MERC CONFERENCE 2022

Transforming Research for Thriving Communities

Thursday, 29th September 2022

Sponsored by:
2022 MERC Leadership Team

Aish Ravi  
Bingging Li  
Jing Zhang  
Melody Tang

Nooshin Karimi  
Weiqi Jiang  
Wenxuan Zhang

Join the team!

Talk to us about being part of the MERC 2023 Leadership Team:

Email: merc-edu@monash.edu
Twitter: @merc_education
Facebook: Monash Education Research Community (MERC)
Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

Monash University’s Australian campuses are proudly on Kulin land in Melbourne. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and recognise and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

The MERC Leadership Team 2022 is grateful for the guidance & assistance of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>NAMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract Reviewers</td>
<td>Associate Professor Michael Phillips, Dr Anna Podorova, Dr Bethany Devenish, Dr Katrina Tour, Dr Leigh Disney, Dr Liang Li, Dr Lynette Pretorius, Dr Prabhat Rai, Dr Raqib Chowdhury, Dr Thanh Pham, Ms Chloe Emonson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education Mentor</td>
<td>Dr. Kate de Bruin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education Graduate</td>
<td>Trudi Brunton, Alice Goenawan, Remalia Rachmawati, Kate Wilson</td>
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<td>Research Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Conference Volunteers</td>
<td>Aish Ravi, Bingqing Li, Cong Lem Ngo, Ferhan Dogan, Gillian O’connor, Hong Chen, Jimena de Mello Heredia, Jin Qu, Jing Zhang, Lavinia Araminta, Mandy Salisbury, Melody Tang, Nilushi Minoli Dediwalage, Nooshin Karimi, Rick White, Samantha Lewis, Samran Daneshfar, Satoshi Miyashita, Shihua (Alice) Yu, Shiyao Wang, Sonia Jeffrey, Sweta Vijaykumar Patel, Truly Pasaribu, Weiqi Jiang, Wenhuan Zhang, Zainul Yasni, Ziqi Li</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monash Graduate Association</td>
<td>MGA Team</td>
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Welcome Note

From the 2022 MERC Leaders

Welcome to the 2022 MERC Conference!

The MERC Conference is an annual gathering of research students (Honours, Masters, and PhD) and academics from the fields of Education and Psychology to present their work-in-progress in a safe and supportive space. Drawing on results of a poll sent out to all research students, we decided to hold this year's conference online to promote research impact and inclusion for our communities – local, national, and international. We also organise offline social events afterwards to encourage and nurture responsive academic discussions and create a friendly research environment.

Based on the [Monash university strategic plan 2021-2030](https://www.monash.edu/about/moneco/strategic_plan), the theme for this year's conference is “Transforming Research for Thriving Communities”. Thriving communities carry out the promise of a “good life”. Undisputedly, we live in a world that is developing and changing at a remarkable pace. In recent years we have been confronted with unprecedented challenges, and it is worth thinking about how we can live better together. Everyone's contribution to the community is essential, and we strongly believe that inclusive and creative research can make transformative differences. This conference fortunately hosts representations from a broader international community. We look forward to seeing the visions you have generated in your field and the contributions you have been making) both domestically and globally.

We are thrilled that you can join the Monash Education Research Community Conference 2022 and hope this conference will give you an opportunity to communicate your research, receive constructive feedback, and create beautiful memories. MERC is a cohesive research community, and through this conference, we wish to facilitate building, collaboratively and together, a platform to support a thriving community for all.

Kind regards,

The MERC Leadership Team 2022
General Information

Welcome Events
The conference will begin at 8:45am with a welcome from the MERC Leadership Team, followed by our opening and keynote speakers. Full details of each speaker for the Welcome Events are provided in the Conference Program section of this booklet.

Parallel Presentations
Full details of each parallel presentation are provided in the Abstracts Section of this booklet. Each presentation will be 20 minutes in duration with 10 minutes for questions and feedback.

Closing Events
The final session for the conference will begin at 4:00 pm and conclude at 5:00 pm AEST. This final session will include our Feature Panel of past Monash Education PhD students, along with a closing speech from our panel chair and closing speaker. Full details of our Feature Panel members and panel chair can be found in the Conference Program section of this booklet.

Conference Zoom Links
The Zoom links for each event (welcome events, parallel presentations, closing events) have been emailed to all registered conference attendees. These links are also available on the MERC Conference Website for your reference. The Conference Website will be updated if there are any changes to the Conference Program, including any changes to the Zoom links or the presentation schedule.

Participant Feedback
Successive MERC conference organising committees have benefited over past years from participant feedback. Therefore, your comments and feedback this year are equally valued and appreciated. Comments and feedback on the conference will be collected via google form after the conference.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the MERC volunteers in the Zoom Chat during the online presentation sessions. We are more than willing to assist and are keen to meet you.
# Program Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:45am – 9:00am</td>
<td>Welcome: MERC Leadership Team 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MC: Jing Zhang</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00am-9:15am</td>
<td>Opening Speaker: Dr Rebecca Cooper</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15am-10:00am</td>
<td>Keynote Address: Professor Nicole Rinehart</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00am-10:30am</td>
<td>MORNING TEA</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30am-12:30pm</td>
<td>Parallel Presentations – Morning Session</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inclusive education and social justice</td>
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<td>Cross-cultural interaction and language education</td>
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<td>Transformative leadership and evolution in education</td>
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<td>Early-childhood: learning and teaching</td>
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<td>Early-childhood: play</td>
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<td>Early-childhood: parents</td>
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<td>12:30pm-1:30pm</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30pm-3:30pm</td>
<td>Parallel Presentations – Afternoon Session</td>
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<td>Inclusive education and social justice</td>
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<td>Transformative leadership and evolution in education</td>
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<td>Early-childhood: teachers</td>
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<td>Experience of graduate students and early-career researchers</td>
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<td>Early-childhood: learning and teaching</td>
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<td>Wellbeing in education</td>
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<td>3:30pm-4:00pm</td>
<td>AFTERNOON TEA</td>
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<td>4:00pm-5:00pm</td>
<td>Panel Discussion &amp; Summary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MC: MERC Leadership 2022 (Aish Ravi)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Panel Chair: Prof. Viv Ellis</td>
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<td>Panel Co-chair: Prof. Richard Pringle</td>
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<td>Panelists: Dr Michael Henderson, Dr Urmee Chakma, Dr Xianyu Meng, Dr Xiaojing Yan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8:45-10:00am
MORNING SESSION – OPENING AND KEYNOTE

WELCOME FROM THE MERC LEADERSHIP TEAM 2022

MC: Jing Zhang

OPENING SPEAKER

Dr Rebecca Cooper
Senior Lecturer
School of Curriculum Teaching & Inclusive Education
Faculty of Education, Monash University

Biography: Dr Rebecca Cooper is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, Monash University. Her research is focused on teacher knowledge development considering how teachers and science teacher educators develop knowledge throughout their careers, with a specific interest in the professional learning of highly accomplished teachers. Her research with science teachers and their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), includes considering how teachers’ practice can be developed and articulated, to share their knowledge as part of a collective knowledge of science teaching. Rebecca is President of the Australasian Science Education Research Association and a Panel Chair for initial teacher education course accreditation for the Victorian Institute of Teaching and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership.
**Keynote Address**

Professor Nicole Rinehart
School of Educational Psychology & Counselling
Faculty of Education, Monash University

**Biography:** Professor Nicole Rinehart is an international leader in neurodevelopmental disorders and practicing clinical psychologist. In 2021, she was appointed Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychology and Director of Research (Krongold), in the Faculty of Education, Monash University. Nicole has been at the forefront of research efforts to improve educational, mental and physical health outcomes for children and adolescents who experience developmental challenges or complex neurodevelopmental disorders, such as autism and ADHD. She has held multiple National Health and Medical Research Council and National Disability Insurance Agency – ILC grants in collaboration with her colleagues at the Royal Children’s Hospital, Monash Children’s Hospital, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute, UCLA, and Howard Florey Institute. Her research is inspired by the families and children with neurodevelopmental conditions who she has worked with over the last 2 decades at the Melbourne Children’s Clinic.

**10:00am-10:30am**
**MORNING TEAM**
### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Presenter Name &amp; Abstract Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Jialing Pan</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Chinese lesbians negotiating sexual identities at the intersection of higher education, place and culture in Australia</td>
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<td>11:00</td>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Tabetha Spiteri</td>
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<td>Fostering thriving communities through addressing inequality: Investigating girls’ integrated STEM (i-STEM) education experiences</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Nilushi Dediwalage + Aish Ravi</td>
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<td>Teaching with Colour and Culture in Australian Schools</td>
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<td>12:00</td>
<td>#4</td>
<td>Jannatul Ferdous</td>
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<td>Education and Employment of Hijras (Transgender) in Bangladesh</td>
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### CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Presenter Name &amp; Abstract Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Truly Pasaribu</td>
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<td>Situating moral and ethical discourses in language teaching and assessment practices: An autoethnography of an Indonesian EFL teacher</td>
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<td>11:00</td>
<td>#6</td>
<td>Mosammet Nelema Akhter</td>
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<td>To be or not be invested: Students' responses to secondary English Curriculum and its enactments in Bangladesh</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
<td>#7</td>
<td>Amani Alshomrani</td>
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<td>Development of Teacher Professional Identity and Agency: An Ethnographic Study of a Saudi English Language Institute</td>
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<td>12:00</td>
<td>#8</td>
<td>Hongming Fan</td>
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<td>From the future to the present: English teachers’ imagined student identities at Chinese universities</td>
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### TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP AND EVOLUTION IN EDUCATION

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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>#9</td>
<td>Saoud Almalki</td>
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<td>Primary School Leadership and Management in Saudi Arabia</td>
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<td>11:00</td>
<td>#10</td>
<td>Sonia Jeffrey</td>
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<td>Making curriculum in the Australian church: Protestant Churches as sites of pedagogical practice</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
<td>#11</td>
<td>Zainul Yasni</td>
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<td>Exploring the Influence of Socio-Religious Beliefs and Values on Indonesian Islamic School Leaders</td>
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# EARLY CHILDHOOD: LEARNING AND TEACHING

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>#12</td>
<td>Sayuri Amemiya Post-qualitative inquiry into food-child relations in an early childhood education and care setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>#13</td>
<td>Sadaf Mirza Developing a tool for analysing teachers’ written mathematics lesson plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>#14</td>
<td>Gillian O’Connor Science Concept Formation During Infancy and Toddlerhood: A Cultural Historical Exploration</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>#15</td>
<td>Anita Green How Teachers Adapt their Mathematics Teacher Noticing Practices in the Online Environment</td>
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</table>

