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School of Education

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY**

**13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM (PGRS)**

Saturday 5th APRIL 2025

School of Education: Nuns' Island

Book of Abstracts



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Welcome!

Dear Participant, Colleague, Researcher!

We are delighted to welcome you to the 13th Annual Postgraduate Research Symposium (PGRS) of the School of Education, University of Galway.

The Annual PGRS Symposium is a core event in the research calendar of the School of Education, where doctoral students - at various stages in their PhD journey - have the opportunity to present their work and avail of constructive feedback from their peers and faculty.

Now in its 13th year, the PGRS has developed into an annual forum where students can share their research plans, data and methodologies, and also discuss their research challenges.

We are delighted again this year to showcase such an impressive array of diverse, important and impactful research that is being undertaken by the School of Education's doctoral candidates, and by PhDs from across the College and University who are undertaking education-cognate research.

Please find enclosed in this Open Access Book of Abstracts publication, the programme and schedule for the day and also Abstracts for each of the presentations. We would like especially to congratulate and thank all our presenters today, and our colleagues who are very generously giving of their time to chair the respective parallel sessions. Our thanks also to our School Administrator, Caroline Casey for her support in organising the day.

We thank you for your participation and contributions, and trust you will enjoy the symposium, as we share, discuss and debate important educational issues and questions in the collegial, welcoming and supportive context of the School of Education PGRS.

Professor Michal Molcho

*Head of the School of
Education*

Professor Elaine Keane

*Head of the Discipline of
Education, School of
Education*

Professor Tony Hall

*Director of Doctoral
Studies, School of Education*



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PROGRAMME



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School of Education, University of Galway
13th Annual Postgraduate Research Symposium
(PGRS) Saturday, April 5th, 2025, Nuns' Island

9.20am-9.50am: Refreshments on Arrival

9.50am-10.00am: Welcome and Opening Remarks

10.00am-11.30am: Parallel Sessions 1

STC Chair: Prof Elaine Keane	Boardroom Chair: Dr Kevin Davison	G023 Chair: Dr Niamh Flynn	G024 Chair: Dr Brenda Gallagher
Arini Nurul Hidayati <i>Bridging Expectations and Realities: Indonesian EFL Teachers' Intercultural Communicative Competence During Study Abroad</i>	Ciara McKeivitt <i>The influence of game-based design learning on first year students' mathematical resilience</i>	Asdar Muhammad Nur <i>Behind the Scenes: Cultural Impacts on Indonesian Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Perspectives on and Experiences of Reflective Practice</i>	Greg Harris <i>"Nobody looked at it. It was never brought up.": A constructivist grounded theory of defending inaction in the implementation of intercultural education in post-primary schooling in Ireland</i>
Ellen Moloney <i>The holistic experience of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 students in Further Education and Training (FET)</i>	Federica Curreli <i>Culturally (in)appropriate: learner attitudes and intercultural pragmatic skills in study abroad contexts</i>	Ger Ahearne <i>The descriptive phenomenological interview – strategies and challenges</i>	Delores Crerar <i>Systemic Insight: Combining Critical Realism and Complexity Theory to Examine Power and Collaboration</i>

<i>colleges across Ireland: some early findings</i>			
Emer Davitt <i>Belonging and Identity during Curricular Reform</i>	Frances Clarke <i>An Analysis of Formative Assessment Practices in Home Economics</i>	Gitit Indra Putra Wacana <i>Enhancing Self-Efficacy in Indonesian Pre-service English Teachers through Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching</i>	Rachel Hastings <i>Irish Home Economics teacher's experience of integrating sustainable and responsible living in Junior Cycle Home Economics</i>

11.30am-1.00pm: Parallel Sessions 2

STC Chair: Prof Elaine Keane	Boardroom Chair: Dr Mary Kelly	G023 Chair: Dr Clíona Murray
Grace Winters <i>Evolving Pedagogical Identity: A Stakeholder Perspective</i>	Hannah Linane <i>An Exploration of the Palliative Care Needs of the Adolescent and Young Adult Population with a Life-Limiting condition in Ireland; A Unique Population with Distinct Needs</i>	Kaitlin Kaufman <i>Operationalising Confidence in the Career Aspirations of Primary Aged Children: A Review of Key Findings and Contributions</i>
Michelle O'Doherty <i>Exploring the CPAR Approach: A Reflective Journey Towards Understanding Relational Pedagogy in ECEC</i>	Natalia Hermida Cepeda <i>Transitional Justice and Child Soldier Reintegration in Colombia: Policy Effectiveness and Stakeholder Perspectives</i>	Shannon Stubbs <i>Implementation of the Primary Science Capital Teaching Approach in a scientist-facilitated intervention</i>
Shauna Molloy <i>Diversity, Inclusion & Teacher Recruitment in Irish Primary and Post-primary Schools: Perspectives & Experiences of School Leaders</i>	Sveva Zafferri <i>Rewriting the script for Foreign Language Learning: a first study on the integration of AI in an Audiovisual Translation course</i>	Tonya Pell <i>A Review of RSE in Irish Post-Primary Schools & Initial Teacher Education Programs</i>

1.00pm-2.00pm: Lunch

2.00pm-3.00pm: Parallel Sessions 3

STC Chair: Prof Tony Hall	Boardroom Chair: Dr Niamh Flynn
Greta Amedei-Westerwald <i>Learning “Discomforting Truths”: Teacher Social Class and Possibilities for Collaborative Spaces to Prepare Teachers to Work Effectively in DEIS-Designated Schools</i>	Deirdre Fitzgerald <i>Delving for Dimensions – Considering the delicacies of relationships within properties in Constructivist Grounded Theory</i>
Paul Finn <i>Recruiting Hard-to-Reach Participants</i>	Niamh Deignan <i>Mentoring in/for educational leadership: Mentoring experiences and implications for future practice</i>

