University of Western Sydney School of Education
Higher Degree Research Student Conference 2012

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS
Foreword

It is with much pleasure that I welcome you to the 2012 University of Western Sydney Education Research Higher Degree Student Conference. Student participants in this conference are drawn from the School of Education, the Centre for Educational Research and the Centre for Positive Psychology and Education.

This Conference provides a wonderful opportunity for Education research students to present their research irrespective of the stage in the research process and to engage in rich discussions about their ideas with fellow students and academics in a research focussed environment.

Our intention is to foster and encourage the next generation of researchers who, with the support of dedicated academic staff, will be extending the boundaries of educational research and contributing to discourse in this field nationally and internationally.

We welcome all presenters and encourage all who attend presentations to listen carefully and respond thoughtfully. Our goal is to support our students’ accomplishments and focus their future work in the most effective way.

We hope you enjoy this conference.

Dr David Wright
Director, Higher Degree Research
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The utilization of technology in teaching of the Arabic language in secondary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Hamed Alasaadi, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Carol Reid, Dr. Katina Zammit and Dr. Jorge Dorfman-Knijnik (Supervisors)
School of Education

This study is about how Arabic language teachers use technology in secondary schools. It aims to provide knowledge that will improve understanding of the current usage of technology. Saudi Arabia has introduced computers into their curricula to keep pace with their developed counterparts. Also, this study can provide the Education Ministry in Saudi Arabia with valuable information for addressing future educational policies such as access, usage and training in the use of computers and can help identify the benefit of the current use of technology for students.

Specifically, the study explores the availability and usage of technologies as tools that Arabic language teachers use. It examines the main difficulties that prevent the teachers from using them in their teaching.

This study utilized two kinds of methodologies with male such as questionnaire and interviews. The data revealed that it appeared from questionnaires that many electronic instructional technology tools were available in secondary schools in Riyadh. Also, using electronic instructional technology activities in teaching the Arabic language in secondary schools was high.
Sharing the tip of the sand dune: Ethical Issues in Cross Cultural Research

Nerrisa Albon, PhD Candidate

Prof. Margaret Somerville (Supervisor)
Centre for Educational Research

Research comes with responsibility. Writing a narrative about my own experiences in a school reform program in the United Arab Emirates means confronting some ethical issues. Auto/ethnography, as a research method, allows me to present my interpretation of issues but these interpretations arise from my perspective as a western woman. These narratives were not created in a vacuum but were shaped by the context of the school, community and country that I lived in for 15 months.

The critical analysis of my own journal entries during my stay in the UAE and my memories show an awareness of the impact of ethical issues in my writing. My writing shows my journey of awareness as I come to understand the imposition of an inappropriate Western curriculum in a Middle Eastern Country.
Sociocultural dynamics affecting the second language learning process of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australian settings

Ahmad Alkhalil, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Carol Reid (Supervisor)
School of Education

This study explores the nature of the social and cultural dynamics that affect the process of second language learning of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australia contexts. Current literature related to second language acquisition shows that second language learning research has moved from a general focus on a number of individual social, psychological and linguistic factors that affect second language learning into an in-depth post structural inquiry on the second language learners social and cultural identities.

The study employs qualitative narrative inquiry, through the use of narrative stories and semi-structured interviews, to identify and describe these sociocultural dynamics that affect second language learning in a group of first-generation Arab refugees who reside in South Western Sydney suburbs. This paper is important because it investigates how adult second language learners perceive their language learning experiences. The study also explores the various insights of social and cultural dynamics and their impact on second language learning. This research is a PhD research project and still at the data analysis stage.
The use of technology in teaching Arabic informed by new understandings of Literacy in primary schools in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia

Hussain Alsaiari, PhD Candidate

Dr. Katina Zammit and Assoc. Prof. Carol Reid (Supervisors), School of Education

This paper draws on my research which seeks to document the perspectives of twenty four male primary educators of the Arabic language on the use of technology and communicative language teaching (CLT) informed by new understandings of literacy in Saudi Arabia (Tabuk). There is lack of communication skills in using the Standard Arabic, in conversation, listening and speaking. This study aims to fill the gap in the literature in Arabic literacy, as there is a lack of research about Arabic Literacy pedagogy drawing on new literacy theory. Arabic is a global language and this study has international significance because the findings will inform the teaching of Arabic both as a first and a second language. Therefore, this study will investigate ways in which CLT approaches can be incorporated into the teaching of Arabic through the use of various activities that are contextual and meaningful.

The focus of this study then is on oral language in relation to listening, speaking, viewing, reading, writing, critiquing and creating in purposeful contexts. It will utilise qualitative research methods to examine five case studies sites (government primary schools in urban (Tabuk) to investigate perceived barriers of the use of technology in Standard Arabic Teaching by using the CLT Approach. Furthermore, the study will examine the use of the Contemporary Curriculum rather than traditional methods in teaching Arabic by examining the relationship between new literacy theory and CLT and the use of technology, in order to enhance teaching Arabic and improve using the target language for communicative purposes.
The use of ICT by Secondary School Principals in Jeddah Educational District

Saeed Alshamrani, PhD Candidate

Dr. Katina Zammit and Assoc. Prof. Carol Reid (Supervisors)
School of Education

This study aims to reveal the extent the use of ICT by principals of secondary schools in Jeddah and the availability of this ICT in the schools. The study also seeks to apply the tools of the study to answer questions of the study the following:

Main question: How does ICT shape the leadership of secondary school principals in Jeddah?