# EARLY CHILDHOOD: PLAY

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Presenter Name &amp; Abstract Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>#16</td>
<td>Wenxuan Zhang Chinese Early Childhood Teachers’ Practice on Children’s Mathematics Learning in Play-based Contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>#17</td>
<td>Yuwen Ma Chinese children’s engineering thinking development: Theoretical thinking and productive imagination in a collective form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>#18</td>
<td>Hong Chen A cultural-historical study of Australian children’s development of mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills during transition from Preschool to primary school</td>
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</tbody>
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# EARLY CHILDHOOD: PARENTS

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Presenter Name &amp; Abstract Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>#19</td>
<td>Zixi Liang The educators’ role in creating conditions to engage single mothers and non-resident fathers in co-supporting children’s social competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>#20</td>
<td>Shiyao Wang Capital exchange and fathers’ position in the early childhood education setting: An ethnographic case study in the Chinese Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>#21</td>
<td>Ali Soyoof Uncovering Iranian mothers’ perceptions of their bilingual children’s home digital literacy practices in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>#22</td>
<td>Chenxi Lu A study of family support during the transition from kindergarten to primary school in Chinese rural areas</td>
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</table>
### 1:30 Pm-3:30pm

**PARALLEL PRESENTATIONS – AFTERNOON SESSIONS**

#### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>#23</td>
<td>Rebecca Rosenberg</td>
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<td>Beginning teacher preparation and readiness for the profession as inclusive educators</td>
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<td>2:00</td>
<td>#24</td>
<td>Latifah Alomair</td>
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<td>The Education of Hearing Impairments in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Between the Role of School Leadership and the Implementation of Inclusive Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>#25</td>
<td>Claire Jackson</td>
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<td>Teachers' self-efficacy when working with teacher assistants: a mixed-methods study</td>
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<td>3:00</td>
<td>#26</td>
<td>Elvira Kalenjuk</td>
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<td>Writing and identity as symbiotic: Children’s depictions of dysgraphia in art-based research</td>
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#### CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>#27</td>
<td>Nur Hayati</td>
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<td>Reflective Practice in English Language Teacher Education in Indonesia: Teacher Educators' Integration and Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>#28</td>
<td>Jin Qu</td>
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<td>The role of life learning in transition of first generation of Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs into Australian community</td>
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<td>2:30</td>
<td>#29</td>
<td>Agus Prayogo</td>
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<td>Multimodal Literacy in an Indonesian EFL teacher education program: Exploring EFL pre-service teachers' understandings and envisioned practices</td>
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#### TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP AND EVOLUTION IN EDUCATION

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<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>#30</td>
<td>Ngo Cong-Lem</td>
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<td>Studying emotions from a cultural-historical perspective: Research trends and critical reflections</td>
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## EARLY CHILDHOOD: TEACHERS

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>#33</td>
<td>Fatona Suraya</td>
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<td>Introducing English as a Foreign Language in Early Childhood Education in Kudus, Indonesia: Teachers' Perceptions and Practices</td>
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<td>2:00</td>
<td>#34</td>
<td>Sweta Vijaykumar Patel</td>
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<td>It is a bumpy ride but wonderful: Narratives of immigrant Early Childhood Educators in Victoria.</td>
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<td>2:30</td>
<td>#35</td>
<td>Felipe Godoy</td>
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<td>Care or education? Understanding the role of the early childhood assistant teachers in Chile.</td>
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<td>3:00</td>
<td>#36</td>
<td>Catherine Sundbhe</td>
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<tr>
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<td>An autoethnographic story of the agentic early childhood teacher</td>
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## EXPERIENCE OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHERS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Presenter Name &amp; Abstract Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>#37</td>
<td>Melody Tang</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Challenges Associated with Employability Capitals Facing Chinese International Graduates in Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>#38</td>
<td>Dave Yan</td>
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<td>A layered account of pursuing my doctoral studies through vignettes</td>
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<td>2:30</td>
<td>#39</td>
<td>Longinus Onyechesi</td>
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<td>Negotiating a Third Space: The online educational experience of refugee-background African students during COVID-19 pandemic</td>
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<td>3:00</td>
<td>#40</td>
<td>Mary Ann Slater</td>
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<td>Weaving and theorizing Research: an autoethnographic study towards decolonization of self, pedagogy and being a researcher</td>
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### EARLY CHILDHOOD: LEARNING AND TEACHING

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<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>#41</td>
<td>Yuejiu Wang</td>
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<td>The Conceptual Playworld as an Intervention: Supporting Chinese Kindergarten Teachers' STEM Teaching in Play</td>
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<td>2:00</td>
<td>#42</td>
<td>Mandy Salisbury</td>
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<td>Early childhood educators' use of research and evidence: what do we know?</td>
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<td>2:30</td>
<td>#43</td>
<td>Jianing Liu</td>
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<td>Investigating Chinese Preschool Teachers' Practices for Promoting Children’s Social-emotional Learning (SEL)</td>
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<td>3:00</td>
<td>#44</td>
<td>Hanif Reza Jaberipour</td>
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<td>At the research spacetime: A post qualitative research design in listening to immigrant families’ experience of Australian early childhood education</td>
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### WELLBEING IN EDUCATION

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Abstract #</th>
<th>Presenter Name &amp; Abstract Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>#45</td>
<td>Alexandra Marinucci</td>
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<td>Young People’s Perspectives and Experiences of Mental Health Literacy and Action in Australian Schools: A Qualitative Study</td>
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<td>2:00</td>
<td>#46</td>
<td>Lingling Chen</td>
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<td>Parenting experiences in the context of mental illness: A qualitative comparison between Chinese mothers and fathers</td>
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<td>2:30</td>
<td>#47</td>
<td>Weiqi Jiang</td>
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<td>‘Rowing a boat upstream’: An autoethnographic exploration of student wellbeing</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00</td>
<td>#48</td>
<td>Ellina Zipman</td>
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<td>Music education in aged care Positive ageing through instrumental music learning</td>
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MC: Aish Ravi

THEME: VISIBILITY AND VOICE
This panel will discuss the importance of visibility and voice in research in relation to Monash’s Impact 2030 plan and #changeit campaign. Panel members will elaborate on their personal experiences and what best practice is for them.

PANEL CHAIR

Professor Viv Ellis

Dean
Monash University Faculty of Education

Biography: Viv Ellis is a global expert on teacher education, having worked with government agencies and NGOs across the UK, Europe, Asia and Australia, most recently on the Norwegian government’s reforms to upper primary/lower secondary initial teacher education. Currently Dean of the Faculty of Education at Monash University in Melbourne, he was the founding Co-Director of the Centre for Innovation in Teacher Education and Development, a strategic partnership between King’s College London and Teachers College, Columbia University, where he currently holds an honorary research professorship. He is also editor of the new Bloomsbury Academic series Keywords in Teacher Education.
PANEL CO-CHAIR

Professor Richard Pringles
Associate Dean Graduate Research
Faculty of Education, Monash University

Biography: I am the Associate Dean of Graduate Research in the Faculty of Education. In this role I work with the graduate portfolio team to ensure that all of our 330+ PhD students are well supervised and on track to get their doctorates. I joined the Faculty in 2018 as Professor of Sport, Health and Physical Education. I have worked in tertiary education since 1992. My teaching is primarily connected with researching in education (e.g. the Graduate Certificate of Educational Research) and in the area of health and physical education. The context of my research focuses on sport, education and health and with concerns about gender, ethnicities and sexualities. I am particularly interested in how people are shaped by the workings of power and how, in turn, power relations can be shaped by people. Through examining how power ‘works’, I am hopeful that we can make a positive difference in people’s lives.
Prior to coming to Monash University, I have worked at the University of Auckland (as Associate Dean Postgraduate Research within the Faculty of Education and Social Work), the University of Waikato and Auckland University of Technology. I have also taught health and physical education and economics at secondary schools.
PANEL MEMBER

Dr Michael Henderson

**Biography:** Dr Michael J. Henderson recently completed his PhD at Monash University. Through recently granted funding he is able to continue his research in adult learning choice making, by building on the insights gleaned through his Learning Choice Tracker. He is an advisor (LANTITE), teacher and unit coordinator in both the Bachelors and Masters programs in areas of teaching, education and leadership. Michael is also a part time lecturer at Charles Darwin University in the LANTITE space. He is a business researcher and consultant to industry on leadership, education and change management. Michael has held roles in leadership, management, business and technology in various sectors of private industry and government-in Australia and globally. Michael is also a chartered engineer. [https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4372-8590](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4372-8590)

Dr Xiaojing Yan

**Biography:** Xiaojing Yan is a lecturer in the College of Urban Economics and Public Administration, Capital University of Economics and Business, China. She completed her doctoral degree in March 2022 in the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia. Her research interests focus on sociology of education, education administration, policy study, rural education, and qualitative research. Currently, she is investigating the relationships among education policies, education practices and policy history. In the future, she intends to explore how policies influence teachers competence and how to improve teachers’ professional development and learning in schools.
Dr Urmee Chakma

**Biography:** Dr Urmee Chakma is a Lecturer of Humanities and Pedagogy in the School of Education at La Trobe University, Australia. She earned her PhD from the Faculty of Education, Monash University in 2021 where she worked as Teaching and Research Associate from 2018-2022. She was also a member of the MERC Leadership team from 2017-2018. Her areas of research interest include the politics of English, Indigenous education, diasporic communities, citizenship studies, and social justice.

Dr Xianyu Meng

**Biography:** Dr Xianyu Meng, PhD, graduated from the Faculty of Education at Monash University in December 2021, and is now working as a lecturer at the Faculty of Education, Beijing City University, China. Her research interests are cultural-historical theory of child development, play and pedagogy, children’s emotional development, STEM learning, children in institutional care, and education of children with special needs.
Chinese lesbians negotiating sexual identities at the intersection of higher education, place and culture in Australia

Jialing PAN  
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Abstract: In China, discrimination, prejudice and stigmatization towards lesbian women are pervasive culturally, educationally and politically. Research shows that trans-regional and transnational mobility have become an important strategy for lesbians to negotiate their sexual identity. Australia not only offers culturally diverse and vibrant higher education but is also ranked as one of top ten gay friendly countries in the world. For this reason, Australia provides safe and inclusive spaces and places for sexual minority international students. However, little attention has been paid to Chinese lesbian international students. Thus, the main aim of this paper is to explore how Chinese lesbian students in Australia negotiate their sexual identities at the intersections of higher education, place, and culture. This research draws upon interpretative phenomenological analysis and takes a critical realist ontological orientation and inductive approach; data collection methods are semi-structured interviews, by drawing on queer theory. This research has the potential to increase the understanding of the experiences of Chinese lesbian international students in Australia. The findings may be used by policy makers in higher education institutions in Australia to improve the educational outcomes as well as health and well-being of Chinese lesbian international students.