Close: 3.00pm-3.15pm, STC



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13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Greta Amedei-Westerwald
School & College:	School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Elaine Keane, Dr. Manuela Heinz
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	5th
Title of Presentation:	Learning “Discomforting Truths”: Teacher Social Class and Possibilities for Collaborative Spaces to Prepare Teachers to Work Effectively in DEIS-Designated Schools
Abstract	<p>Little is known about teachers from diverse backgrounds, and their experiences in ITE programmes and later teaching in different types of schools. This missing data has been identified as crucial to further inform current efforts not only to diversify the teaching profession, but also to prepare all teachers to educate students in the ever-diversifying school populations (Keane, Heinz, Mc Daid, 2023).</p> <p>This presentation draws on data collected from a doctoral study focused upon career trajectories and experiences of teachers in Ireland from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. In doing so, I aim to contribute new knowledge regarding teaching in DEIS schools, comparing perspectives of teachers and exploring their suggestions for how ITE can better develop “effective teachers for all students and supportive colleagues for all staff in schools,” specifically in the DEIS-designated context (Keane, et. al, 2023).</p> <p>I utilise data from semi-structured interviews of 20 teachers from diverse social class backgrounds. Social class backgrounds were determined using the Republic of Ireland’s Census categories for each participant’s parents’ last known professions. Ten participants were from social classes 1-2, with the remaining ten from classes 3-7. Some constructivist grounded theory (CGT) techniques were employed for analysis, including line-by-line initial coding after each interview, then progressing to focused coding (bringing forward the most frequent codes) to develop categories (Charmaz, 2014). Throughout coding,</p>



reflexive journaling, analytic memoing (Keane, 2022) and the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965) were employed, prioritising critical reflexivity about both researcher and participant positionalities (Keane, 2021). It is important to note that this was not a full CGT study, but was the second part of a larger sequential mixed-methods doctoral study.

Analysis of interviews demonstrated stark differences, contingent upon social class, in the extent to which teachers felt comfortable in DEIS-designated contexts, and how they (dis)engaged with students and their parents in these schools. However, despite these differences, teachers from all class backgrounds suggested that ITE programmes could be improved by adding modules about teaching in DEIS-designated schools and/or teaching students of diverse backgrounds. Bourdieu's writings on habitus (1977; 1988) and Boler & Zembylas' theories about "pedagogies of discomfort" (2003) will be used to discuss the above findings and implications for the improvement of teacher education and continued diversification.

*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



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Name:	Arini Nurul Hidayati
School & College:	School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Cliona Murray Dr. Manuela Heinz
Year of PhD Study:	2 nd
Title of Presentation:	Bridging Expectations and Realities: Indonesian EFL Teachers' Intercultural Communicative Competence During Study Abroad
Abstract	<p>The increasing globalization of education necessitates the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among teachers. Prior research highlights the importance of intercultural exposure in shaping teachers' professional identities and teaching practices. This study explores how Indonesian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers undertaking postgraduate studies in Anglophone countries develop ICC during of their study abroad experience. Using a narrative inquiry approach, this study follows twenty Master's students in universities across the UK, Australia, Ireland, Finland, the US, and the Netherlands. Employing a longitudinal design, the researcher collects the data through in-depth interviews and photovoice conducted before, during, and after their study abroad experience.</p> <p>In this presentation, I will focus on exploring the findings of my first phase of interviews (n=20). The findings indicate that, prior to departure, participants actively prepared for intercultural interactions through prior engagement with diverse cultural groups, media exposure, and discussion on cultural differences. While some expressed anxiety about navigating new cultural environments, their motivations to enhance their teaching competencies outweighed these concerns. Inspired by one participant's reflection , "<i>I Imagined What Life I Would Live</i>", the study highlights the contrast between expectations and realities abroad and how these experiences shape intercultural learning and professional growth. The findings provide insights into identity negotiation, cultural adaptation, and the role of prior experiences in shaping ICC. This research contributes to intercultural education by offering practical implications for teacher training programs, emphasizing the need to develop both linguistic proficiency and intercultural competence to better prepare teachers for teaching in the increasingly diverse classrooms.</p>

*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



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Abstract Submission Template

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Name:	Asdar Muhammad Nur
School & College:	School of Education, College of Arts, Social Sciences, & Celtic Studies
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Manuela Heinz
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	1 st Year
Title of Presentation:	Behind the Scenes: Cultural Impacts on Indonesian Pre-Service EFL Teachers' Perspectives on and Experiences of Reflective Practice
Abstract	<p>In recent years, reflective practice has received growing attention globally as a professional learning approach for teachers across the career pathway. Teachers are encouraged and supported to reflect on their own practice and experiences to gain insights, understand their teaching, and improve. Research has shown that reflective practice can help teachers identify weaknesses, adjust methods, and build self-awareness. Although reflective practice has been widely studied, little research is available that explores approaches to experiences with and/or impact of reflective practice as a professional learning approach for teachers in non-Western countries like Indonesia. The overarching research question explored in this study is: In how far, and in what ways, do cultural factors influence pre-service EFL teachers' experiences with, and perspectives towards, reflective practice in Indonesia.</p> <p>It is hoped that a better contextual understanding of reflective practice in Indonesian initial teacher education can help teacher educators to appropriately conceptualise and design reflective practice for professional learning to support student teachers' motivation, adaptation, and professional growth. By examining the intersection between socio-cultural background/ contexts and reflective practice, the research aims to promote a culturally responsive approaches to</p>



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	<p>reflective practice that support the development of teachers from diverse backgrounds and within diverse teacher education contexts. In this presentation, the researcher will summarise key concepts related to, and research exploring, firstly, reflective practice in teacher education, and, secondly, the influence of culture on education and on teacher education, including with regard to reflective practice. Following this scoping review of relevant literature, the researcher will outline, and invite feedback, on the design of the mixed-methods action research study. Data will be collected through a combination of surveys, interviews, journals, focus groups, and a workshop.</p>
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*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.