Sub questions:

1. What types of ICT are available to secondary school principals in Jeddah?
2. What are the differences or similarities in leadership styles between urban and rural schools in their use of ICT?
3. How do principals use ICT to support their leadership?
4. What are the challenges (human, organizational or other) that school principals face in their use of ICT?
5. Are there individual differences between the responses of the sample at a level of statistical significance due to experience, age, educational level, training, and gender?

The tools of the study are the questionnaire, interview and observation it also seeks through the outcomes and recommendations of the study to write a guide to the use of ICT & the principal leader. The important points are about: ICT, Electronic School & Educational Leadership. Brief about the place of study (KSA). Procedures for the study and its methodology.
The Sociological Analysis of English as a Global Language in Turkish Education

Mehmet Aslan, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Carol Reid and Dr. Katina Zammit (Supervisors), School of Education

The purpose of this study is to examine lecturers’, students’ and graduates’ views of English at both private and state universities, in order to ascertain the impact of the use of English in the educational system and social life in Turkey. This study also aims at understanding the importance of the English language and its effects in sociological, educational, economic and geo-political contexts amongst the students, lecturers and graduates within the ambit of Turkish educational institutions. This has been achieved by way of a small-scale questionnaire and interviews which were administered to students, lectures and graduates with a view to eliciting their opinions about the use of English as a medium of instruction at their university.

The questionnaire created by Tung, Lam and Tsang (1977) was used in this study with minor modifications to make the statements fit the current situation in Turkey. Questionnaires for students and lecturers comprised 18 questions each and the graduate’s questionnaire had 17 questions. Each questionnaire was grouped into three main sections: attitudes, views & preferences about English, socio-economic impact of English and views on power of English vs. Turkish. The survey was conducted amongst 6 Turkish universities; 3 private and 3 public. 246 students, 72 lecturers and 45 graduates responded to the respective questionnaires.

The results of the questionnaire show that the majority of respondents in the category of students and lecturers prefer English as the medium of instruction at universities. However, graduates are in favour of Turkish as the medium of instruction at the universities. Although, lecturers support English as the medium of instruction, the results show that they also value teaching in national language.

In conclusion, students overwhelmingly preferred English to be the medium of instruction, whereas graduates and lecturers were more balanced in their approach.
How to use NSW Quality Teaching as a teacher’s self-reflection tool for teaching Chinese through communicative approach: An action research project

Zhu Chen, PhD Candidate

Prof. Wayne Sawyer and Dr. Dacheng Zhao (Supervisors)
School of Education and Centre for Educational Research

This study is trying to investigate how NSW Quality Teaching model can be used as a language teacher’s self-reflection tool to improve teaching outcomes in communicative language teaching (CLT). This study is hopefully to contribute current educational research in two areas. Firstly, it reveals the value of reflection for teacher development. Secondly, it provides more authentic examples of how the implementation of QT model improves quality of language pedagogy. Particularly, it fills a gap in the literature by exploring how QT can be used to enhance CLT.

In terms of methodology, action research, which is a four-step cycle involving planning, acting, observing and reflecting, will be adopted. During the research, the researcher will reflect on previous teaching practice based on QT as well as data from other sources including other teachers’ feedback and students learning outcomes. Then new lesson plans according to these reflections will be implemented. Based on this, two findings have emerged. It seems that reflecting based on a model like QT helps with make tensions in teaching more explicit. It is through resolving these tensions where professional development is expected to stem from. Secondly, it is found that a possible approach for QT to enhance CLT is to incorporate QT elements into the design of communicative activities, that is, creating ‘Quality Communicative Activities’.
An investigation of the significance of cultural historical activity theory on Methodology in L1 and L2 and the Implications for the role of drama in the teaching of L2

Lesley Christen, PhD Candidate
Assoc. Prof. Mary Mooney and Dr. David Wright (Supervisors), School of Education

This paper presents a theoretically based argument that seeks to identify a line of thinking originating in the work of Vygotsky and its development into a particular strand of post-Vygotskian thought, known as Activity Theory. This system will be described for its relevance to the central proposition that the use of process drama as a mediating activity embodying spontaneous and collaborative interaction, greatly assists in the best practice of teaching English as an Additional Language.

Sociocultural theory, which argues that ‘human mental functioning is fundamentally a mediated process that is organized by cultural artefacts, activities, and concepts,’ (Ratner, 2002) has gained attention across the humanities, social sciences, and education over the past two decades. Sociocultural perspectives of language and learning view language use in real life situations as fundamental not ancillary to learning. As Lantolf and Pavlenko (1995) write ‘development does not proceed as the unfolding of innate capacities once they intertwine with socially constructed meditational means’.