Keywords: Lesbian, Chinese international students, homosexuality, discrimination

Biography: Jialing Pan is a PhD student in the Faculty of Education, Monash University. She has master's degree of Adult Learning in Monash. As a student researcher, she studied the Chinese international students’ learning experience in flipped classroom. Her research interests are gender, sexuality, and inclusive education.

Fostering thriving communities through addressing inequality: Investigating girls’ integrated STEM (i-STEM) education experiences

Tabetha SPITERI  
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Abstract: One of our most pressing systemic social issues relates to the inequality in representation of girls and women in STEM subjects and fields at school, higher education and in industry. Past research indicates that STEM education experiences, particularly those focussing on a more ‘siloed’ approach to STEM, do not necessarily foster a sense of belonging and inclusion for girls, and influences their likelihood of continuing with non-compulsory STEM education in high school and beyond. Thus, there has been increased
interest in a more integrated approach to STEM education (i-STEM) in recent years, as this is seen to foster connections between the STEM domains and 'real world' contexts, increasing students' engagement and sense of belonging in STEM. However, there is a lack of research into the experiences of girls in i-STEM education, particularly in contexts outside of the United States. Hence, this qualitative PhD study aims to understand the experiences of girls in i-STEM education in an Australian context. A small sample of year seven girls from one co-educational school in Melbourne, Australia, were asked to photograph their i-STEM education experiences and unpack these experiences in follow-up photo-elicted focus group interviews. This presentation focuses on the preliminary results from this study, exploring the emerging themes regarding how the girls have interpreted their experiences in i-STEM education, and their feelings about STEM in relation to these experiences. Implications are discussed, including the potential for informing the design of more inclusive i-STEM education experiences, plus the identification of potential areas for future research.

Keywords: STEM education, girls/gender, identity, qualitative

Abstract: 3
Time: 11:30am–12:00pm

Teaching with Colour and Culture in Australian Schools

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Abstract: Colour and cultural diversity in classrooms is a rapidly increasing phenomena around the world, and classrooms in Australia are exhibiting the same traits. There is data supporting the diverse makeups of student cohorts in Australia. However, when considering the educator population, there is a lack of data on colour, race, ethnicity and the cultural demographic of teachers in Australia. There is a considerable difference in the ratio of culturally diverse students to teachers. This narrative explores the story through phenomena and method, where the former creates the narrative through the lived experiences of the two authors, who are teachers of colour in the Australian education system. Despite being highly qualified and experienced, schools and parents make assumptions about the authors based on appearance. The authors have often been the only people of colour in professional settings such as teacher and leadership conferences. The use of two voices in this paper can be considered a limitation, as generalisations cannot be made about all teachers of colour. The authors highlight the importance of professional development embracing issues of colour and culture. The authors aim to use their voices to raise awareness of their experiences. While their research focuses on mathematics education and women in sport respectively, both studies have emerging themes on the lack of cultural and racial representation amongst school teachers and coaches. The aim is to contribute to existing knowledge through their research and the sharing of lived experiences as teachers of colour.

Keywords: Teachers of colour, culture, Australian schools, lived experience, voice

Biography: Nilushi Minoli Dediwalage is a PhD student, primary school teacher and Maths
learning specialist with a Bachelor of Applied Science (RMIT) and Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Monash).

Aishwarya Ravi is a PhD candidate, secondary school teacher and a football coach with training in VCE and IB Business Management and Economics.

Abstract: 4 Time: 12:00pm–12:30pm

Education and Employment of Hijras (Transgender) in Bangladesh

Jannatul FERDOUS
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Abstract: Bangladesh, a developing country in South Asia, has demonstrated moves to gender equality with aims to end all types of gender discrimination. Transgender (familiar as “Hijra” in Bangladesh) got official recognition in November 2013 as the “Third Gender” in Bangladesh. Though the hijras were officially recognised, still they have been excluded from the basic rights of citizens like health, education, employment and inheritance. In education and employment, the hijras have been researched from foci on hijra deprivation and non-conforming gender expression resulting in ongoing exclusion. Such discrimination is an impediment to access to increased educational attainment and long-term secure employment. It is therefore necessary to determine a more transparent and realistic picture of exclusion and discrimination faced by hijras with the goal of improving access to education and employment. Accordingly, this also requires a deeper understanding of the many socio-cultural structures, that intersect, including government identity politics and influences on hijras’ outcomes. I will draw on queer theory, Butler’s concept on gender performativity and Foucault’s concept on power and knowledge to explore the issues associated with exclusion of hijra from access to education and employment. My proposed ethnographic study involves in-depth, semi-structured interviews with hijras of Bangladesh about their experiences in education and employment, and simultaneously analyses the institutional structures and discourses that continue to position hijras as an invisible yet socially problematic “other” in Bangladesh. My study aims to understand the lived experiences of hijras regarding education and employment in order to inform policy, processes, structures and other practices. This research would assist to guide and advise the government to formulate more equitable and humane structures for improving the overall life and health outcomes of the hijras in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Education, employment, hijras, Bangladesh, gender

Biography: Jannatul is a PhD student in the Faculty of Education, Monash University, entering in 2022. She has a Master’s degree in Public Policy and Management, from The University of Melbourne. She worked for the Bangladesh Government for the last 14 years with the designation “Deputy Secretary”. She achieved the “Public Administration Award” in 2017 for her contribution to understanding the issues for hijras in relation to social exclusion and how government can enhance their lives.
**CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

**Abstract: 5**

**Time: 10:30am–11:00am**

**Situating moral and ethical discourses in language teaching and assessment practices: An autoethnography of an Indonesian EFL teacher**

Truly PASARIBU  
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**Abstract:** Although moral and ethical discourses are inseparable in Indonesian education as reflected through the archeology of its education history and policies, how these discourses are enacted in teaching and assessment practices remains under-researched. By adopting an autoethnographic lens, I examine my personal moral and ethical reflections throughout my assessment experiences as an EFL learner, university teacher and researcher. This study aims to investigate how moral and ethical discourses are reflected in my language teaching and assessment experiences as an EFL learner, teacher, and PhD student and how such discourses shape my teaching and assessment beliefs and practices. With these aims, I narrate and analyse my reflections using Foucault’s genealogy of ethics framework—the care of the self—which includes the investigation of ethical substance, mode of subjection, self-forming activities, and ethical ends. The study provides a nuanced understanding for teachers and students on how moral and ethical discourses can be negotiated in EFL assessment.

**Keywords:** Language assessment, moral and ethical discourses, autoethnography.

**Biography:** Truly Almendo Pasaribu is a PhD student at the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia. She has been teaching EFL Linguistics and Literacy since 2013. She has published books and research articles on discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, EFL writing, and digital technologies in language education.

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**Abstract: 6**

**Time: 11:00am–11:30am**

**To be or not be invested: Students’ responses to secondary English Curriculum and its enactments in Bangladesh**

Mosammet Nelema AKHTER  
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**Abstract:** With the adoption of major educational concepts from the West, English education in Bangladesh has seen major policy changes since the late 1990s. However, little in-depth research has been conducted to investigate how students have responded to such policy changes and policy enactments by English teachers. Drawing upon Norton’s concepts of identity and investment, this paper investigates secondary school students’ investment in learning English vis-à-vis English Curriculum 2012 and teachers’ enactments of the Curriculum as well as other social factors. Part of a larger project which adopted a qualitative multiple case-study approach, this paper used data from four focus groups with 26 students from four secondary schools. Six or seven students from Grades 9 and/or 10 participated in each focus group conducted online. The findings reveal that while the Curriculum promotes concepts such as collaborative learning and teacher as a facilitator, most students prefer working individually rather than collaboratively and that the teacher be a central authoritative figure who transmits knowledge to them. Furthermore, the data suggests that while English is viewed to be associated with students’ multiple imagined communities and imagined
identities, their investment in learning English is constrained by classroom instruction, especially teaching to the test. Two social factors—encouragement and fear—received from significant others, especially family and teachers, were also found to have a considerable impact on students’ investment in learning English. This study contributes a new understanding of how student investment in learning English is shaped in the context of English education in Bangladesh.

**Keywords:** Learning English, Investment, English education, Curriculum

**Biography:** Mosammet Nelema Akhter is a PhD candidate at Monash University, Clayton. She is a teacher in the Department of English at the University of Dhaka and has worked as a teacher educator. Her research interests include language education policies, multilingualism, TESOL and curriculum. She has published her research internationally.

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**Abstract:**

This study is an investigation of the social relations formed between English language teachers and administrative members in a language institute in Saudi Arabia. It maps teachers’ institutional roles and positions, and analyses the impact of larger power structures and institutional dominant discourses on the development of teacher professional identity and agency. Drawing connections between teachers’ and administrative members’ understanding of their professional roles and positions allows a clearer view of the discourses shaping the Institute's daily life and constructing teacher professional identity and agency. Methodologically, this research is designed as an institutional ethnography drawing on qualitative data collected from two data sources: 1) publicly available policy documents from the Institute, 2) semi-structured interviews and focus groups with teaching and administrative participants (6 teachers and 4 administrators). Critical discourse analysis was used to analyse the institutional policy documents. Thematic analysis was employed to code the data gathered from interviews and focus group discussions, which is understood using concepts about knowledge and power from Foucault. The findings reveal that despite the vision of the Institute for excellence and quality of English language teaching, there seems little focus on the needs of teachers. Teachers appear to lack the means of practising their agency and struggle in expressing their social and professional identities due to being positioned passively within complex power relations and a top-down organisational system. This study offers insights for teaching practice and policy reforms, especially recognising teachers’ voices and empowering their current institutional positions, so that the development of their professional identity and access to their agency is maximised. It addresses the issue of power relations which has been opaque for a long time in the context of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia.

**Keywords:** Agency, critical discourse analysis, Foucault, teacher identity, power relations

**Biography:** Amani is an English language teacher at King Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia. Currently, Amani is doing her PhD in Education at Monash University. Her research interests are mainly teacher education and teacher professional identity and agency.
Abstract: It is believed that the ways in which teachers perceive their students play an important role in influencing their pedagogical practices. Previous research has investigated teachers’ beliefs about the past and present of learners, such as learners’ backgrounds, personalities, and learning abilities, but teachers’ visions of students’ futures remain under-researched. Drawing on Norton's concept of imagined identity, this study reports on findings from a multiple-case study which explores English teachers’ perceptions of their students at two Chinese universities. Two teachers instructing English major students and two instructing non-English major students were involved in this research. The results indicate that the teachers constructed imagined student identities not only based on their students' past and present but also about the students' futures, including study and career aspirations, and potential changes effected by English learning in learners' ways of thinking about the world. Such imagined student identities would not only influence the teachers' pedagogical practices, but might cause tension when there is disparity between teachers’ imagined student identities and the imagined identities of the students themselves. The study extends our understanding of how teachers perceive learners from the usual past-present view to an alternative future-present perspective. Implications for practice and research are discussed in the light of the need for more flexible and dynamic teachers’ imagined student identities in order to create greater educational outcomes for the students.