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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Ciara Mc Kevitt
School & College:	School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Professor Cornelia Connolly
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	3 rd Year
Title of Presentation:	The influence of game-based design learning on first year students' mathematical resilience
Abstract	<p>Mathematical resilience plays a crucial role in the development of mathematical skills, as evidenced in the proposed curricula at both primary and post primary. Current students are technologically proficient nevertheless, there is a challenge in utilising those skills in the classroom to aid understanding and nurture mathematical resilience.</p> <p>This action research study employs a quasi-experimental design with a mixed methods approach to explore the affect of gamification in the mathematics classroom among first year post primary students. This study includes 200 students across 4 research cycles. Each participant engaged in a pre and post-intervention survey that measured their mathematical resilience and mathematical anxiety. The intervention lasted eight weeks, during this period the experimental group took part in learning through the educational software Blooket, whilst the control group received instruction through traditional teaching methods. This presentation will report on findings from two research cycles. The findings from the first two cycles of the intervention suggest a statistically significant improvement in mathematical resilience in the experimental group post-intervention, verified from the statistical testing carried out using SPSS. The post-intervention mean scores increased significantly in both cycles from pre-intervention. These results demonstrate promising benefits when we utilise game based learning to enhance mathematical resilience. Semi-structured interviews took place in groups, and the qualitative data thematically analysed using NVivo. Various themes were coded, the dominant theme being motivation where students highlighted an increase in enjoyment of maths classes. Though not a</p>



	<p>panacea, findings indicate that employing gamification into mathematics education, not only nurtures the mathematical resilience of the students but also created a positive shift in their mathematical attitudes. Gamification has the potential to be incorporated in the teaching and learning of future mathematics curricula due to its success in student engagement, motivation and enhancement of mathematical resilience.</p>
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*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



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Abstract Submission Template

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Name:	Deirdre Fitzgerald
School & College:	Discipline of Children's Studies, School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Prof. Michal Molcho Dr. Devon Goodwin
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	5 th Year (Part-time)
Title of Presentation:	Delving for Dimensions – Considering the delicacies of relationships within properties in Constructivist Grounded Theory
Abstract	<p>Scholarly work on the concept of an 'Ordinary Life' discusses the possibility of a person with disability leading an ordinary life, in a valued role, surrounded by an inclusive community. Key to this possible outcome are decision points throughout the life of the person with disability; the initial decision regarding where to go school (an inclusive vs segregated setting) is one of the most important of these decisions.</p> <p>Given the paucity of research in this area, this Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) project aims to conceptualise the inter-personal processes, actions, and competing forces present in the context of these decisions; the goal of this conceptualization is to increase understanding of when, why, and how children find themselves in inclusive vs. segregated educational settings.</p> <p>To date 22 semi-structured interviews have been conducted with parents of young children with complex disability and the practitioners who work with them. Initial and focused coding of the data has revealed the salience of the concepts "shifting into uncertainty", "seeking an environment to flourish" and "strategically profiling". The project is at stage of theoretical coding, and while this is taking longer than anticipated, it is vital to allow time to engage critically with how the categories and properties relate to each other in order to develop a</p>



	<p>coherent theory; without these statements of relationship, there is no theory.</p> <p>This presentation will discuss the journey taken by the researcher in exploring these concepts, considering their applicability to understanding the experience of both the parent and the practitioner. It will also discuss potential relationships between and within the categories.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

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Name:	Delores Crerar
School & College:	School of Political Science and Sociology
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Carmel Devaney
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	2
Title of Presentation:	Systemic Insight: Combining Critical Realism and Complexity Theory to Examine Power and Collaboration
Abstract	<p>This presentation outlines the adoption of critical realism and complexity theory as the methodological framework for a study exploring commissioning relationships within Ireland’s Family Resource Centres (FRCs). Whilst the research has yet to be conducted, the chosen frameworks reflect a deliberate approach to understanding the layered and dynamic nature of such relationships. Critical realism provides a robust lens to explore the empirical (stakeholder perceptions), actual (observable processes), and real (underlying systemic mechanisms) dimensions, facilitating an in-depth investigation into power dynamics and decision-making processes.</p> <p>Complementing this, complexity theory conceptualises these relationships as complex adaptive systems, characterised by interdependence, feedback loops, and emergent behaviours. By addressing the non-linear and adaptive nature of collaborative interactions, complexity theory enhances the ability to anticipate unplanned outcomes and understand shifts in governance structures.</p> <p>This dual-framework methodology positions the study to bridge structural, interpretive, and systemic dimensions, offering the potential to generate actionable insights into how commissioning practices impact collaboration, autonomy, and service delivery for vulnerable families. The presentation will reflect on the rationale for integrating these approaches, their alignment with the research objectives, and their anticipated contribution to advancing knowledge in the field.</p>

*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Ellen Moloney
School & College:	School of Education, University of Galway
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Brenda Gallagher & Prof. Elaine Keane
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	2 nd year
Title of Presentation:	The holistic experience of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 students in Further Education and Training (FET) colleges across Ireland: some early findings
Abstract	<p>The FET sector is a very important sector of the Irish education system representing over 90% of all QQI awards of which, approximately half, are QQI Level 5 major award courses. Level 5 courses are one academic year in duration and are recognised as the first vocational specific phase on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ); they are also currently the level with the highest attrition rates across the NFQ.</p> <p>This research study explores FET Level 5 students' holistic experiences of their courses with a view to optimising the impact and role of these courses in terms of student's academic and career trajectories. Employing a mixed methodology research design, and grounded theoretically in the constructivist approach, key objectives of the study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing a clear understating of students' initial expectations of their Level 5 course and its perceived importance in launching their academic and career trajectories.• Gaining important insights into students' holistic experiences of participating on their Level 5 courses, including the application, admissions and induction processes and the role of same in launching and shaping their academic and career trajectories.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harnessing the student voice, so as to enhance academic and career trajectories for all Level 5 graduates• Through the identification of student-centred actionable insights, inform a universal design entry process for the FET sector, with a view to bridging any potential gap between student initial course expectations and lived reality of same. <p>This presentation will provide a brief synopsis of the study focusing on what informed the area of concentration and the research design. This will be followed by an overview of some early findings from phase 1 of the data collection process (an online questionnaire); these findings focus predominantly on students' experiences of the application, admissions and induction processes aligned to their course of study.</p>

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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Emer Davitt
School & College:	School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Dr Paul Flynn, Dr Veronica McCauley
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	5 th Year Part Time
Title of Presentation:	Belonging and Identity during Curricular Reform
Abstract	<p>Teacher agency is central to educational change, as teachers adapt to evolving curricula and diverse student needs. At the micro level of curriculum-making, teachers reassess their professional development to navigate changing educational landscapes. In today's diverse classrooms, pedagogical adaptivity or modifying lesson plans to align with students' cognitive needs is essential. Adaptive experts continually refine their practices, seeking new approaches when existing methods prove ineffective. Curricular reform heightens this need for flexibility, reflexivity, and innovation.</p> <p>Teacher disposition plays a key role in enacting curricular change, while allowing for pedagogical adaptivity. Thoughtfully adaptive teachers possess declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge, as well as a strong sense of beliefs, vision, belonging, and identity. These elements shape their agency and effectiveness during curricular reform, particularly in contexts where language and teaching are deeply intertwined, such as in Irish Medium education.</p> <p>This doctoral study explores the interplay between curricular reform enactment in Irish Medium secondary schools in Ireland and teacher adaptivity during Junior Cycle reform. Through a case study approach, qualitative data was collected via semi-structured interviews with 17 teachers across 13 schools. Thematic analysis, using NVIVO, examined</p>