Through the identification of elements of drama present in first language learning, I will indicate the value of their use in EAL and through Activity Theory modelling, propose a system that seeks to demonstrate the value of the educational practices of process drama in the teaching of English as a second language.
An investigation of Liushu in teaching Chinese characters to non-native primary students: An action research in Western Sydney schools

Jin Fang, MEd (Hons) Candidate

Dr. Dacheng Zhao and Prof. Michael Singh (Supervisors)
Centre for Educational Research

This research aimed to find an effective and efficient way to teach Chinese characters to the second language learners. To achieve this, action research was used. In the research, the teacher-researcher used Liushu (typical Chinese knowledge to construct Chinese characters) to teach Chinese characters to non-native primary students. It followed a four-step action research cycle, and there were 2 cycles in this research. In the planning phase, the teacher-researcher did some reconnaissance to gain a better understanding of the nature and context of the research problem. Then solutions were planned based on Liushu theory.

In the acting phase, planned solutions were implemented in classes, data from self-reflection diary, observation field notes and interview records were collected, then necessary modification were made. In the observing phase, evidence and findings were analysed and discussed. In the reflecting phase, previous cycles of implementation were evaluated and new lesson plans were designed. Students’ working samples were collected to indicate whether there was any improvement in students’ learning outcomes. More importantly, evidence collected from the observations, interviews and self-reflection diaries may provide detailed explanations whether Liushu theory is an effective and efficient way to teach Chinese characters to non-native primary students.
On country: The art of place-making in Wurundjeri country today; a visual narrative and record

Angela Foley, PhD Candidate

Prof. Margaret Somerville (Supervisor), Centre for Educational Research

The thesis is set in contemporary south-east Australia in the west of the ancestral country of its Aboriginal traditional owners, the Wurundjeri people. Before colonisation, Wurundjeri sustained their people and hosted some of Victoria’s largest Aboriginal gatherings in the nearby Bolin Bolin Billabong. In Melbourne’s urbanised north, the basalt, grasslands and waterways still carry signs of Aboriginal culture dating back 40,000 years. Today’s Wurundjeri assemble clues in the adaptive manner of their ancestors to recover from the language, ceremony, country-access bans and devastating mid 19th century population reduction to 18 people.

Acknowledging traditional owners in the urban environment is explored using a postmodern emergence methodology. I ask “How do traditional owners perform the art of place-making when nearly 4 million people live on Wurundjeri country today?” using:

1. Indigenous inquiry (such as ‘two way’ work) to address issues of representation in collecting and recording stories
2. Pedagogies of place and place-making
3. Deep mapping to re-recognise place; situate and assemble material representations
4. Arts-based inquiry to develop a visual narrative, acknowledge process and substantiate the products of material culture

My own place-making and art practice will inform all stages of inquiry towards building a shared vision of Wurundjeri country.
Numeracy counts: Explicating research-derived effective teacher feedback elements, psychosocial drivers, and novel intervention for numeracy success

Nick Green, PhD Candidate

Dr. Marjorie Seaton and Prof. Rhonda Craven
The Centre for Positive Psychology and Education

Numeracy results for Australian 15 year-olds in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) have declined between 2003 and 2009. Low numeracy skills are related to unemployment which in turn has negative effects on mental health and well-being. OECD data also shows numeracy achievement is related to Gross Domestic Product. Enhancing numeracy levels is hence an important aim from individual, societal and economic perspectives. Student self-concept is a fundamental psycho-social driver of academic success and appears to be reciprocally linked to academic achievement.

Further, Marsh and Craven indicate that feedback between teachers and students can enhance student self-concept through appropriate attribution in success and failure situations. Hattie and Timperley’s work provides that effective feedback should also inform students and teachers of progress relative to goals and provide accurate direction for future tasks and goals. Such feedback should answer the questions, “Where am I going?” “How am I going?” and “Where to next?” Further, feedback has been shown to be among the most powerful influences on achievement. Despite this, feedback is presently under-researched. Enhancing academic self-concept through effective teacher and student feedback should generate improved academic achievement in numeracy, psychosocial outcomes, for example motivation, and broader educational outcomes such as retention and future aspirations.
Inspired research! Doctoral students’ experience of a community of practice

Contributors: Jacqueline Humphries, Petra Karlsson, Jana Kokkinos, Sylvana Mahmic, Michelle Rose, Kerry Staples & Nolene Walker

Supervisors within the School of Education and Centre for Positive Psychology and Education

Being a doctoral student can be isolating. Having regular, structured contact with those going through the same experience may have positive benefits. The Inspired Research Group was set up around a notion of a Community of Practice (CoP) where all participants negotiated the outcomes and activities to enhance learning and motivation for each other. Whilst aspects of the group have been facilitated by the supervisor, all members are seen as leaders, contributors and learners. Set up in July 2011, the group meets fortnightly.

Activities include writing support/feedback, and sessions aimed at research skill development. Members keep a journal where they reflect on the group and its impacts on their study. Data are collected at each meeting. An early decision was made to evaluate the group and report the outcomes in a journal article. All members of the group are therefore participants and researchers.

Initial findings suggest that the CoP has enhanced participants’ focus, academic writing and research skills and has promoted a strong sense of community. Practical outcomes have been three participants completing their CoC’s, draft thesis chapters and four conference papers. It has also been fun.
What are the Obstacles to the Integration of Iraqi Refugees in Australia?

