism in Saudi Arabia's Primary Schools.
Online pre-recorded: 3 minutes (Part of the IoE's new 3-minute Thesis Competition)
Soliman Altamimi (a second-year full-time PhD student)

Although Education has been given to all individuals around the world, including students with autism as other special education needs students, however, students with autism hope their educators can easily meet their needs in schools. Still, what teachers need is to know what exiting contribution is bringing as, strategies, new justifications and pedagogies. One of the top issues here is how general teachers can teach those students even though those general teachers were not specialised in special needs. Some suggestions to overcome this were 1) offering continuous training sessions, 2) encouraging specialised teachers to effectively share their knowledge, expertise skills and personal experience with general teachers. In fact, Recent studies urge teachers of special needs and those specialising in autism themselves have less knowledge in autism based on both quantitative and qualitative instruments. Hence the question here is how specialised teachers can deal with this issue to transfer their knowledge to general teachers in order to let them teach students with autism if they have lack of knowledge.

AFTERNOON SESSION PROGRAMME
(ROOM L24 G06)

Time	Name	Title of presentation	Venue
Session 6 (13:15-13:30)	Hongyan Zhang	To explore Chinese left-behind children's experiences in their early years	Room L24 G06 London Road Campus
Session 7 (13:30-13:45)	Xiaobo Li	The Relative Effects of Isolated and Combined Processing Instruction and Meaning-based Output Instruction on the Acquisition of English Passive Voice	
Session 8 (13:45-14:00)	Graziana Di Pede	Leadership Learning: A study about the experiences of undergraduate business students on a one-year work placement	
Session 9 (14:00-14:15)	Xinrong Chen	The development of pedagogical beliefs in music education students in the context of Chinese and British characteristic ideologies	
Comfort break (14:15-14:30)			
Session 10 (14:30-14:45)	Aniqa Leena	Assessing the impact of changes to teaching on multilingual pupils' English language proficiency	
Session 11 (14:45-15:00)	Catherine Langran	Impact of COVID-19 on pharmacy student engagement	
Session 12 (15:00-15:15)	Emine Serap Karacan	Social and Emotional Learning in Mathematics Classrooms	
Social Gathering (15:15-16:00)			

AFTERNOON SESSION ABSTRACTS

To explore Chinese left-behind children's experiences in their early years
Hongyan Zhang (a first-year full-time PhD student)

Given by existing literature that most of the studies only focused on Chinese left-behind children's academic performance and well-being using quantitative research methods, little research has been done on exploring Chinese left-behind children's experiences in their early years. My research aims to actively listen to children and empower them simultaneously by utilising a Mosaic research method. It is hoped to expand the westernised attachment theory's understanding in the Chinese context and inform child-friendly supportive policies.

The Relative Effects of Isolated and Combined Processing Instruction and Meaning-based Output Instruction on the Acquisition of English Passive Voice
Xiaobo Li (a first-year full-time PhD student)

The present study compares the effects of Processing Instruction (PI), Meaning-based Output Instruction (MOI) and a combined PI + output instruction for learners' acquisition of English passive voice. Around 120 students from two intact classes in a Chinese junior secondary school will be chosen as participants of this study. They will be randomly allocated into three experimental groups (PI, MOI and PI + output) and one control group based on their pre-test scores. The whole experiment will last for 15 weeks with a pre-test in the first week, the teaching intervention from week two to week six, a post-test in week seven, a stimulated recall interview in week eight and a delayed post-test in week 15. The PI group mainly receives input-based PI, the MOI group receives output-based MOI and the PI + output group receives a combination of both PI and output practice. The control group receives no instruction on the target grammatical feature. After the intervention and tests, both quantitative and qualitative data will be analysed and a conclusion will be drawn to answer the research questions.

Leadership Learning: A study about the experiences of undergraduate business students on a one-year work placement
Graziana Di Pede (a final-year EdD student)

The aim of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how students learn to lead in pre- and early-career experiences. Previous research has predominantly focused on the leadership development of managers as opposed to the leadership learning of business students who are bound to become future leaders. Using semi-structured interviews and reflective journals, this study will shed light on the leadership experiences of 13 undergraduate business students undertaking a one-year work placement as part of their university degree. Pre-placement interviews were used to explore students' leadership experiences before the work placement whereas post-placement interviews and reflective journals were used to analyse their experiences during the placement. By encouraging reflection on both enacted and observed episodes (critical incidents), students were able to make sense of their own learning in relation to effective and ineffective leadership as well as their own leadership identity. Findings suggested that students learn to lead by taking on leadership roles and by observing others in different contexts (e.g., education, sport, and work). Furthermore, data revealed that business students regard becoming a leader as an important career goal, and that their leadership identity is strongly influenced by observed role models (both positive and negative).