	<p>how internal teacher characteristics and external supports influenced teachers' adaptive expertise during this reform period.</p> <p>Findings reveal that curricular reform led to a decline in teacher confidence, impacting pedagogical adaptivity directly. Many relied on their vision and beliefs to navigate uncertainty, and those teachers with strong professional and language identities as well as a firm sense of belonging demonstrated greater resilience and adaptivity, despite concerns about performativity and state examinations.</p> <p>This study highlights the importance of supporting teachers' professional identities and communities during reform to sustain pedagogical adaptivity. Insights will inform policy and professional development initiatives that foster teacher agency, confidence, and adaptive expertise, ultimately benefiting student outcomes in Irish Medium education and more broadly.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Federica Curreli
School & College:	School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures – College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies
Supervisor(s):	Prof. Anne O'Connor (University of Galway), Prof. Borbala Samu (University for Foreigners of Perugia, Italy)
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	1 st Year
Title of Presentation:	<i>Culturally (in)appropriate: learner attitudes and intercultural pragmatic skills in study abroad contexts.</i>
Abstract	<p>This project investigates firstly students' perceptions and attitudes towards the target language and culture before and after study abroad (SA) and secondly whether pragmatic instruction can encourage learners to challenge pre-existing attitudes and cultural values and foster their intercultural sensitivity. It builds on previous research in this area, which has shown that language exposure alone is not sufficient to develop pragmatic skills, since learners need both to notice the surface features of pragmatic phenomena and to understand the underlying principles. Several studies have demonstrated the benefits of pragmatic-based courses particularly in SA contexts, but have predominantly focused on the degree to which learners approximate native speakers' language use. However, according to recent translingual frameworks and critical pragmatics approaches, more attention needs to be paid to how issues of learner subjectivity and agency can be incorporated into pragmatic teaching as a key tool to enhance students' pragmatic and intercultural skills.</p> <p>This study uses a parallel mixed methods design, where the qualitative and quantitative strands of the research are carried out simultaneously. At present, qualitative data are being collected through semi-structured interviews, while quantitative data through two questionnaires. The first questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews, conducted with the</p>



	<p>final-year students of Italian, aim to gain an insight into learners' Erasmus experience, on their interactions with the Italian community and on their perceptions and attitudes towards local sociocultural norms. Moreover, an experimental module on pragmatics and intercultural communication is being delivered to second-year students of Italian and Italian Erasmus students, engaging them in collaborative critical reflection on the L1 and L2 cultures. This group of students will complete the second questionnaire, aimed at collecting their opinions and assessing the effectiveness of the teaching content and approach. This first set of data will be used to refine the research design and further data collection.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Frances Clarke
School & College:	St. Angela's College/ATU
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Kathryn McSweeney Dr. Brian O'Boyle
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	Year 4
Title of Presentation:	An Analysis of Formative Assessment Practices in Home Economics
Abstract	<p>300 words max. (See guidelines)</p> <p>An Analysis of Formative Assessment Practices in Home Economics</p> <p>Abstract</p> <p>Formative assessment practices have shown significant benefits across educational disciplines, yet their implementation in Home Economics education seems to be inconsistent and underutilised. This presentation examines the implementation gap between contemporary formative assessment policy and initiatives, and classroom practice in Home Economics. There is little research about Home Economics assessment other than the work of McSweeney (2014), and little since documenting teachers' responses to curriculum and assessment reform.</p> <p>Drawing on Kathryn McSweeney's (2014) work <i>Assessment practices and their impact on home economics education in Ireland</i>, a study investigating the alignment between home economics education aims in Ireland and national assessment practices, I analyse how subsequent policy reforms have addressed the challenges identified in this study and how home</p>



economics teachers interpret and apply the recommended approaches. McSweeney's (2014) study examined stakeholders' perceptions of home economics assessment and its impact on learning and teaching by interviewing teachers, students, teacher educators, and professional home economists, coupled with an analysis of curriculum and assessments from 2005-2014. A follow-up study (McSweeney & Gardner, 2014) investigated how Home Economics teachers' beliefs about assessment influence their classroom practices, particularly regarding the use of AfL pedagogical approaches.

Findings reveal that while recent policy reforms increasingly acknowledge the distinctive nature of Home Economics education, significant gaps remain in providing subject-specific implementation frameworks, appropriate resource allocation, and professional development tailored to the subject's needs. This research contributes to understanding how policy reform can more effectively bridge the implementation gap in discipline-specific contexts while maintaining assessment validity and authenticity.



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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Gitit Indra Putra Wacana
School & College:	School of Education & College of Arts
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Paul Flynn
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	3 rd
Title of Presentation:	Enhancing Self-Efficacy in Indonesian Pre-service English Teachers through Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching
Abstract	<p>This study investigates the potential of Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching (TMTBLT) to enhance the self-efficacy of Indonesian pre-service English teachers. Self-efficacy, a key determinant of teacher effectiveness and student outcomes, is often underdeveloped in Indonesian teacher training programmes, where traditional teaching methods remain prevalent. Against this backdrop, the research examines how integrating technology with task-based approaches can foster confidence and competence in pre-service teachers. Grounded in Bandura's self-efficacy theory and informed by recent developments in TBLT and educational technology, the study adopts a mixed-methods approach. This includes pre- and post-intervention surveys, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. Participants are pre-service teachers from Indonesian universities who engage in a semester-long TMTBLT intervention, utilising digital tools such as language learning apps, virtual collaboration platforms, and multimedia resources within task-based activities.</p> <p>The presentation will focus on two key findings: first, the role of authentic, technology-enhanced tasks in building pre-service teachers' confidence in designing and delivering communicative language lessons; and second, the impact of collaborative, technology-mediated reflection on their perceived ability to manage classroom challenges. Initial findings suggest that TMTBLT not only strengthens linguistic and pedagogical skills but also cultivates a sense of agency and adaptability among pre-service teachers. These insights underscore the potential of TMTBLT as a transformative approach in teacher education, particularly in resource-</p>