Makki Ilaj, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Carol Reid and Dr. Katina Zammit (Supervisors)
School of Education

This study will be researching the concept of social integration, and its importance to the Iraqi community and the obstacles facing their integration in Australia. The importance of the research emerges from the perceived failure of attempts by many Western governments to find a solution to the problem of integration of refugees. This research is critical in the current context where refugees are seen as a threat to Australian social cohesion.

From the initial findings, the effects can be grouped into social, educational, religious, political, psychological, financial, racial discrimination, prejudice, and the influence of a new culture (culture shock).

The Muslim and Arabic societies will benefit from the research, since there is a lot in common between them and the Iraqi society. As well, those working with refugees may obtain assistance from it. In addition, through discussing the problems that hinder Iraqi refugees from integrating, this research may participate in finding solutions for this significant phenomenon.
Roles of the assessor in Drama: The Teacher as Curator, Supervisor and Critic

Rachael Jacobs, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Mary Mooney and Assoc. Prof. Deirdre Russell-Bowie (Supervisors)
School of Education

This paper reports on a PhD study on the assessment of drama performances in Senior Secondary schools in Australia. A range of metaphors have been derived from the data in this study to illustrate the myriad of roles at play when drama teacher assess performances.

To begin with, the teacher is described as a curator who facilitates an exhibition of work created by their students. The students take on the role of the artist who must respond to the artistic brief set by the curator. As the creative process unfolds, the teacher moves into a supervisor’s role which is characterised by collaboration and guidance, as they mentor the student artists towards the creative outcome.

Finally, the teacher must become the arts consumer, then critic. They assess students based on predetermined criteria that measures the successfulness of the art in achieving the aims of the artistic brief. Within the analysis, notions of creativity and innovation are explored, as is the extent to which divergent responses are permitted or even encouraged in the drama assessment process. Finally, this paper discusses the tensions between the roles that are present when the teacher is required to be the curator, supervisor and critic.
Investigating Nursing Pedagogy between China and Australia: A comparative case study

Yonggui Jin, PhD Candidate

Dr. Dacheng Zhao and Prof. Michael Singh (Supervisors)
Centre for Educational Research

The developed countries are currently facing a shortage of nurses. To solve the problem, international organisations are trying to increase nurse migration from developing countries to developed countries, for example from China to Australia. However, there are considerable differences across the world in the pedagogy for preparing nurses.

This study aims to contribute to understanding seminars and differences of nursing pedagogy between Australia and China. Furthermore, it is to investigate the relationships between nursing pedagogy and nursing curriculum, social cultural context, and professional identity.

The findings of the study may help nurses in developing countries such as China to understand Australian nursing pedagogy and make the transplantation smoothly within the context of globalisation.
Empathic Connection or Addictive Flight? Fathers’ Relationships with their Children

Dion Khlentzos, PhD Candidate

Dr. Brenda Dobia and Dr. Roberto Parada (Supervisors)
School of Education

This study aims to explore the psychological effects of a parenting program on a sample of men in recovery from substance and other addictions. To date there has been limited research into the efficacy of parenting programs as part of the treatment for addictions. The present study will employ a modified version of the Tuning in to Kids (TiK) program, specifically targeted at the needs of men with addictions. The participants will be volunteer fathers of pre-school and primary school-age children, consistent with the ages of children in previous TiK studies. The TiK program is an attachment-based parenting program that involves skills including emotion coaching of one’s children as well as attention to one’s own strong emotions.

The fathers will be recruited from a rehabilitation facility to participate in the eight-week program. Each will receive an interview and a pre-test questionnaire, and follow-up questionnaires will be administered at the conclusion of the program and after a further six months. The results will be compared with those of a wait-listed control group who will commence their program six months after the treatment group. The questionnaires are currently being validated on another sample of fathers, including those within and outside rehabilitation facilities.
How early childhood teachers are embracing mathematics in prior-to-school settings: triumphs and tribulations

Jana Kokkinos, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Allan White and Dr. Joanne Orlando (Supervisors)
School of Education

There is general agreement that teaching children mathematics is important, even in the very early years. Young children are constantly displaying a natural curiosity of mathematics concepts as they encounter them through everyday experiences. Yet evidence suggests that the opportunity for children to build on this curiosity and to elicit understandings of mathematics, particularly in prior-to-school settings, is only poorly embraced by early childhood teachers. Early childhood teachers working in prior-to-school settings located in Sydney’s Greater West were observed and interviewed about how they embrace and support mathematics teaching and learning in their settings.

Preliminary findings suggest that: limited teacher knowledge may impede the success of mathematics experiences; teachers felt their pre-service teacher training did not adequately prepare them for teaching mathematics to young children, and; there is a compelling need for mathematics professional development courses in the prior-to-school sector.
The Blindfold and the Minefield – Ethical Decision Making and School Principals

Rod Leonarder, EdD Candidate

Prof. Moira Carmody and Dr. Nida Denson (Supervisors)
Diversities, Ethics and Education (DEE), School of Social Sciences and Psychology, and School of Education

My research addresses issues relating to the complexity of school decision making by principals.