Keywords: Imagined identity, investment, English as a second language, higher education, China

Biography: Hongming Fan is a third-year PhD student in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. She has obtained her Master’s degree in TESOL at Monash University. Her research mainly focuses on identity in language learning, with a broad interest in language acquisition, higher education, and curriculum.

TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP AND EVOLUTION IN EDUCATION

Abstract: Effective school leadership and management are key for educational achievement, which is central aspect of any thriving community. In Saudi Arabia, it is particularly essential for fulfilling the national educational objectives which aim to promote the country’s growth as well as advancing students and enhancing the learning environment. The literature reveals that there is a need for more information about this. This research therefore seeks to investigate how school principals view their leadership and management roles; how they develop relationships with their staff; and how professional development activities support the principals. The study adopts a qualitative method, utilising case studies
focused on three primary schools. Semi structured interviews were conducted with two school superintendents, three school principals and six teachers. Document analysis was also used to explore educational leadership and management roles in the Saudi context.

The initial findings showed that the leadership roles expected of school principals are increasing in complexity. A growing number of daily tasks and obligations were placed on education leaders by senior leaders in the education departments, which placed a strain on the leaders' core functions of supporting their team in providing children with the best education possible. Findings also indicated that professional development programmes were significantly important for supporting school principals, and that incentives were needed to attract good leaders.

**Keywords:** School leadership, School management, Primary schools, Saudi Arabia

**Biography:** Saoud Almalki is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. His PhD research focuses on educational leadership and management in Saudi primary schools.

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**Abstract:**

Making curriculum in the Australian church: Protestant Churches as sites of pedagogical practice

Sonia JEFFREY  
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**Abstract:** This project enquires how Australian protestant churches act as sites of pedagogical practice in curriculum making. It explores how curriculum making for young people in local church environments deliver a different type of curriculum product to those produced for mainstream classrooms. The construction of both sacred and secular curricula involves wide-ranging sets of discourses and processes which are located within complex webs of societal and cultural ideologies, representing the political interests of specific groups. These exist within institutional structures and processes, and local understandings, beliefs, and practices. This narrative study will investigate the production of religious curricula in several mainstream Australian Protestant traditions and the experiences of the people who write them. It will enquire how church-based curriculum writers seek to create and adapt pedagogical practices in curriculum making whilst aligning their writing voice with the values espoused within it.

**Keywords:** curriculum making, protestant church, voice, pedagogy, faith formation

**Biography:** Sonia is a second year PhD student whose ordained and professional career has centered on writing and religious curriculums in Australian protestant Churches. Whilst her master’s project interrogated her own dilemmas of navigating writing and vocational identities, this research captures the stories of writers who make curricula across a wider range of religious institutions. Sonia works as an educator in the prevention of family violence for the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.
Exploring the Influence of Socio-Religious Beliefs and Values on Indonesian Islamic School Leaders

Zainul YASNI
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Abstract: School leaders in Indonesia play a critical role in shaping how school societies perceive their world in a dynamic, democratic, multi-cultural, and religious Indonesia. Their leadership practices are underpinned by a set of principles informed by the beliefs they uphold. However, there is limited insight into how and to what extent their beliefs influence leadership practices, especially in the context of Islamic schools. The purpose of this study is to highlight gaps in mainstream literature concerning different viewpoints on school leadership. Guided by a qualitative case study, I questioned how and in what ways leaders’ socio-religious beliefs and values influence the leadership of Islamic schools in the context of Indonesia. The study involved 25 Islamic school leaders in Indonesia, recruited using a snowball sampling method. A conceptual framework grounded in Islamic ideals is also discussed as a lens to comprehend the data. This study found that how school leaders perceive religion, spirituality, and culture determines to what extent they become progressive or conservative leaders in the schools they serve. Progressive leadership demonstrates openness, inclusion, and pluralism, whereas conservative leadership demonstrates closedness, exclusivity, and unitary. The findings benefit the government and educational policymakers working on developing other leadership practices within the context of Islamic schools. This study also contributes to the growing understanding of how socio-religious beliefs influence leadership behaviours within a non-western setting. It enhances our understanding of Islamic educational leadership in Indonesia, the nation with the largest number of Islamic schools in the world.

Keywords: School leadership, Islamic schools, Leaders’ Beliefs and Values, Indonesia.

Biography: Zainul Yasni is a PhD candidate at Monash University and a recipient of the LPDP Scholarship. Prior to pursuing his doctorate, he worked as a lecturer at Hamzanwadi University. His research interests focus on educational leadership and policy and Islamic schools. He is passionate about the voice of educational leaders in the field.

POST-QUALITATIVE INQUIRY INTO FOOD-CHILD RELATIONS IN AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SETTING

Sayuri AMEMIYA
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Abstract: This research explores food practices and food-child relations in Australian Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) with a more-than-human relational approach. While the literature around ECEC food practices almost always focus on the humans (children and educators), this research generates posthuman, child-decentred narratives to rethink food-child relations. It aims to illuminate possibilities for food practices and food-child relations.
that shift away from the hierarchical and extractive relation between humans as consumers and food as commodity. In the study of ECEC food practices, who/what (humans and nonhumans) are in the community which we want to thrive? Attuning to more-than-human relationality in research, with whom/what do we want to thrive? For the empirical component of the research, I visited a childcare centre to observe and participate in food practices and generated audio-visual data. I use this visiting as a temporal and spatial marker to locate the methodological practices and encounters. The theoretical conceptualisation of methodological approach and methods of engagement that inform and are informed by practice became sticky during the visiting. Visiting as sticky and emergent methodology creates and recreates itself and knowledge in the research in ongoing engagement with humans and nonhumans. In this post-qualitative inquiry, methodology is not intended to be replicated or generalised but aimed to underline multiplicity and specificity of research engagement. I consider how methodology might nurture diverse ways of researching and thriving rather than imposing singular, predefined understandings.

**Keywords:** More-than-human, post-qualitative, methodologies, early childhood, food

**Biography:** I am interested in young children’s relations with nonhumans in everyday, mundane practices in ECEC and their implications in the wider more-than-human worlds. Currently in my second year of PhD, I am engaging in the ongoing process of data generation following the fieldwork trip.

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**Abstract: 13**  
**Time: 11:00am–11:30am**  
**Developing a tool for analysing teachers’ written mathematics lesson plans**

Sadaf MIRZA  
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**Abstract:** A range of factors contribute to substantial variation in the documentation of teachers’ mathematics written lesson plans. Despite this, written lesson plans can contain significant data regarding the opportunities to learn presented to students. Situated in a larger PhD study, this presentation reports on the development of a mathematics lesson plan analysis tool (LPAT) in order to use teachers’ written plans as data. Based on recommendations from the existing body of work regarding what needs to be included in lesson plans and lesson plan critiquing tools, a deductive qualitative coding process was undertaken. Thirteen elements under three types of codes were developed to analyse different aspects of the written plans. The code types were: a) identify the presence or absence of particular elements, b) classification of lessons into categories of pedagogical approach, and c) identify to what extent certain elements were present. The LPAT was trialled on lesson plans from two primary schools in the outer south-eastern suburbs in Melbourne. The lesson plans differed significantly in the template used, design and detail. The LPAT proved effective in quantifying and structuring data from different types of teachers’ written plans. This paves way for teachers’ written lesson plans to be used as data for mathematics teaching and learning by practitioners and researchers.

**Keywords:** Mathematics instruction, Data in schools, Planning, Written lesson plans.

**Biography:** Sadaf Mira is a PhD student at Monash University and a primary school teacher who is passionate about mathematics education. Her study focuses on broadening perspectives and analysis of data available in schools to inform mathematics teaching and learning. Her research interests include mathematics learning, outcomes and use of data.
Abstract: There is an imminent need to develop our understanding of science concept formation during infancy and toddlerhood. Early science learning experiences are essential for the development of children’s scientific knowledge and inquiry skills. Our understanding of science learning, as it occurs for children from birth to three however, is extremely limited. To build our understanding in this largely unknown area of science education, a study was conducted to explore the way in which children, during the cultural ages of infancy and toddlerhood, form science concepts through their imaginary play (within the context of their everyday educational reality). The study used a Cultural-Historical framework to design Conceptual PlayWorld Educational Experiments. The Conceptual PlayWorld (CPW) is a collective model of practice that supports the learning of Science concepts through play. Five CPW Educational Experiments were implemented at a Children’s Day Care Center in Melbourne, Australia; 68 children (aged 8 - 46 months) and 17 educators participated. Digital visual methods were used for the collection of the qualitative data. The way in which the biological science concepts, animal characteristics and habitats, developed, and were supported within the context of the CPW’s, was examined. Building an understanding of how children, during the first three years of life, form science concepts through their imaginary play, the study hopes to contribute to enhanced pedagogical practices for science education in the early years. In doing so, findings from the study will enhance our ability to support very young children to thrive as an active community of science learners.

Keywords: Science, Early Years Education, Infancy and Toddlerhood, Concept Formation, Cultural-Historical

Biography: Gillian O’Connor is PhD Candidate with the Faculty of Education at Monash University. She holds a Kathleen Fitzpatrick Scholarship working as part of Fleer’s Conceptual PlayLab project. Gillian has a keen interest in early years education. Her research focuses on examining science concept formation during the infancy and toddlerhood cultural age periods.

Abstract: In 2020 teachers and students found themselves in a unique situation where they were teaching and learning online. During the Covid-19 pandemic Victorians were put into lockdowns and schools were asked to implement some form of remote learning in response to these lockdowns. It was unknown how primary teachers would adapt their regular classroom interactions with students to an online learning environment. As a part of a larger study eight participants were interviewed via zoom on two separate occasions to investigate the cues that lead teachers to noticing moments of mathematical significance. The first
The interview was conducted early Term 4 in 2020 while teachers were still in remote learning and were preparing for a return to the classroom. The second interview was conducted a few weeks after teachers and students had returned to the physical classroom. There were several reported differences in how teachers interacted with their students and how they noticed their students mathematical thinking in the online environment. In this presentation I will share one teacher’s experience adapting their practice of noticing and interacting with one particular student in the online environment. This anecdote will illustrate the qualitative data analysis used to identify what was noticed, what led to this moment, how the information was interpreted, what actions were actions taken, and contrast these actions with the face-to-face classroom environment.