	<p>constrained contexts. The presentation will conclude with practical implications for integrating TMTBLT into teacher training curricula and recommendations for further research on technology-mediated approaches to teacher development.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Grace Winters
School & College:	University of Galway – School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Dr Amanda McCloat & Dr Helen Maguire
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	4 th Year
Title of Presentation:	Evolving Pedagogical Identity: A Stakeholder Perspective
Abstract	<p>This study examines how pedagogical identities evolve over time, focusing on the perspective of key Home Economics stakeholders. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) was applied as an analytical tool to enhance the interpretation of findings, allowing themes to emerge inductively. While existing research highlights the fluid nature of teacher identity, there is limited understanding of how stakeholders contribute to this transformation. This study addresses this gap by exploring how personal and professional experiences, practical engagement, and institutional influences shape evolving pedagogical stances. By analysing emergent themes, this research offers a nuanced perspective on the dynamic and context-dependent nature of pedagogical identity formation.</p> <p>This presentation focuses on three key findings. First, stakeholders increasingly embrace experiential and practical learning as a pedagogical stance, shifting away from traditional, text-based instruction in favour of hands-on, skill based approaches aligned with curriculum reforms. Secondly, the role of personal and professional experiences is central in shaping stakeholder identity, with many drawing on formative experiences such as parental modelling, intergenerational transmission of pedagogical beliefs and school-based influence. Finally, bridging the gap between theory and practice remains a challenge. Mentorship and ongoing professional learning emerge as critical mechanisms in this transition. The findings suggest that stakeholder pedagogical identity is not static, but dynamic, identity driven process, shaped by both personal</p>



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	<p>beliefs and the subject's unique epistemological structure. This research highlights the need for frameworks that bridge theory and practice, while fostering student-centered, inclusive educational approaches in teacher education, curriculum design and professional training.</p>
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*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Greg Harris
School & College:	School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Elaine Keane
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	5 th (final draft submitted January 20245)
Title of Presentation:	“Nobody looked at it. It was never brought up.”: A constructivist grounded theory of defending inaction in the implementation of intercultural education in post-primary schooling in Ireland
Abstract	<p>It is widely accepted that teachers have a pivotal position in the implementation of intercultural education. Despite this, there is a gap in the literature on Irish teachers' understandings of intercultural education. Existing literature does, however, suggest that Irish teachers may hold attitudes that are inhospitable to intercultural education, such as seeing it as an 'add on' or minimizing the impact of racism. This research sought to investigate Irish teachers' understandings of intercultural education. As this is an under-theorised area, it adopted a Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) methodology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 31 post-primary teachers. Data were analysed using CGT procedures of coding and categorising, with data collection and analysis conducted iteratively across several rounds. This led to the construction of a grounded theory of defending inaction on intercultural education. This CGT had three sub-categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 'Opening my eyes' to diversity and privilege.2. Valuing diversity and intercultural education.3. Defending the lack of intercultural education. <p>This presentation will focus mainly on the third sub-category. It will explain how participants pointed to, and then defended, the lack of intercultural education in their schools. These defences included a lack of time, training and focus on intercultural education, both in their schools and the wider education system. Drawing on relevant literature, this presentation will discuss how, given the importance that participants placed on intercultural education, such defences became necessary to</p>



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	<p>the maintenance of their professional identities and their conceptions of themselves as good teachers. It will conclude by offering recommendations for overcoming these defences and improving the implementation of intercultural education in Irish post-primary schools.</p>
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*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



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13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Hannah Linane
School & College:	University of Galway College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies
Supervisor(s):	Prof Michal Molcho
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	2
Title of Presentation:	An Exploration of the Palliative Care Needs of the Adolescent and Young Adult Population with a Life-Limiting condition in Ireland; A Unique Population with Distinct Needs.



Abstract

Introduction:

Palliative care improves the quality of life of patients and their families who are facing the problems associated with life-limiting or life-threatening illness. Adolescence and young adulthood is a period of vulnerability in healthcare. This group has specific needs which require an adapted approach to healthcare provision. There is an emerging recognition of the palliative care needs of adolescents and young adults but the availability of palliative care supports designed for this group remains limited. There are a lack of international models/literature to guide the development of a dedicated adolescent and young adult specialist palliative service that transverses the paediatric and adult healthcare service divide.

Research Question:

What are the palliative needs of adolescents and young adults with a life-limiting/life threatening condition?

Methodology:

This is a multiphase, multisite study employing a mixed methods methodology.

A systematic review is in progress, examining the literature on unmet palliative care needs of adolescents and young adults.

A retrospective medical chart evaluation is examining the number, demographic information and clinical characteristics of adolescents and young adults, aged 13 to 24 years and 364 days, who have received specialist palliative care input in the Republic of Ireland.

The qualitative phase, involves semi-structured interviews with adolescents and young adults with a life-limiting condition and their guardians, who are known to specialist palliative care services, to discuss their experiences and needs. Utilising public and patient involvement in research, harnesses the concept of person-centred service development in healthcare.

Presentation:

The presentation will focus on literature in the area, systematic review findings, theoretical frameworks, methodology and emerging findings of the research to date.

Conclusion:

It is hoped that this research will inform the development of a dedicated adolescent and young adult specialist palliative care service in the Republic of Ireland, providing equitable access to this deserving and underserved population.