Is Ethical Decision Making simply a way of differentiating between good and bad decision making?

What happens if school leaders do not employ ethical decision making practices?

And, why does research about professional learning practices in health care and medicine provide valuable insights into the school sector?
Expanding intellectual horizon for transnational exchange of critical theories: Identifying pedagogical possibilities in Australian teacher education to engage with non-western critical theoretical tools

Lalitha Lloyds, PhD Candidate

Prof. Michael Singh and Assoc. Prof. Christine Woodrow (Supervisors)
Centre for Educational Research and School of Education

The purpose of this conference paper is to present research findings that provide insights into identifying pedagogical possibilities to engage with non-Western critical theoretical tools in Australian teacher education. Research evidence indicates ‘non-acknowledgement’ and ‘misrecognition’ of Asian (educators) research candidates’ and Asian-Australian (teacher) educators’ knowledge of critique and criticality, their bilingual/multilingual capabilities that they bring to bear in Australia. Evidence from two rounds of interviews and a questionnaire were analysed that identified potential for transnational exchange of critical theoretical ideas. However, findings are indicative of Western stereotypical notions of non-Western critical theorising and Western critical theoretical dominance that interrupt transnational exchange of critical theoretical ideas.

The key problem for Australian teacher educators is that its pedagogies are nation-focused and inadequate to engage in transnational exchange of critical theoretical tools. Nevertheless, research evidence indicates that intellectual engagement with non-Western critical theories might help in reshaping existing pedagogical trends in Australian teacher education. The paper identifies that recognition and engagement with non-Western critical theoretical knowledge has potential to enhance Australian curriculum perspectives. Specifically, the paper identifies pedagogical possibilities for Australian research and education programs for intellectual engagement with non-Western critical theoretical resources to internationalise Australian teacher education.
Driving student learning outcomes through teacher professional development and learning communities

Carol Marshman, EdD Candidate

Prof. Moira Carmody and Dr. Nida Denson (Supervisors)
Diversities, Ethics and Education (DEE), School of Social Sciences and Psychology, and School of Education

This research aims to investigate, review, develop, test and evaluate a framework of strategies and techniques that enable school leaders to build collaborative and constructive teacher professional development and learning communities. How can the school community’s motivation and commitment to quality teaching and learning be sustained in educational settings?

An examination of data provides evidence of how a supportive conceptual framework centred on modelling reflective practice can enable the building of collaborative and constructive school environments. The most critical elements examined are; understanding the processes that increase the participants’ knowledge and skills, capturing and enhancing their motivation and commitment to learning at an individual and organisational level, and ensuring that the result is improved student learning.

This research will enable a clearer understanding of how teacher motivation and commitment to quality teaching and learning is sustained in a school setting.
Pre-service Teachers: Effects on their identity and self efficacy in the primary Mathematics practicum classroom

Karen McDaid, PhD Candidate

Dr. Tania Ferfolja and Dr. Jacqueline D'Warte (Supervisors)
School of Education

Research conducted by Hembree (1990) found that mathematics anxiety in pre-service teachers is higher than for any other subject major undertaken at university. The anxiety usually arose as a result of negative school experiences giving rise to concerns about high levels of mathematics anxiety being communicated to primary students in the classroom (Sovchik, 1996, cited in McGlynn-Stewart, 2010). On the other hand the primary teachers whose attitudes were inclined more positively towards mathematics stated that this was due to positive teacher attitudes at the tertiary level (Henderson & Rodrigues, 2008).

As Primary Professional Practice unit coordinator for the Master of Teaching Program, the author is responsible for ensuring quality practicum experiences for pre-service teachers completing the Master of Teaching program at the University of Western Sydney. The author also coordinates a large Mathematics unit that students completing the Pathways to Primary Teaching must complete as part of their Education Studies Major. The intention is to research the developmental growth of new scheme teachers with regards to their acquisition of skills and knowledge and to ascertain any changes that might have occurred with their professional identity during the Primary Professional Practice practicum with a specific focus on self-efficacy and Mathematics.
Longing and Belonging: Elucidating advances and limitations of current acculturation and enculturation theory.

Nyrie Nalbandian, PhD Candidate

Prof. Rhonda Craven, Dr. Marjorie Seaton and Dr. Nida Denson (Supervisors)
The Centre for Positive Psychology and Education

Acculturation, can be explained as the collective changes to a cultural group due to social interaction with another distinct culture (Matsudaira, 2006; Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936; Yoon, et al., 2011). In contrast enculturation is the conservation of one’s culture of origin (Berry & Sam, 1994; Yoon, et al., 2011). Research in acculturation and enculturation has gained much attention in the last 25 years. Increased interest has been attributed to their relation to psychological well-being amongst cultural minorities (Hansford & Hattie, 1982; Kang, 2006; Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991; Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew, & Vigil, 1987; Yoon, Langrehr, & Ong, 2011). Despite this increased attention, there remains a paucity of research on the effects of acculturation and enculturation on the academic outcomes and the psychosocial well being of cultural minority students within Australia.