The development of pedagogical beliefs in music education students in the context of Chinese and British characteristic ideologies
Xinrong Chen (a first-year full-time PhD student)

Many complex contextual factors and social influences affect the formation of teaching beliefs in music education students. However, there are particularly critical moments in their schooling that can activate or reinforce the development of teaching beliefs and thus influence their teacher development process. The purpose of this proposal is to investigate the construction of pedagogical beliefs of pre-service teachers in the context of the educational environments of different countries in the UK and China, and to identify learning strategies that create and promote music teacher education in the ideologies of the two different countries, and finally to strengthen them to advance their educational careers in a positive way.

Assessing the impact of changes to teaching on multilingual pupils' English language proficiency
Aniqa Leena (a second-year full-time PhD student)
Twitter: @aniqaleena

In England, there is no statutory framework to assess multilingual pupils' English proficiency, and those that exist are subject to wide variation and interpretation (Evans et al., 2016). This is coupled with limited understanding of how practitioners can best support multilingual learners in the classroom (Murphy & Unthiah, 2015; Oxley & de Cat, 2019). This paper presents a quasi-experimental study, taken over one school year with 80 pupils (aged 5-6) and 75 pupils (aged 8-9), across 4 primary schools in South East England. It set out to tackle the multilingual assessment gap using bespoke tests based upon World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) materials. The tests were used to evaluate how far a US-established professional development intervention, known as the Enduring Principles of Learning (EPL), can influence teaching practice and subsequently improve multilingual learners' English proficiency. Experimental pupils in both age groups (n=85) received EPL teaching whilst control pupils (n=70) received existing classroom practice. Emerging findings from the pre-intervention testing period will be discussed, and reflections on working with pupils in the aftermath of the pandemic will be shared.

Impact of COVID-19 on pharmacy student engagement
Catherine Langran (a final year EdD student)

The aim of my thesis is to explore pharmacy student engagement and the use of digital engagement data. A case study approach was utilised to interview pharmacy students at the beginning and end of an academic year (October 2020 to March 2021). This abstract presents the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on both student engagement and interviewing. In March 2020, there was a sudden disruption due to Covid-19, with face-to-face teaching cancelled and examinations moved to online assessments. On returning to University in September 2020, pharmacy students had a blended approach to teaching, with asynchronous online lectures, synchronous online workshops and limited face-to-face teaching. Interviews explored the impact of these different teaching approaches on student academic engagement and motivation, alongside the impact of Covid-19 and lockdowns on student sociability and mental health, throughout the academic year. Interviews took place either on-campus or via MS Teams. On-campus interviews were impacted by social distancing, mask wearing and a cautiousness of being in an enclosed space. In contrast, online interviews made students feel more at ease in their home setting, reduced travel, and allowed video recording and captioning. However, they were disruptions due to poor internet connection and other on-screen distractions for students.

Social and Emotional Learning in Mathematics Classrooms
Emine Serap Karacan (a third-year full-time PhD student)
Twitter: @KaracaneSerap

In this work, I will present my research project related to primary school children's social and emotional learning (SEL) in mathematics classrooms in the UK. SEL is a key factor for improving pupils' academic performance and lifelong learning. However, for both pupils and teachers, SEL competencies have not been studied intensively and directly in mathematics education in the literature. Moreover, enhancement of social and emotional competencies provides an environment that supports and helps academic achievement in education and school life (CASEL, n.d.). My aim is to understand how SEL can be used to overcome the existing problems such as the feelings of boredom, anger, math anxiety, hopelessness, in learning mathematics (Metje et al., 2007; Peixoto et al., 2016; Skaalvik, 2018). Also, to create an optimal environment for children with their peers and tutors. Therefore, this study investigates how SEL can be implemented into mathematics classrooms. For this presentation, I will give a brief introduction about social and emotional learning and the focus of my research. Additionally, I will present and discuss initial data of this research.