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13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Kaitlin Kaufman
School & College:	College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic Studies School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Professor Elaine Keane
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	4th
Title of Presentation:	Operationalising Confidence in the Career Aspirations of Primary Aged Children: A Review of Key Findings and Contributions
Abstract	<p>Following the Celtic Tiger in the 2000's, an economic boom caused Ireland's demographics to significantly diversify. This diversification also took place in the Irish educational system, as student populations became more heterogenous. However, teaching populations remain homogenous, consisting predominantly of middle-class White Irish females, with decreasing proportions of student teachers from lower socio-economic groups (cf. Keane and Heinz, 2015; Heinz and Keane, 2018). In Ireland, these class disparities are tracked by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), as well as the IRC funded national research project, Diversity in Initial Teacher Education (DITE), which collected and analysed data related to socio-demographic backgrounds and motivations of applicants and entrants to state-funded Initial Teacher Education (ITE). While previous qualitative research has been conducted on the topic of social class in teaching, we don't know children's reasons for considering (or not) careers, including teaching, or how reasons compare for different socio-economic groups, and this study contributes to the field in this regard.</p> <p>My research involves an in-depth qualitative study, employing the constructivist grounded theory methodology to develop a substantive theory about experiences and perspectives of senior primary school students from various social class, ethnic, and migrant backgrounds, from DEIS and non-DEIS schools, regarding their higher education and career aspirations, particularly in relation to teaching. The study engages 47 students (age 10-12) using focus groups and individual</p>



	<p>interviews. A participatory approach involves participants meaningfully in the development of theory, in alignment with constructivist principles.</p> <p>In this presentation, I examine core findings relating to the participants' career aspirations, perceptions of opportunity, and reasonings for rejecting a teaching career as a potential aspiration, the role played by social class and ethnic or migrant background, and the overall CGT which foregrounds how the children differentially operationalised confidence in their futures. The findings will be discussed in the context of relevant theory and empirical research in the sociology of education and the sociology of childhood.</p>
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*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



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13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Michelle O' Doherty
School & College:	School of Education, College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies.
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Sheila Garrity
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	1 st Year
Title of Presentation:	Exploring the CPAR Approach: A Reflective Journey Towards Understanding Relational Pedagogy in ECEC
Abstract	<p>Research emphasizes the critical role of bonding and attachment in early childhood for promoting child health, development, and well-being. As children spend increasingly longer periods in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings, the need to nurture these bonds and address their relational needs becomes even more crucial. This study aims to explore the experiences of early years educators in applying a relational pedagogical approach with children under three years of age in ECEC environments. A Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) methodology is being considered, as it provides an effective framework for understanding how relational pedagogy is implemented from the perspective of early years educators. This approach will support the development of deeper insights into the challenges and practices involved in fostering supportive relationships in ECEC settings.</p> <p>This presentation will examine the journey undertaken so far, with a particular emphasis on the rationale for selecting a CPAR approach as a suitable method of inquiry. In Ireland, ECEC policy acknowledges relational pedagogy as a key component of high-quality early years practice. However, there remains a limited understanding of how it is effectively implemented into practice. The CPAR approach offers reflective spaces for educators to critically assess their practice, explore their experiences with relational pedagogy, and gain deeper insights into the challenges they encounter. Through this process, educators can refine their approaches, enhance their professional practice, and</p>



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	<p>cultivate a collaborative learning environment that strengthens the quality of ECEC education.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Natalia Hermida Cepeda
School & College:	School of Education, College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies
Supervisor(s):	Professor Michal Molcho
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	2 nd
Title of Presentation:	Transitional Justice and Child Soldier Reintegration in Colombia: Policy Effectiveness and Stakeholder Perspectives
Abstract	<p>Between 1985 and 2018, Colombia's armed conflict resulted in the recruitment of approximately 30,000 child soldiers, a war crime under international humanitarian law. While transitional justice mechanisms have sought to address this issue, reintegration remains a complex process influenced by political, social, and economic factors. This study analyses transitional justice policies facilitating the reintegration of former child soldiers in post-war Colombia. Using a triangulated methodology, the research incorporates open-source data to assess educational and social reintegration indicators, policy analysis to evaluate state-led reintegration strategies, and interviews with key stakeholders, including government agencies, international organizations, and NGOs to explore on-the-ground implementation challenges and successes.</p> <p>This presentation will outline the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study, focusing on the role of transitional justice in reintegration processes. It will also present initial findings from the analysis of open-source data on education, child welfare, and social indicators, providing insights into broader reintegration trends. By setting the groundwork for upcoming policy analysis and stakeholder interviews, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in reintegrating former child soldiers within Colombia's transitional justice framework.</p>



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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Niamh Deignan
School & College:	School of Education, University of Galway
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Manuela Heinz
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	5 th Year
Title of Presentation:	Mentoring in/for educational leadership: Mentoring experiences and implications for future practice
Abstract	<p>This doctoral research study investigates the experiences of leaders within secondary education in Ireland regarding mentoring and coaching, as well as the extent and manner in which these experiences influence their leadership identities and practices. Although the Centre of School Leadership (now integrated into Oide) has implemented mentoring programs for school leaders since 2016, the effects of these mentoring supports on educational leaders in Ireland have not yet been thoroughly examined. This study explores the following research questions: ‘What are the expectations, experiences and motivations of mentors and mentees in/for school leaders(hip) in Ireland. What mentoring approaches are currently used and what are the implications of mentoring experiences for practice in second-level school leadership in Ireland?’</p> <p>During the presentation, the researcher will provide an overview of the key findings from this exploratory sequential mixed methods design, which included semi-structured interviews and survey questionnaires with post-primary level principals who engaged with formal mentoring.</p> <p>The findings of this study indicate that individuals who have undertaken formal preparation through mentoring programs report a smoother transition into the role of school leader, particularly in navigating the</p>