To assess the impact of these concepts on minority students, it is necessary to establish an accurate understanding of existing theoretical models which predict them. Accordingly, this presentation will review advances and limitations of current theoretical and conceptual models of acculturation and enculturation. This review will inform and direct future advances in acculturation and enculturation measures.
Space and time in Ninggirum thought

Colleen Oates, PhD Candidate

Prof. Margaret Somerville (Supervisor)
Centre for Educational Research

This research seeks to understand the effects of global development on traditional culture in the Pacific Region. It examines traditional and contemporary stories of the Ninggirum people of Papua New Guinea. This paper endeavours to understand how Ninggirum thought organizes the space of the Ninggirum world, and how change happens within their reality. It explores Ninggirum concepts of space and space/time conjunction, in order to gain insight into how the organisation of space and time effects lived experience. It does this through a brief linguistic analysis of two versions of their central creation story, a written Ninggirum, and an oral English account. It also examines the texts for omission, silence, and metaphor which reflect cultural changes.

Analysis shows marked ontological and epistemological shifts from orality with its spatial and spatio-temporal organisation of ideas, towards the global economic priority which emphasises the writing of ideas in chronological linear format. It also shows a growing separation of human experience from nature as environments and traditional landscapes are being artificially altered. It implies that traditional cultures are constantly being divided and destabilised by means of the dualistic logic of relentless progress which defines the developed and undeveloped territories of global development.
The impact of beginning Mandarin teachers’ knowledge on primary students’ classroom engagement in Western Sydney Schools

Wenlu Qiu, MEd (Hons) Candidate

Dr. Jinghe Han and Prof. Michael Singh (Supervisors)
Centre for Educational Research

Teachers’ knowledge has always attracted great interest in the field of education and abundant studies have been done. However, the knowledge of beginning native Mandarin teachers in the Australian educational context remains underexplored. This project aims to study the impact of beginning Mandarin teachers’ knowledge on second language learners’ engagement in Australian primary schools.

A qualitative case study is designed to make an intense investigation in the real-life context with great value of empirical perspective. Eight beginning Mandarin teachers (including the researcher herself) under study are members of the ROSETE Program (Research Oriented, School Engaged Teacher Education) in the School of Education, University of Western Sydney. Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with the participants and observation of their Mandarin classes, and the researcher’s own biographical narrative. A category of components of knowledge developed by Park and Oliver (2008) will be employed in the data analysis.
Teacher Perspectives on Positive Behaviour Support: Now and Future Directions

Michelle Rose, PhD Candidate

Prof. Rhonda Craven, Assoc. Prof. Alexander Yeung and Dr. Mary Mooney (Supervisors)
The Centre for Positive Psychology and Education and the School of Education

Recently school-wide systems to support positive behaviour to enable focused engagement with the learning were introduced to consenting schools across New South Wales and more widely throughout Australia. However, only limited research has been undertaken to critically analyse the extent of and effectiveness of parent involvement in relation to the behaviour support systems operating within schools.

The purpose of this research is to explicate teachers' and principals' perspectives of the effectiveness of their current behaviour support system, how and to what extent parents have been involved in the school's positive behaviour support system, and what might be needed to improve the effectiveness of their current system. Semi structured interviews were conducted with twelve teachers and two principals from two Department of Education and Communities primary schools in the South Western Sydney Regional area.

The findings suggest that multiple factors exist, that segregate parents from the school and further findings indicate a need for adult education that may involve teachers and parents learning together across areas of child development, special needs and behaviour management. The findings have practical implications for the reconceptualisation of structured support systems which forge stronger links between the stakeholders within a school and their local community. The findings have implications for the development of future models of implementation for positive behaviour support systems.
Examining the implications and challenges of raising the school leaving age in NSW

Kathleen Seto, EdD Candidate

Dr. Peter Bansel and Prof. Moira Carmody (Supervisors)
Diversities, Ethics and Education (DEE), School of Social Sciences and Psychology, and School of Education

1 January 2010 signalled the introduction of a new compulsory schooling age in New South Wales. As of 2010, all young people are required to complete Year 10 and then engage in education, or training, or be in full-time employment until the age of 17. This change will be a greater challenge to schools in disadvantaged areas, where the retention rates from Year 10 to 12 are traditionally below the state average. The challenge for government secondary schools in South Western Sydney will be to provide alternative curriculum structures and programs that will satisfactorily address this trend. The implications of such changes will be examined alongside the resulting challenges that have emerged for school communities with regard to student engagement.

This research will be examined through the lens of Foucault’s notion of governmentality and the proposition is that legislation alone will not improve retention rates of disadvantaged students. Whilst most educators would agree with the ambitions of the government policy in raising the school leaving age, the argument of this paper is that there are also unintended assumptions and consequences.
Making Physics Easy for Everyone: Is it mission impossible?

Munirah Shaik Kadir, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Alexander Yeung (Supervisor)
The Centre for Positive Psychology and Education

Physics education is in crisis as the number of students studying physics around the world is on a rapid decline. Yet the demand for scientists and science teachers is on the rise. Research shows that students’ lack of interest and motivation to study Physics is partly due to the high level of difficulty in solving physics problems.