**Keywords:** Online, noticing, mathematical thinking, primary teachers

**Biography:** I am a primary school teacher with 20 years’ experience. I have also been a sessional lecturer with Monash for the last 6 years. I am 4.5 years through my PhD (part-time).

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**EARLY CHILDHOOD: PLAY**

**Abstract:**

Chinese Early Childhood Teachers’ Practice on Children’s Mathematics Learning in Play-based Contexts

Wenxuan ZHANG
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**Abstract:** Play-based approach as an ideology which originates from Western countries. Although China’s educational policy has emphasised the importance of play for early childhood (EC) development, Chinese EC teachers still have challenges in practising the play-based approach to teach subject knowledge, such as mathematics. To address those challenges and understand the EC teachers’ developmental opportunities, this study examines the current practices of Chinese EC teachers in early mathematics education. Data were gathered of 8 EC teachers using digital video observations of mathematical activity settings and stimulated recall interviews from two kindergartens in China. Cultural-historical concepts of motives, scientific and everyday concepts, pedagogical positioning are drawn upon to examine Chinese EC teachers’ pedagogical practices, particularly how EC teachers interact with children in mathematical activities. The findings show that although EC teachers expressed challenges with the play-based approach, they were willing to extend from children’s everyday experiences and actively engage with play-based mathematics education in this context. This study argues that there is an urgent need to provide professional development for Chinese EC teachers and develop a culturally sensitive play-based mathematical pedagogical model in China.

**Keywords:** Cultural Historical Theory, Play, Mathematics, Chinese Early Childhood Teachers.

**Biography:** Wenxuan Zhang is Ph.D. student at Monash University. Her research interests focus on the early childhood mathematics education in China, with specific emphasis on applying cultural-historical perspectives to understanding play-based pedagogy in children’s mathematics learning and development.
Chinese children’s engineering thinking development: Theoretical thinking and productive imagination in a collective form

Yuwen MA
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Abstract: Despite being one of the most practical and real-world domains that all children can engage in, engineering learning is a significant yet underrepresented field in early education. Previous researchers have shown the importance of interactions and materials in promoting young children’s engineering thinking. However, far too little attention has been paid to specific play-based approaches in promoting Chinese children’s engineering thinking in kindergartens. This paper focuses on Chinese children’s engineering thinking development within the Conceptual PlayWorld activity settings. As a part of the educational experiment, the Conceptual PlayWorld was an imaginary scenario created by educators and researchers where young children are invited to go on imaginary journeys, solve challenges and learn STEM concepts. In this study, video observations of 2 teachers interacting with 28 children (4–5 years; mean age of 4.5 years old) during Conceptual PlayWorld activities (27.91 hours) and child interviews (4.02 hours) were analysed. Informed by the cultural-historical theory of theoretical knowledge as well as everyday concepts and scientific concepts, this paper examined the conditions that Conceptual PlayWorld created for Chinese children’s engineering thinking in bridge building. To be specific, children were motivated to develop theoretical thinking within the collective imagination situation based on their everyday understanding of the bridges. In children’s bridge building process, a theoretical core model of ‘Material – Structure - Social purpose’ emerged through children’s affective imagination and materials exploration. Therefore, it is argued that the Conceptual PlayWorld provides a possible model for Chinese children’s engineering thinking development within the collective imagination.

Keywords: Engineering, child, imagination, playworld.

Biography: Yuwen Ma is currently a PhD student in Conceptual PlayLab at Monash University. Her current research interests are cultural historical play and development, as well as children’s STEM learning.

A cultural-historical study of Australian children’s development of mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills during transition from Preschool to primary school

Hong CHEN
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Abstract: The transition from preschool to primary school is a critical period in children’s development. Research has identified that the development of early mathematics skills significantly contributes to children’s later success in their school experiences and helps the transition process. A growing focus on the development of children’s early mathematics skills urges a suitable pedagogical approach to support children’s mathematical learning as they transition between settings. However, Australian children’s transition from a play-based framework to a more formal-oriented curriculum results in a disjointed experience in terms
of teaching strategies, learning approaches and expectations on developing mathematics skills. Many interventions around the world use task-based activities to support children’s mathematical transition. There is limited evidence regarding how a play-based approach through children’s imagination could create conditions in supporting children’s mathematical problem solving and reasoning during transition. Drawn upon the cultural-historical concept of play, everyday and scientific concepts and extending Fleer’s Conceptual PlayWorld in mathematics, this research aims to investigate how Mathematical PlayWorld creates motivating conditions in supporting children’s mathematical transition. The research follows children from the 4-year-old Kindergarten to the Foundation level in a Victorian school. The data consists of fieldnotes, stimulated recall interviews with children and teachers, video observations of Mathematical PlayWorld implementation and interactions between teachers and children. Hedegaard’s dialectical-interactive approach frames the holistic analysis of children’s mathematics conceptual learning process during the transition period. This study aims to contribute to the empirical evidence of the Mathematical PlayWorld approach, in supporting Australian children’s transition experience, especially in mathematics learning.

Keywords: Transition, Conceptual PlayWorld, Mathematics Concept Learning, Cultural-Historical Theory

Biography: Hong Chen is a PhD student in the Faculty of Education, Monash University. She has been working as an Early childhood teacher for more than six years. Her research interests are early childhood education, mathematics, transition and play-based learning.

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**EARLY CHILDHOOD: PARENTS**

**Abstract:** 19  
**Time:** 10:30am–11:00am

The educators’ role in creating conditions to engage single mothers and non-resident fathers in co-supporting children’s social competence

**Zixi LIANG**  
*Monash University*  
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Abstract: Hidden Abstract

**Biography:** My name is Zixi Liang, I am a PhD student at Monash Faculty of Education. I have also completed a Master of Teaching course and Graduate Certificate of Educational Research with Monash University. My research interest includes early childhood education, children’s social competence and family practice.

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**Abstract:** 20  
**Time:** 11:00am–11:30am

Capital exchange and fathers’ position in the early childhood education setting: An ethnographic case study in the Chinese Context

**Shiyao WANG**  
*Monash University*  
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Abstract: In recent decades, father involvement in the early childhood education (ECE) field in China has been a research focus to better understand the children’s development. This paper adopts Bourdieu’s concepts of capital, doxa and illusio, to investigate how fathers are
positioned in the field so as to contribute. Drawing from an ethnographic case study of two kindergartens in China, I explore how to enhance father involvement to achieve greater equity in parenting. The analysis is based on documents, field notes, interviews after observation and semi-structured interviews. In aligning with the theory, I use three levels of Bourdieu’s field analysis: (1) interaction of other powerful fields in relate to ECE field to constitute father inclusion, and (2) depiction of the kindergarten itself and capital exchange in the field, and (3) fathers’ habitus constituted by and constituting their practices in a father less-inclusive setting. In this paper, I concentrate on the second level of analysis in constructing a particular field. Key findings are the kindergarten expects to take advantage of parent resources (capital). As fathers have limited in cultural capital in the kindergarten, they are positioned as passive but cooperative. Mothers gain more linguistic capital (one kind of cultural capital) compared to fathers. Positive changes exist in fathers’ increased social capital with teachers via parent activities. Teachers and mothers also provide emotional capital in supporting father engagement. Implications are that teachers and mothers play an important role as mediators in legitimating fathers more centrally in children’s education. Fathers are also in need of cultural capital that play a more productive role in the ECE field.

**Keywords:** father involvement, early childhood education, Bourdieu’s field analysis, Chinese context.

**Biography:** Shiyao Wang is a Ph.D. candidate from Monash University, Australia. Her research interests include early child development and education, father involvement, parenting equity.

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**Abstract: 21**

**Time: 11:30am–12:00pm**

**Uncovering Iranian mothers’ perceptions of their bilingual children’s home digital literacy practices in English**

**Ali SOYOOF**

*Monash University*

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**Abstract:** In Iran, many children spend a great deal of their time in the home context where they often use different digital technologies such as smartphones, tablets, and other digital devices. However, the way that children use these digital technologies largely depends on their mothers whose perceptions can shape their home digital literacy practices. While mothers’ perceptions of their children’s home digital literacy practices have been investigated in other contexts such as Turkey, Spain, England, and Sweden, there is a scarcity of knowledge about the perceptions of Iranian mothers. To bridge this gap, I conducted a qualitative case study using demographic profiles and semi-structured interviews to uncover Iranian mothers’ perceptions of their bilingual children’s home digital literacy practices in English. Drawing on thematic analysis, the findings demonstrated that while Iranian mothers urged their children to engage in home digital literacy practices in English, they had different motives such as migration, higher education, decision making, practical skills, and early formal education. The findings of this study can offer valuable insights to Iranian English language teaching (ELT) stakeholders to better address the needs of Iranian children and their parents using digital technologies in English.

**Keywords:** Perceptions, mothers, Iranian bilingual children, home digital literacy practices in English

**Biography:** Ali Soyoof is a Ph.D. student at Monash University. His research interests are
A study of family support during the transition from kindergarten to primary school in Chinese rural areas

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Abstract: Children’s transition from kindergarten to primary school can be mentally, physically, emotionally, academically and socially crucial for children’s development and learning. In 2021, Chinese Ministry published several policies on promoting children’s transition from kindergarten to primary school. Among the “Double Reduce Policy”, which foregrounds reducing homework from kindergartens and schools and strictly prohibits off-campus academic tutoring, has aroused extensive attention. Previous research predominantly focuses on pedagogies at kindergartens and primary schools and strengthening the relationship between family and schools. However, limited studies investigate how families support children’s transition within family contexts and explore children’s perspective on transition under the new policies, especially in Chinese rural areas. Families play a critical role in children’s achievement in school and through life, and family engagement with education is essential and emotionally, academically and socially benefits children. Through a holistic lens - societal, institutional, and personal perspectives, this study investigates how the families support children’s transition and development in their everyday family activities under the contexts of the implementation of new policies, and how children experience and contribute to their development and learning over the period of the transition.

This study is based on three qualitative case studies, draws upon cultural-historical concepts of motives and demands, and takes a dialectical-interactive approach. The data of video observation and interviews with adults and children will be generated. Therefore, this study can contribute to understanding and promoting children’s learning and development during transition under new policies in China, which can be utilised by families, educators, policymakers and researchers.