	<p>complexities associated with the principalship. Those who engaged in formal preparation and development reported an easier transition into the role of school leader and the advantages of engaging in more productive discussions within their mentoring relationships. Many mentors and mentees voiced concerns regarding the potential for burnout among younger principals and the required length of service necessary for retirement. Furthermore, participants noted the scarcity of career opportunities thereafter, particularly within a system characterised by limited prospects for leadership mobility.</p> <p>Participants perceived the mentoring programme as essential for addressing principals' immediate challenges. The findings additionally revealed that mentorship support for both newly appointed and seasoned principals offered opportunities for personal development, skill enhancement, and strategic insight, thereby contributing to the overarching evolution of leaders' identities within the educational sector. The aspiration for mandatory participation was also recognised as having a beneficial impact on their experiences and emphasised the considerable value mentoring relationships can provide in supporting and sustaining school leaders.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Shannon Stubbs
School & College:	School of Biological and Chemical Sciences
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Muriel Grenon, Dr. Jennifer DeWitt
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	4th
Title of Presentation:	Implementation of the Primary Science Capital Teaching Approach in a scientist-facilitated intervention
Abstract	<p>Scientist-facilitated outreach initiatives are becoming increasingly prevalent in non-formal science education, offering young people opportunities to engage directly with scientists. These initiatives, often designed to increase engagement with science and provide relatable role models, are typically short-term and complementary to the formal curriculum. Despite their prevalence, there is limited research on how best to design and deliver such interventions and their effects on young people's perceptions of science and scientists. This study explores the proximal outcomes of a brief, non-formal intervention implementing the Primary Science Capital Teaching Approach (PSCTA) and how scientists operationalise the approach. Pragmatism served as the guiding research paradigm. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including child pre- and post-intervention questionnaires (n=365) and semi-structured interviews with 67 child participants and 10 scientists across 12 schools in the west of Ireland.</p> <p>A team of 3–6 scientists visited classrooms for an hour to deliver the intervention, engaging in small-group Q&A discussions structured around topics such as becoming a scientist, daily life, and personal interests. Scientists were trained to help children identify their own funds of knowledge and address exclusionary stereotypes. Findings indicate that the intervention reduced the use of stereotypical descriptors and increased positive descriptions of scientists. Participants reported feeling more informed about scientists' lives and careers, though self-identification as "science-y" and career aspirations remained stable.</p>



	<p>Young people's questions often centred on scientists' personal lives rather than science. Scientists used personal anecdotes to establish connections, supporting openness and engagement by highlighting shared, relatable experiences, addressing potential barriers to science and linking children's lives to science.</p> <p>These findings contribute to understanding how short-term, scientist-facilitated interventions can support more inclusive perceptions of science and scientists, particularly when guided by equity-based approaches such as the PSCTA.</p>
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*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION 13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Shauna Molloy
School & College:	School of Education, College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies
Supervisor(s):	Prof. Elaine Keane
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	1 st
Title of Presentation:	Diversity, Inclusion & Teacher Recruitment in Irish Primary and Post-primary Schools: Perspectives & Experiences of School Leaders
Abstract	<p>300 words max. (See guidelines)</p> <p>The student body at compulsory schooling level is becoming more diverse in Ireland and internationally. There are benefits for both students and educators when people in leadership positions can relate to the circumstances of their students. Yet, research has found that the socio-demographic profile of teachers in Ireland comprises in the main individuals who are female, White, of the settled community, of the majority ethnic group, middle class, and of the abled community. In a country where almost 12% of the general population are from backgrounds other than Irish (CSO, 2022), there is significant under-representation of many people in Ireland among Ireland’s teachers. Research from the international context suggests that school leaders, such as principals, hold a large influence over recruitment in schools, generally opting for the best ‘fit’ based on personal preference, once qualification and perceived merit are accounted for. There has been no research in Ireland on the topic. The proposed study will address this gap in the research, employing an in-depth qualitative approach to examine the perspectives and experiences of school leaders about teacher recruitment practices and processes, and implications for the diversification of the teaching profession, and for wider inclusive policies and practices in education.</p> <p>In this presentation, after outlining the above rationale, I will explore existing research from the US and Canada that indicates that recruitment practices in schools privilege issues of ‘fit’ based on school leaders’</p>



	<p>perceptions, with school leaders frequently recruiting in their 'likeness' (including re. 'race' and ethnicity) which impacts negatively on diversity of the teaching population. Even when equity policies are implemented in recruitment, the desired outcome is not always achieved. It is evident that diversity and inclusion in educational recruitment is a complex and evolving issue. In addition, I will present my planned methodological approach in this in-depth qualitative study.</p>
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*Adapted from Keane, E. (2024). *PGRS Abstract Submission Template*.



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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Sveva Zafferri
School & College:	School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures College of Arts
Supervisor(s):	Professor Anne O'Connor
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	1 st year (full-time)
Title of Presentation:	Rewriting the script for Foreign Language Learning: a first study on the integration of AI in an Audiovisual Translation course.
Abstract	<p>Over the last two decades, research has highlighted the potential of Audiovisual Translation (AVT) in Foreign Language (FL) learning for developing listening comprehension, writing proficiency, vocabulary acquisition, and translation skills. With the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI), technologies such as Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) and Machine Translation (MT) are reshaping AVT practices in the translation industry and the rise of post-editors working with machine-translated outputs calls for up-to-date training methods in FL classrooms. However, research on the pedagogical integration of such tools remains underexplored – particularly regarding student-centred learning models and lesser-taught languages like Italian.</p> <p>This presentation outlines the design of a first experimental study investigating the integration of ASR for the transcription of scripts, MT, and post-editing of machine-translated subtitles in a 12-week AVT-focused course. Conducted at the University of Galway (January-March 2025), the study involved 14 final-year students of the BA in Italian. This hands-on approach aimed to develop linguistic and translation competence, digital literacy, and critical-thinking skills while exposing students to the challenges and potentialities of using AI in translation. This study adopts a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods approach. Data collection integrates qualitative methods (open-ended questionnaires, focus groups, classroom observations, analysis of students' assignments) alongside quantitative measures (closed-ended questionnaire). This mixed-method design enables comprehensive evaluations of AI-</p>



	<p>enhanced AVT's impact on FL learning, collecting measurable trends and nuanced student feedback.</p> <p>While data analysis will be conducted in the coming months, initial observations indicate the potential for exploring innovative teaching methodologies. However, the integration of AI in FL learning also brings notable challenges. Technology's rapid evolution and unpredictability require adaptable teaching strategies to ensure effective and pedagogically meaningful implementation. To address these complexities, further studies will be conducted. These will refine and expand upon the design of this initial study to develop innovative training practices and advance the field of FL learning.</p>
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13th ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Tonya Pell
School & College:	College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Kevin Davison
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	2 nd
Title of Presentation:	A Review of RSE in Irish Post-Primary Schools & Initial Teacher Education Programs
Abstract	<p>300 words max. (See guidelines)</p> <p>The work of academics, educators, and policymakers has made an impact in the last thirty years of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Ireland, but the research shows that more needs to be done. Over and over, the lack of teacher preparation to teach RSE is raised as an issue in policy implementation. Research highlights that many teachers lack the necessary training to effectively and confidently teach RSE in post-primary education. Irish ITE programmes have developed in the last couple of decades to create a professional and highly educated teaching workforce. The commitment to self-reflexive practice, school placements, and development of professional and subject based knowledge is strong in all aspects of the program, except for the provision of SPHE and RSE. Research overwhelmingly recommends that if student teachers are expected to teach RSE post-graduation, then a foundational element of teacher preparation in ITE programmes must address the need for teachers to be confident and comfortable to teach the subject upon graduation.</p> <p>In this presentation, I will be reviewing the reality of RSE in Ireland, and RSE provision in ITE programmes. I will cover a brief history of the influence of the Catholic ethos in Irish education to</p>