This research investigates what makes physics problems difficult for students, and using cognitive load theory, designs an intervention for effective physics instruction, which can be generalised to both Australian and Singapore secondary schools. The effectiveness of the intervention, in terms of students’ skills in solving physics problems, cognitive load, as well as motivation and self-concept, will be evaluated.

This research is significant because there are few intervention studies that examine both students’ learning outcomes and motivation in learning physics. While reducing the cognitive load can make physics manageable as a subject, it is the students’ motivation in learning physics that could have long-term effects on their choice of pursuing physics studies in the future. It is possible to make physics easy for everyone if both short-term and long-term issues associated with physics learning can be addressed in an effective way.
Pedagogical Leadership...A transformative tool???

Romi Sharma, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Christine Woodrow and Dr. Leonie Arthur (Supervisors)
School of Education

The aim of this research is to investigate the potential of pedagogical leadership as a transformative process that empowers early childhood educators in a context of new curriculum directions and expectations. The presentation will explore the skills and dispositions necessary for successful realisation of pedagogical leadership and compare these with traditional leadership discourses.

The introduction of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), and the establishment of a national quality system, distinguishes the changing policy context of early childhood education in Australia. Previous research in the United Kingdom and New Zealand suggests that the introduction of mandated curriculum can lead to an intensified focus on compliance and accountability rather than the pedagogical leadership necessary for effecting curriculum change and improvements in quality, thus reverting to traditional leadership approaches.

This provides an imperative for research that explores early childhood educator’s understandings of the implications for their professional roles and practices and how these interact on perceptions and practices of leadership.
Gathering perspectives from the field using Qualtrics an online survey tool.

Kerry Staples, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Christine Johnston and Assoc. Prof. Christine Woodrow (Supervisors)
School of Education

Surveys provide an effective way of collecting data from large numbers of participants. More recently online surveys have grown in popularity as a time effective and low cost method of reaching a wide geographic audience. Presenting surveys on-line however can both ameliorate and exacerbate sampling, distribution and completion issues.

This paper will examine the process of developing and using the on-line survey tool Qualtrics to gather the perspectives of over 1,000 early childhood professionals supporting the inclusion of children with disabilities across Australia.

The “Supporting Inclusion Survey” forms the first phase of a multilevel, mixed method study which examines in what ways the relationship between the early childhood teacher and the consultant, contributes to the inclusion of children with a disability in early childhood settings.
Exploring Quality Teaching of Information Communication Technology in NSW and YenBai High Schools: A comparative case study

Manh Thang Tran, PhD Candidate

Dr. Dacheng Zhao and Assoc. Prof. Allan White (Supervisors)
Centre for Educational Research and the School of Education

A comparative study of the quality teaching of ICT teacher in high schools in NSW and Yenbai province was considered significant and feasible. This study may contribute to compare ICT teachers in high schools and determine the distance between the actual situation of the teaching staff and current information technology requirements of ICT teachers meet the requirements of teaching informatics in secondary schools; propose a specific way to meet quality training of ICT teachers in high school, consistent with the context of a ICT teacher training school in Vietnam.

Research of comparative between theory and practice of quality ICT teaching in NSW - Australia and Yenbai - Vietnam in high schools, to propose solutions to develop high school ICT teachers in Yenbai in order to meet quality requirements teach ICT high school in the coming years. Adoption:

• To study the policies and views of participants ICT teachers recruitment in Australia.
• The institutions and policies fostering the quality of ICT teachers in high school
• Find out the educational policies and other factors that are of interest in Australia's education with the development of international partnerships, and provide evidence-based information the policy making of education.
• Comparison of methods of teaching ICT in high school in the state of NSW with ICT teaching in the province of Yenbai.
• Introduction and application of innovative teaching methods, the effectiveness of ICT teachers high schools in NSW into high schools Yenbai.
Pre-service Teacher Education for Inclusive Classes

Nolene Walker, PhD Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Christine Johnston and Dr. Katrina Barker (Supervisors)
School of Education

The purpose of this study is to identify curricula and pedagogy that prepares pre-service teachers for inclusive primary classrooms during their initial teacher training. It will also examine the impact of the mandatory inclusion unit that students at University of Western Sydney undertake as part of their pre-service primary teacher preparation.

The findings of this research will have implications for the selection of curricula and pedagogy to be included in teacher training courses to ensure that pre-service teachers are equipped for the inclusive classroom.
HDR Student Conference Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time (PM)</th>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:30 - 1:00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 2:15</td>
<td>3 Minute Thesis Presentations</td>
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</table>

Session 1: Room I.1.04  Chair: Rachel Jacobs

Angela Foley (1:05 – 1:15)
On country: The art of place-making in Wurundjeri country today, a visual narrative and record.

Munirah Shaik Kadir (1:20 – 1:30)
Making Physics Easy for Everyone: Is it mission impossible?

Karen McDaid (1:35 – 1:45)
Pre-service Teachers: Effects on their identity and self efficacy in the primary Mathematics practicum classroom.

Romi Sharma (1:50 – 2:00)
Pedagogical Leadership...A transformative tool?