Keywords: Family engagement, family activity, transition to primary school, children’s learning and development, Chinese early childhood education

Biography: I’m Chenxi Lu, a first-year Monash PhD student. Completed a bachelor degree of Art Education, and a master degree of TESOL. As a student researcher, I studied Chinese two-child policy and its impact on parental stress and family relationships. I’m interested in early childhood education and family pedagogy.
Abstract: It is vital for a beginning teacher to understand inclusive education legislation and policy, as well as to be able to appropriately implement evidenced based inclusive practices. Several studies have documented, however, that numerous beginning teachers report feeling unsure and unprepared in knowing how to proactively support all students academically and behaviourally. Specific references to beginning teachers transitioning into the profession as inclusive educators do not appear in the considerable research that has taken place to date. Hence, the voice of the beginning teacher is important to investigate. This study sought to explore the perceptions of beginning teachers regarding their preparation for becoming inclusive educators. The aim of this research project was to unearth the beginning teachers’ voice, to identify facilitators and barriers to becoming inclusive educators at the university setting, specifically when transitioning into the profession. It is this purpose which aligns with the MERC Annual Conference 2022 theme Transforming research for thriving communities. A phenomenological approach was used to explore the viewpoint of eight beginning teachers transitioning into the profession in 2020 or 2021. The “three apprenticeships” initially identified by Lee Shulman (2004) and adapted by Rouse (2008) is the theoretical framework employed to structure the research project and to analyse the data. This study identified that beginning teachers hold the perception that university is not preparing them sufficiently to become inclusive educators. Consequently, these teachers feel ill-prepared and incompetent as inclusive educators. These findings highlight three domains of improvement suggested to augment current initial teacher education practices.

Keywords: Beginning teachers, inclusive education, differentiated teaching instruction, initial teacher education, transition.

Biography: Rebecca Rosenberg is an inclusive educator who advises on access to the curriculum for students with disability. Her PhD focus is on beginning teachers and inclusive education. This is in response to an existing passion for inclusive education, and because beginning teachers are the next generation of inclusive educators.
The Education of Hearing Impairments in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Between the Role of School Leadership and the Implementation of Inclusive Education

Latifah ALOMAIR
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Abstract: Saudi Arabia has been working to enhance lifelong learning for its youth, as a response to its 2030 Vision. This Vision aims to build a vibrant society with fulfilling lives and equitable opportunities. Developing inclusive school practices is pivotal to improving educational opportunities for students, especially those with hearing impairments. However, if we are interested in moving towards more inclusive practices, one of the factors that must be studied in-depth is leadership and its role in the development of these practices. This study investigates the concept of multi-level leadership, as opposed to the traditional conception of leadership in schools, which focuses primarily on the principal's role. In Western countries, the notion of multi-level leadership is well-researched, while in Arab countries, conventional leadership prevails. This research arises out of one organisational case study to address how the Saudi Arabian school principal, middle leaders, and teachers at ABC Primary School implement inclusive education practices to maximise the learning of students with hearing impairments. The data will be examined within a conceptual framework that sheds light on the impact of contextual influences on leadership practices and the implementation of inclusion. This study will include senior leaders, middle leaders, teacher leaders, parents, and students, using interviews, observations, an open-ended questionnaire, and document analysis. Significant contributions will be made by this study to the development of understandings of the learning contexts of students with hearing impairments in inclusive settings and the development of leadership in the effort to construct an educational system that incorporates the best possible practices.

Keywords: Leadership Practices, Inclusive Education, Hearing Impairments, Saudi Arabia

Biography: Latifah Alomair is a Saudi Arabian PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Monash University. Her research interests include inclusive education, school leadership, and policy. Although she has never worked in schools, she is concerned about the improvement of education in her country and the promotion of educational equity.

Teachers’ self-efficacy when working with teacher assistants: a mixed-methods study

Claire JACKSON
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Abstract: Teachers are highly likely to work with a teacher assistant at some stage during their career, yet they are seldom trained in how to maximise the benefits of this collaborative partnership. Self-efficacy is a well-established concept that influences an individual's confidence in their capabilities. It is known to be a reliable predictor of many facets of successful teacher practice. Self-efficacy is context and task specific and has been measured in relation to many aspects of teachers' work in schools. More recently, self-efficacy relating to teachers' inclusive practices has been measured. However, a scale measuring this construct with regards to teachers' work with teacher assistants does not
currently exist. A new scale has therefore been developed through an exploratory sequential mixed-methods study. The multi-phased project included an international systematic literature review of 26 studies, focus group and semi-structured interviews with Victorian secondary teachers (n = 16) and the collection of survey data from Australian secondary teachers (n = 174). The intent of the newly developed scale is to measure teachers' self-efficacy when working with a teacher assistant in order to establish factors that may have the ability to improve the impact of this professional partnership.

**Keywords:** Teacher, teacher assistant, self-efficacy, students with disability, collaboration.

**Biography:** Claire has over 20 years’ experience in inclusive education. She is in the final stages of her PhD and hopes her research will help to further develop initial teacher education programs and inservice teacher training to build the capacity of teachers when working with support staff such as teacher assistants.

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**Abstract:**

**Writing and identity as symbiotic: Children’s depictions of dysgraphia in art-based research**

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**Abstract:** Dysgraphia can be defined as significant difficulties with any or all aspects of writing, for example, handwriting, spelling, ideation, planning, or composition, despite good intelligence during primary and secondary schooling. However, navigating dysgraphia can be a metaphorical quagmire. This is due to the complexity of the writing itself, the differing underlying difficulties, and comorbidities associated with dysgraphia. Added to these challenges is the paucity of research and lack of awareness about dysgraphia, leaving school-aged children with writing disabilities vulnerable to further disadvantage. To address this gap, this study intended to explore the experiences of children with dysgraphia, aged 10-12, to gain important idiographic insights about their writing difficulties, and to enable children to participate in research about issues that affect them. Using an art therapy method of data collection framed by hermeneutic phenomenology, five children used a range of self-selected art modes to create a representation of their experiences of dysgraphia over several Zoom® sessions. The findings showcased a symbiosis between writing and identity, where writing difficulties and teacher misperceptions manifested as internalised failings or emotional turmoil. This research has important implications for teacher professional development that builds teacher efficacy in strengths-based practices, as well as providing appropriate accommodations for children with dysgraphia. Moreover, writing affirmation will likely increase children’s sense of writing efficacy and identity, creating inclusive education practices that enable children diagnosed with dysgraphia to thrive.

**Keywords:** dysgraphia, writing disability, phenomenology, art-based research

**Biography:** Elvira Kalenjuk is an Australian university lecturer and accredited art therapist with over 20 years’ experience as a primary teacher. Elvira’s credentials include a Victorian International Teaching Fellowship, and qualifications in politics, archaeology, art therapy, educational neuroscience. Elvira is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at Monash University.
CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Abstract: 27  Time: 1:30pm–2:00pm

Reflective Practice in English Language Teacher Education in Indonesia: Teacher Educators’ Integration and Engagement

Nur HAYATI
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Abstract: Hidden Abstract

Biography: Nur Hayati is a faculty member of the English Department of Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia. She is currently a third-year PhD student in the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia. Her research interests are in the areas of reflective practice, teacher cognition, teacher education and teacher professional development.

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Abstract: 28  Time: 2:00pm–2:30pm

The role of life learning in transition of first generation of Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs into Australian community

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Abstract: UNESCO and lifelong learning advocates pronounce the 21st century as a ‘learning society’, with four pillars of knowledge: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. However, researchers indicate important dimensions of how, where and why people learn throughout their lives are not yet well explained, and the last two pillars are under-researched and rarely reported. Drawing on the work of Bourdieu and others, and working with a constructivist ontology and an interpretive epistemology, I aim to adopt a phenomenological approach and qualitative methods to investigate the role of life learning in shaping the transition of first-generation Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in Melbourne. This presentation will also propose a potential framework for a systematic literature review, which will inform this project. My paper is a systematic literature review focusing on lifelong learning. I have found most of the literature about lifelong learning still hovering around learning a specific skill instead of learning to be an active citizen. Based on my literature review so far, the gap for my research to fill is to find what role life learning plays to facilitate the first generation of Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs to finish their transnational transition into the Australian community. Hopefully, after data collection and analysis, the findings of this project will help to identify and raise the voice of this marginalized cohort. Their struggling situations, real expectations, their difficulties and barriers to integrate into the Australian community and to contribute to the host country can be unpacked and revealed.

Keywords: Lifelong learning, Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs, transition.

Biography: I am a first year PhD student from School of Education Culture & Society. As I had been a Chinese immigrant entrepreneur in Melbourne before I became a Monash student, I have great passion and curiosity to explore this topic.
Multimodal Literacy in an Indonesian EFL teacher education program: Exploring EFL pre-service teachers’ understandings and envisioned practices

Agus PRAYOGO
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Abstract: Due to the highly multimodal nature of communication, information, and social interaction, the importance of multimodal literacies in education and, more recently, in English language education, has been recognised. A growing body of research evidence supports the need for English language teachers, including pre-service teachers, to be able to teach multimodal literacy. Thus, preparing teachers to teach multimodal literacy should be started in the teacher education program. However, little is known about how pre-service teachers perceive multimodal literacy in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, especially in Indonesia. This study aims to capture EFL pre-service teachers’ perspectives on multimodal literacy, their envisioned practices on multimodal literacy, and their engagement with multimodal texts during their study in the teacher preparation program. Twenty pre-service teachers are recruited for this study. Data for this qualitative case study will be collected from the interview, focus group, and observation. This study takes place in a teacher education program at a university in Central Java, Indonesia. Iterative coding is used to identify the patterns and occurrences within the data, and then codes are cross referenced to identify findings. This study is expected to provide implications for curriculum design and policy making in EFL teacher education in order to prepare and empower EFL pre-service teachers to teach multimodal literacy in the Indonesian context.

Keywords: EFL teaching, multimodal literacy, multimodal texts, pre-service teachers.

Biography: Agus is a first year Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Education, Monash University, from Indonesia. His research interests include multimodality, teacher professional development, and reflective practice.

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Studying emotions from a cultural-historical perspective: Research trends and critical reflections

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Abstract: In recent decades, emotion has received much attention in educational research. Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory (VCHT) is increasingly embraced as a potent theoretical framework for researching emotion and its role in development. This paper presents preliminary findings of a scoping review of empirical VCHT-based research on the topic of emotions. It specifically aims to identify emerging themes in the literature, existing gaps and reflections on the findings. A scheme of inclusion and exclusion criteria was designed before an extensive literature search was conducted on Scopus research database. Thematic analysis was adopted for the data analysis. The findings revealed five major themes, including (1) emotion regulation, (2) unity of emotion and cognition, (3) interplay among
emotion, cognition, motivation and action, (4) pedagogical intervention for promoting positive emotional development and (5) explanatory mechanism of emotion. It has also been found that previous cultural-historical research on emotions mostly materialised from the early childhood research sector and adopted a qualitative case study for the research design. In a number of the studies reviewed, development seems to be (implicitly) understood and explained as a deterministic process. This has been argued by previous scholars to be misaligned with VCHT, which requires a revelation of the underlying dynamic (mediated) structure of the phenomenon by tracing its historical development.