	<p>discuss the development and implementation of the SPHE policy and curriculum. Then, I will discuss the professionalization of the field over the years to show the gaps surrounding SPHE and RSE provision in ITE programmes. Finally, I will share some brief recommendations from international research and policy.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Ger Ahearne
School & College:	School of Education
Supervisor(s):	Dr. Fiona Concannon Dr. Niamh Flynn
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	Year 3 (Part-time)
Title of Presentation:	The descriptive phenomenological interview – strategies and challenges
Abstract	<p>My research is a qualitative study of adult learners at the University of Galway undertaking part-time diploma and degree programmes across various disciplines. The study utilises a descriptive phenomenological approach to gain a deeper understanding of the students' experiences of returning to higher education, their experiences of teaching and learning in university, and approaches that best support their learning.</p> <p>Phenomenology, although widely used in the health sciences, has been underutilised to date in the field of education. Many authors highlight the challenges that phenomenology presents for the novice researcher. Firstly, phenomenology is not simply a research methodology or method, but also a philosophy with a long and complicated tradition. Researchers must garner a deep understanding of these philosophical underpinnings as they impact every aspect of the research process. Secondly, there is significant polarisation between different approaches</p>



to phenomenology from descriptive to interpretive and later varieties such as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), reflective lifeworld research and many others.

While there are multiple approaches to data collection in the field, interviews remain the most common. Although much has been written about qualitative interviewing, few focus particularly on the phenomenological interview. While these general guidelines are important and, in many ways, applicable, there are multiple additional considerations for the phenomenological researcher.

The purpose of this presentation is to examine the phenomenological interview from the perspective of the novice researcher. I will outline my approach to the research, adhering to the conventions of descriptive phenomenology including, population sample and size, the controversial subject of bracketing, data collection procedures, the application of imaginative variation and the proposed plan for data analysis. As this is an ongoing process, I will highlight lessons learned and some of the challenges that I have encountered in my journey to date.

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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Rachel Hastings
School & College:	School of Home Economics, St Angelas Sligo
Supervisor(s):	Dr Amanda McCloat and Dr Helen Maguire
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	4th
Title of Presentation:	Irish Home Economics teacher's experience of integrating sustainable and responsible living in Junior Cycle Home Economics
Abstract	<p>This study explored the integration of sustainable and responsible living in Junior Cycle Home Economics [HE]. As the role of sustainability in education and Sustainable Development Goals received renewed attention with the adoption of the 2030 Development Agenda, there is an increasing need for educational curricula and teachers to equip students with the sustainable and responsible knowledge and skills to make informed and sustainable decisions in their lives. Sustainable and responsible living is integrated into Irish Junior Cycle HE Specification as one of the four Elements across each of the HE Strands. Previous research highlights the importance of HE education as being integral in working towards achieving to obtain a more sustainable world. This study draws on the perspectives of Irish HE teachers regarding their experience integrating sustainable and responsible living within Junior Cycle HE. This study employed a qualitative approach, with in-depth interviews conducted with HE teachers (n=10) to ascertain their current teaching</p>



	<p>practices in the Irish HE classrooms. Thematic analysis using Braun and Clarke’s framework was subsequently undertaken.</p> <p>The presentation will focus on the results of this thematic analysis. Five themes were developed from the analysis however, this presentation will focus on two of these themes- 1. Teacher’s focus, motivation and attitude towards sustainable and responsible living and 2. the challenges faced teaching sustainable and responsible living. Preliminary findings suggest that while HE teachers are eager to incorporate sustainable and responsible living knowledge and practices, however, there is a need for additional pedagogical support to aid them with effective integration of sustainable and responsible living knowledge and practices. The study concludes that while Junior Cycle HE teachers have the ability to foster sustainable and responsible living knowledge and practices, further support is required to optimise the impact of the lessons for students.</p>
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Abstract Submission Template

(Please review and follow the abstract preparation guidelines document, and consult your supervisor, before submitting your abstract)

Name:	Paul Finn
School & College:	School of Education (College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies)
Supervisor(s):	Dr Cassie Smith-Christmas
Year of PhD Study: (1st, 2nd, etc.)	1st
Title of Presentation:	Recruiting Hard-to-Reach Participants
Abstract 7	<p>This PhD study is part of the Gaeltacht Families and Multilingualism (GAELFAM) project, which examines the experiences of families who (1) live in a Gaeltacht [predominantly Irish speaking] region and (2) use a language other than (or in addition to) Irish and English in their home. My focus is families with at least one adolescent (12–18-year-old) child. My study is grounded in the growing sociolinguistic subfield of Family Language Policy (FLP). Building predominantly on the work of Bernard Spolsky, FLP is concerned with the linguistic interventions (language management) employed by families to mediate members' use of language (language practices) and beliefs about language (language ideology). My chosen methodology consists of (a) semi-structured interviews, (b) case studies, and (c) ethnography in the communities in which my participants reside.</p> <p>My presentation will discuss a significant challenge that I foresee in my research, namely the issue of recruiting hard-to-reach participants. As part of this study, I believe it is important to include representation from the different types of families who match my target profile. This could include, for example, families with one Irish and one non-Irish parent; families who have relocated to the Gaeltacht for work/education; and/or refugee families seeking asylum. Recruiting these participants may be difficult for 3 reasons: (1) My recruitment pool is limited, which may cause issues when trying to ensure anonymity; (2) These families may be unknown to their communities and may not intend to remain here for the duration of my study; (3) In some cases, especially with regard to refugee families, access may be intentionally restricted (e.g. due to anti-</p>



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	<p>immigrant violence at refugee centres). In this presentation, I will give an overview of the GAELFAM project, discuss my intended recruitment strategies, and outline some suggestions to mitigate challenges to recruitment.</p>
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