Mahn Thang Tran (2:05– 2:15)
Exploring Quality Teaching of Information Communication Technology in NSW and YenBai High Schools: A comparative case study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 2: Room I.1.05</th>
<th>Session 3: Room I.1.14</th>
<th>Session 4: Room I.1.17</th>
<th>Session 5: Room I.1.18</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:30</td>
<td><strong>Makki Ilaj</strong>&lt;br&gt;What are the Obstacles to the Integration of Iraqi Refugees in Australia?</td>
<td><strong>Nerrisa Albon</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sharing the tip of the sand dune: Ethical Issues in Cross Cultural Research.</td>
<td><strong>Mehmet Aslan</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Sociological Analysis of English as a Global Language in Turkish Education.</td>
<td><strong>Joint Presentation:</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Jacqueline Humphries, Christine Johnston, Petra Karlsson, Jana Kikkinos, Sylvanna Mahmic, Michelle Rose, Kerry Staples, Nolene Walker</strong>&lt;br&gt;Inspired research! Doctoral students’ experience of a community of practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:35 – 2:05</td>
<td><strong>Kathleen Seto</strong>&lt;br&gt;Examining the implications and challenges of raising the school leaving age in NSW.</td>
<td><strong>Colleen Oates</strong>&lt;br&gt;Space and time in Ninggirum thought.</td>
<td><strong>Lesley Christen</strong>&lt;br&gt;An investigation of the significance of cultural historical activity theory on Methodology in L1 and L2 and the Implications for the role of drama in the teaching of L2.</td>
<td><strong>Kerry Staples</strong>&lt;br&gt;Gathering perspectives from the field using Qualtrics, an online survey tool.</td>
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## Paper Presentations (Sessions 2; 3, 4 & 5)

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<tr>
<th>Session 2: Room I.1.05</th>
<th>Session 3: Room I.1.14</th>
<th>Session 4: Room I.17</th>
<th>Session 5: Room I.1.18</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chair: Assoc Prof Allan White</td>
<td>Chair: Dr Katina Zammit</td>
<td>Chair: Dr Mary Mooney</td>
<td>Chair: Dr Maggie Clarke</td>
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<tr>
<th>2:10 – 2:40</th>
<th>Sylvanna Mahmic</th>
<th>Dion Khlentzos</th>
<th>Hussain Alsairari</th>
<th>Ahmad Alkhalil</th>
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| 2:30 – 3:00 | AFTERNOON TEA – Building D – Playhouse foyer |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3:00 – 3:30</th>
<th>POSTER PRESENTATIONS – Session 6: Building D – Playhouse foyer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nick Green</td>
<td>Numeracy counts: Explicating research-derived effective teacher feedback elements, psychosocial drivers, and novel intervention for numeracy success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yonggui Jin</td>
<td>Investigating Nursing Pedagogy between China and Australia: A comparative case study.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nyree Nalbandian</td>
<td>Longing and Belonging: Elucidating advances and limitations of current acculturation and enculturation theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenlu Qiu</td>
<td>The impact of beginning Mandarin teachers’ knowledge on primary students’ classroom engagement in Western Sydney Schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:35 – 4:30</td>
<td><strong>KEYNOTE LECTURE</strong></td>
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<td>Building D</td>
<td>Playhouse Lecture Theatre</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Professor Margaret Somerville</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Director, Centre for Educational Research</td>
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<td>School of Education</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Biography</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Margaret Somerville is a Professor of Education in the School of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Education and Director of the Centre for Educational Research.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A pioneer in place studies research in education, she has a long</td>
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<td></td>
<td>history of collaboration with Indigenous communities about their</td>
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<td></td>
<td>relationship to place. Her first of five authored books, 'Ingelba</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and the Five Black Matriarchs' with Aboriginal Elder Patsy Cohen,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>was described as ‘the best politically informed oral history ever</td>
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<td></td>
<td>produced in Australia’. Her enduring focus in this work is in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>articulating what non-Indigenous Australians can learn about</td>
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<td>living in this land from the oldest continuing culture in the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>world. She has applied concepts of place to questions of safe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>bodies in a range of industries and in her research about how</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teachers learn to do their work, and how they learn about the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>places and communities in which they begin teaching. She</td>
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<td></td>
<td>specialises in supervising alternative and creative methodologies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and was awarded the inaugural Vice Chancellors Equity Award for</td>
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<td>this work, published in a number of prestigious journal articles.</td>
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<td>4:30 – 5:30</td>
<td><strong>DINNER</strong></td>
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<td>Building D, Playhouse Foyer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session 7: Room I.1.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:50 – 6:20</td>
<td>Rod Leonarder</td>
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<td>6:25 – 6:50</td>
<td>Rachel Jacobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:55 – 7:25</td>
<td>Hamed Alasaadi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The utilization of technology in teaching of the Arabic language in secondary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.</td>
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<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Close</td>
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Acknowledgements

The School of Education Research & HDR Committee would like to acknowledge and express their thanks to all the staff and students within the school who have contributed to the success of the 2012 HDR Student Conference.

In particular, our special thanks and appreciation are extended to Markie Lugton whose tireless efforts commenced with the initial proposal to the final product. Her commitment to the conference in both organisation and publication support the high standing for our students and their supervisors.
Notes