**Keywords:** emotion, cognition, development, Vygotsky, cultural-historical theory.

**Biography:** Ngo Cong-Lem is a third-year PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia. His research interests involve language education and cultural psychology. He has published in major international journals such as European Journal of Psychology of Education (SSCI) and Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science (SSCI).

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**Abstract: 31**  
**Time: 2:00pm–2:30pm**

**Education through Smoke and Ash: Thinking Without Method and the Argument for a Post-Growth Education**

**Rick WHITE**  
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**Abstract:** This paper speculates as to the material consequences of the ecological crisis for the current objectives of the education system in the State of Victoria. Drawing upon new materialist thought, it presents a post-qualitative inquiry into the lead author’s experiences as an educator during a 2014 fire event in the Latrobe Valley region of Gippsland, Victoria, Australia, known as the Hazelwood Coal Mine Fire. By engaging in thinking without method it unfolds an argument that a political preference for certain theories has resulted in economic growth becoming a key objective of Victoria’s education system. It explores alternative theoretical perspectives, including the theory that there are limits to growth. This theoretical shift implies that any meaningful response to the ecological crisis will require a transition to a post-growth society. The paper considers the implication of this alternative theory for the current objectives of the education system in the State of Victoria. In so doing, it considers what it might mean if we accepted our response-ability to educate for a post-growth society rather than for a society surrounded by smoke and ash.

**Keywords:** Education, Economics, Sustainability, Post-Qualitative, Post-Growth.

**Biography:** Rick White is a PhD candidate at Monash University who studies how education might help secure a desirable ecological and economic future for the young people of the Latrobe Valley. His PhD explores the relationship between education, ecology, and economic growth in this context. He specialises in the role of education in a post-growth economy.
Abstract: “Cultural insensitivity is pretty raw. Sometimes, avoiding it seems easier” (ELLA, ‘Connections’, Act I). Although Australian education policies have required teachers to promote reconciliation since 2011, many teachers are still scared of ‘getting it wrong’ when teaching First Nations perspectives, histories, languages, and cultures. As products of an education system that has historically silenced, mocked, and appropriated First Nations voices, many teachers lack the knowledge, skills, and confidence to create change. This research project explored how embodied professional learning can support teachers to engage with the supercomplexities of teaching for reconciliation. Drawing on Critical Whiteness Studies and Transformative Learning Theory, I designed and facilitated a six-week program with 12 Victorian Drama teachers. Before and after the program, I yarned (a research method based on First Nations cultural forms of conversation) individually with each participant. Following my commitment to embodiment, I analysed the resulting emotional, verbal, and physical data using dramaturgical coding and ethnodramatic writing, and have written up my findings as an ethnodrama (research as a work of theatre). This play, titled ‘Connections’, follows six composite characters as they journey through the complex space of the cultural interface. I suggest that there is no one way to engage with teaching for reconciliation, but an infinite array of unique, often contradictory experiences. Nonetheless, connecting to others on similar journeys helps learners to find joy and support in what is often perceived as a daunting pursuit. Embodiment, specifically drama-based learning, offers powerful opportunities to slide between the world as it is, and the world as we wish it to be. In this presentation, I will illustrate these points by embodying one of the characters, ELLA, who comes to realise that although “We’ve got a long way to go…I can make my feet count. At least I’m on the right track” (‘Connections’, Act V). By sharing these stories, my research offers insight into helping more teachers find their ‘right track’ to teaching for reconciliation.

Keywords: Reconciliation, transformative learning, teacher professional learning, ethnodrama, embodiment.

Biography: Danielle Hradsky is a PhD candidate at Monash University, living and working on the unceded lands of the Woiwurrung and Bunurong/Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nations. She is exploring professional learning that engages teachers with the super complexities of teaching for reconciliation. Danielle is a non-Indigenous Australian.
Introducing English as a Foreign Language in Early Childhood Education in Kudus, Indonesia: Teachers' Perceptions and Practices

Fatona SURAYA
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Abstract: Although research has supported the introduction of foreign language education from an early age, the Indonesian early childhood curriculum system continues to be sceptical in affording enough attention to English to be taught as a subject at the primary level. Even when English is sometimes introduced as embedded in play activities, such practices have raised concerns from teachers themselves. This study examines teachers' perceptions from an early childhood educational institution in an urban area in Pasuruhan Kidul Village, Kudus Regency, Indonesia, on their views of the importance of English in early childhood education and their practices in immersing learners in English in their daily teaching. A set of questionnaires and an interview were conducted to explore teachers' perceptions and practices. The study argues that while all teachers had a high perception of the importance of English in early childhood, no correlation could be established between teachers' positive perceptions of English and their practice of integrating English into their actual pedagogical practices. This finding also indicates that the teachers could not place as much emphasis into their daily teaching routine because of their own insufficient English proficiencies, indicating the absence of an adequate professional support system. These results reiterate the importance of educators' English language knowledge to support both English teaching and English teachers in early childhood education.

Keywords: Language proficiency, Early Childhood Education, teachers' perception, teachers' practice.

Biography: Fatona Suraya is a Ph.D. student at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. She has more than ten years of experience teaching English as a foreign language in secondary school and university. Her research interests include teaching English for Specific Purposes, need analysis, and Content-Based Instruction.

It is a bumpy ride but wonderful: Narratives of immigrant Early Childhood Educators in Victoria

Sweta Vijaykumar PATEL
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Abstract: A growing body of research suggests that when people migrate, specifically educators, they experience diverse challenges as they participate in the host country’s new cultural, social and educational systems. Literature focusing on what factors influence immigrant Early Childhood (EC) educators’ pedagogical decisions and how these impact their aspirations and imagined worlds remains scarce. There are many shifts, tensions and opportunities involved in an immigrant EC educator’s pathway to living in another country. This study explores how immigrant EC educators navigate their cultural and pedagogical experiences in Victorian EC settings. Underpinned by Appadurai’s theory of global cultural
flows and practices along with Narrative methodology, this study explores 13 participants' stories as they adapted to working in the Victorian EC settings. In combining Appadurai’s theoretical framework with Riessman’s narrative analysis framework, a unique three-stage iterative process was used to analyse the data. The focus of this paper is on four narratives and the photo-elicitation. The findings discuss the participants’ past and present experiences, and notions of their future selves as EC educators, as well as factors influencing their pedagogical decisions. The emerging findings offer insights into how immigrant EC educators’ aspirations, imagined worlds, and cultural experiences influence their pedagogical decisions.

**Keywords:** immigrant early childhood educators; narrative inquiry, cultural influence; pedagogy; aspiration.

**Biography:** Sweta Patel is a third-year PhD candidate at Monash University. A qualified Kindergarten teacher, Sweta has over 15 years of experience working in the field of Early Childhood Education in various capacities in India and Australia. Her research interests focus on immigrants, pedagogy, early childhood education and narrative-based methodologies.

**Abstract:**

This research aims to analyse the discourses about the assistant teachers’ role, elaborated by the key actors of the Chilean early childhood education (ECE) system. Scholars have contested a dominant discourse of early childhood teachers as “competent technicians” (Osgood, 2012), according to which the teaching workforce must comply with externally defined competencies to be acknowledged as good professionals. This discourse might be problematic since it excludes alternative profiles of practitioners such as the assistant teachers. To address this issue, the study is informed by a feminist ethics of care approach (Langford et al., 2017), which contests the dualist view of care and education, the subordinate position of care as a social activity and its hyperfeminisation, along with the concepts of technical and ethical practice in ECE, coined by Dahlberg and Moss (2004). Discourses were analysed drawing upon a Foucauldian approach (Clarke, 2005), and a total of ten interviews and two focus groups with assistant teachers, teachers and directors were conducted in two ECE centres located in an urban suburb from Santiago of Chile.

Preliminary findings suggest that while the assistant teachers conceive their role from an ethical practice view that foregrounds a concern with children’s physical, intellectual and emotional needs, teachers and directors require them to fulfil a pedagogical role inspired by a technical practice approach. These findings can inform future policies aimed at strengthening the ECE practitioners’ work and education, with a broader scope that includes assistant teachers and embracing new approaches to ECE professionalism which foreground caring practices.

**Keywords:** Teachers’ professionalism, Early childhood education, Early childhood education policy, Assistant teachers, ethics of care.

**Biography:** Sociologist and PhD in Education candidate at Monash Education. My research interests are focused on the critical analysis of early childhood education policies,
Abstract: Early childhood education and care (ECEC) promotes agency as an important concept for student learning. Curriculum documents define it as children having opportunity to choose and to use one’s voice. As an early childhood teacher (ECT) I embraced this definition and within my practice. I actively sought to give children agency. I came to my doctoral studies wanting to investigate agency in ECEC asking the question “how do I practice agency?” with the aim of making a contribution that would confirm the importance of teaching for agency. However, when I made the decision to adapt an autoethnographic methodology alongside my emerging reading of posthumanist theories, my convictions started to dissolve. There are limited autoethnographic accounts where agency is the concept being examined. There is also a limited understanding of how autoethnography permits an examination of the complexities agency. My inquiry contributes to understanding the complexities and dominant discourses present in educational practices of agency in ECEC. I argue that autoethnography has accorded my inquiry to work within relationally safe spaces in which to critique the auto-self of the (auto)ethnography. In addition, it has permitted a troubling of human centric notions of agency in ECEC. As an ECT I am now living with/in this complexity as an entangled auto-self-other. In conclusion, this paper will argue that autoethnography as a method has provided me with alternative possibilities allowing me to shift from teaching for agency to teaching with agency.

Keywords: Agency, education, relational, postqualitative, autoethnography

Biography: Catherine is a practicing early childhood teacher with an interest in understanding agency in the early childhood sector.
markets, but little is known about the challenges associated with the employability capitals listed above. This book chapter deploys a qualitative approach to explore the challenges associated with employability capitals facing Chinese international graduates in Australia and their responses to these challenges. Fourteen Chinese international graduates participated in in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that the participants had the challenges to 1) accumulate work experience to realise the usefulness of credentials; 2) convert social networks into social capital; 3) convert cultural understanding into cultural capital; 4) be resilient proactively not passively; 5) form a clear career goal; and 6) Increase higher level of active engagement. Additionally, the challenges worked as triggers for participants to develop and build capitals by exercising their employability agency. This study argued that more research is necessary to explore how international graduates negotiate their long-term employability trajectories.

**Keywords:** Agency, Capital, Graduate Employability, Higher Education

**Biography:** Melody Tang is a third year PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Monash University. She received Master of Education and Master of Applied Finance from Monash University. Her research interests include graduate employability, international student, agency, capital, and Bourdieu.

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**Abstract: 38**  
**Time: 2:00pm–2:30pm**

**A layered account of pursuing my doctoral studies through vignettes**

Dave YAN  
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**Abstract:** Academic pursuits are fraught with unknowns. Drawing upon the work of Humphreys, the author develops a layered autoethnographic account of his lived experience of ‘becoming’ a rejected doctoral student as the Other over the years. In the light of critical reading of current literature, there emerges a linear definition of academic identity. By documenting the ‘failure’, the author argues such experience contributes to a sociological understanding of becoming academic. The use of a layered account serves as a means of enhancing the representational richness and reflexivity of qualitative research, through which to gaze at the emergent nature of academic identity formation across time and space. Through vignettes of the self, the author exemplifies how such self-reflexivity can provide glimpses into subjective and intersubjective understandings of academic-becoming. This autoethnographic research questions and critiques the notion of academic identity and academic community that is to educate, attract, retain, and produce scholars at the expense of realising human potential. In writing this autoethnographic piece, the author encourages the silenced voice to speak out, elucidating their lived experience towards self-empowerment and self-understanding. In doing so, we might be able to transform research, enabling the Other to flourish and thrive in various communities. Lastly, the author reflects and discusses the potential challenges in doing such scholarship, including ethical considerations.

**Keywords:** autoethnographic vignettes, academic identity, a layered account; reflectivity; doctoral preparation.

**Biography:** “In 2022, I finally got admitted into a doctoral program. It took me almost 10 years to see the dawn coming.” Through (auto)ethnography, Yan’s research questions the conventional form of doing qualitative research, with a strong focus on the lived experience of immigrant teachers and their professional development.
Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted further challenges to the educational experiences of migrant and refugee-background students, particularly as schools transitioned to online education mode to support education continuity. Moreover, today’s global society is increasingly driven by technology and online education and this has become a key aspect for teaching and learning. A paucity of research has been conducted on the experiences of online education for African migrant and refugee background students. This study examines the online educational experiences of second-generation refugee-background South Sudanese students at secondary schools in Melbourne. It seeks to understand how the students negotiate the affordances and constraints of online education and what emerging realities and/or identities arise given their experiences. Underpinned by postcolonial frameworks of the Third Space, Funds of Knowledge and Funds of Identity, this study uses narrative methodology to explore the online educational experiences of 14 participants. The data was analysed using an adapted version of McCormack’s “storying stories” method. This paper focuses on the storying stories of two participants. Preliminary findings show how the participants negotiated a Third Space in online education by drawing upon the resilience and agency they developed through their lived experiences. Some participants demonstrated resilience by working through the challenges, while some participants were agentic and took responsibility for their learning. The study will contribute to thriving educational and African communities, as it aims to inform teachers about ways young migrant and refugee background African students negotiate learning, particularly online learning by drawing upon previous knowledge and lived experiences.

Keywords: Online education, refugee-background, narrative, Third Space, Funds of Knowledge.

Biography: Longinus Onyechesi is of African heritage and a qualified counsellor, with over 19 years of pastoral counselling. He is interested in supporting teachers’ understanding of African students, particularly in relation to African students’ online learning experiences. He is currently a third-year PhD candidate at Monash University.
despite my best intentions my pedagogy remains tokenistic. An autoethnographic approach allows me to position my multiple roles of self as a learner, ‘teacher’ and ‘researcher’ engaging in processes of unlearning. This has been possible through my opportunities to learn with First Nations Elders, theorising this space of as a ‘meeting place’ where First Nations Peoples’ cultures and knowledges and my own Western worldviews overlap and collide. This approach, involving journal writing and walking-weaving-stories also allows me to find ways to decolonise ‘self’, ‘teacher’ and ‘researcher’ and to unveil pedagogical gaps which silence First Peoples teachings. In this paper, I present one of my and theorize it with the social, cultural, and political complexities that it unveils. I draw on First Peoples academic teachings, relational epistemologies, and ontologies to support this theorisation and present a ‘Visitor Framework’ that supports me in understanding my positioning and responsibilities as a non-indigenous researcher in this academic space.

**Keywords:** Decolonialization, autoethnography, education, pedagogy

**Biography:** Mary Ann Slater is a non-indigenous early childhood teacher and PhD student at Monash University. Having recently completed mid candidature requirements Ann now continues her autoethnographic study theorizing her data stories, learning with decolonial thinking, unlearning, and relearning self and pedagogy as acts of taking responsibility for reconciliation.

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**EARLY CHILDHOOD: LEARNING AND TEACHING**

**Abstract:** The value of STEM education is recognized in early years education. Research finds out that teachers are playing important roles in STEM teaching. However, lacking confidence in STEM teaching hinders Chinese teachers’ STEM practice in kindergarten, specifically in play-based settings. To support Chinese preschool teachers’ STEM teaching in play, an educational experiment was conducted using the Conceptual PlayWorld model as a pedagogical intervention. The Conceptual PlayWorld, as a new pedagogical approach, creates imaginary situation for teachers to teach STEM within play. Four teachers and 62 children with full consent from two classrooms, class A (age 4–5 years, mean 4.5 years old) and class C (age group 4-5, mean: 4.65 years old), participated the study. Total 92.47 hours of digital video data focusing on teachers’ STEM teaching practice within play (81.56 hours), collective planning (7.88 hours), and teachers’ interview (3.03 hours) were documented in the study. To interpret teachers’ STEM teaching in play, the cultural-historical concept of crisis is used to unfold teachers’ STEM teaching process. The findings suggest that engaging in the Conceptual PlayWorld as a play partner and identifying STEM concepts to teach are the two main crises that teachers are experiencing. Moreover, the educational experiment created conditions for the shift of teachers’ STEM teaching in play within a short period of time. It is through the collaborative work between participants and researchers that the crises were oriented to facilitate the shift of teachers’ STEM teaching. Despite of the short period of intervention, this study showcases a potential way to support Chinese kindergarten teachers’ STEM teaching development.

**Yuejiu WANG**  
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**Time:** 1:30pm–2:00pm
Abstract: Early childhood educators’ use of research and evidence: what do we know?

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Abstract: My research study is focused on how Australian early childhood teachers use research and evidence in their practice. There is growing recognition in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) internationally that the use of evidence, including research evidence, can provide a pathway to achieving improved quality of teaching practice and improved learning outcomes for children. Within Australia, however, while there have been advances in understanding how school-based educators use research and evidence, less is known about how early childhood educators use research and evidence. Developing an understanding of the use of research and evidence in ECEC is important as the nature of the workplace and policy and practice expectations differ from that of the school sector. With this in mind, this presentation will share the findings from a scoping review, which explored the question: How does the current research literature describe early childhood educators' use of research and evidence? Using a systematic approach, the scoping review drew from the international literature across a twenty-year span (2001-2021) and identified 46 relevant studies. The aim was to provide an overview of the literature available, the concepts and definitions it contains, and the key characteristics and factors relating to the use of evidence in ECEC that it highlights. The analysis of the 46 included studies showed that the literature on this topic is narrow in scope, with a heavy dominance of studies undertaken within the US. Overall, the review found very few studies on the use of research evidence in ECEC, and on ECEC teachers’ experiences of using research and evidence. The presentation will provide insights into the kinds of issues that have been investigated, the kinds of issues that have not been studied, and how these findings will inform my own doctoral research going forward.

Keywords: ECEC, educators, evidence use, research use.

Biography: I am a PhD candidate and research assistant in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. I am also an early childhood education trainer, primary school teacher and casual teaching associate. My doctoral study focuses on understanding early childhood educators’ use of research and evidence to support quality teaching practices.
Abstract: There is a recognized need for valuing children’s social-emotional development from early years to educate the ‘whole child,’ who can respond to both the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. A growing body of evidence suggests that SEL can help individuals develop a variety of critical qualities and skills, such as self-regulation, persistence, social skills, and problem-solving skills, contributing to a harmonious community and society. However, little is known about the teachers’ implementation of SEL in the Chinese preschool context. Therefore, this study explores Chinese teachers’ current teaching practices (for 4-5 years old) for improving children’s SEL outcomes. Three Chinese preschool educators from a public kindergarten participated in semi-structured interviews and revealed their practices for children’s SEL. Thematic analysis and cultural-historical theory were used to examine the data. The findings revealed that purposeful storytelling and role playing were two practices that were frequently used by participants. Especially, participants stressed the importance of support from more socially competent peers during play. As the frequency of delivering SEL in the class was largely dependent on the teacher, it highlights the need to raise all teachers’ awareness of SEL and improve their teaching quality through SEL-specific guidelines, training, and programs. This study offers some insights into SEL implementation from Chinese teachers’ perspectives and further study could be conducted to investigate how institutional support helps teachers to deliver SEL more confidently in the Chinese context.

Keywords: social-emotional learning, preschool education, teaching practices, cultural-historical theory.

Biography: Jianing Liu received her bachelor’s degree in Early Years and Primary Education and enrolled in Graduate Certificate of Educational Research from Monash University. Her research interests include cultural-historical theory of child development and play-based learning and pedagogy.
by new materialist theoretical concepts such as diffraction, intra-action, and entanglement. This practice guided the researcher to exercise multiple possibilities in understanding key research concepts such as immigration, diversity, parental values, belonging, immigrants' hopes and fears, as well as methodological experiences in listening and intentionality. Eventually the study turned out to distinguish the stereotypes about Iranian immigrants, listen to their hopes, and explore several practices in listening. Throughout the study, the researcher practiced, experimented, and implemented curious practice in its various facets while exploring the theoretical framework, methodology, data, and analysis. The process enabled the researcher to experience the entanglements between the above research steps and acknowledge the intra-relatedness of the research process. In answering the evolving needs of the Australian early childhood community, this presentation intends to explore this research experience and provide examples of the methodological possibilities a post-qualitative inquiry can offer for early childhood education research.

**Keywords:** Post-qualitative research, immigration, curious practice, new-materialism, early childhood education

**Biography:** Before coming to Australia in 2015, Hanif worked as an early childhood educator and a primary school teacher for ten years in Iran. Since 2016 he has been doing a part-time Ph.D. in early childhood education at Monash University and working as a parenting facilitator and program designer at the Australian Childhood Foundation.

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**Abstract:**

**WELLBEING IN EDUCATION**

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**Young People’s Perspectives and Experiences of Mental Health Literacy and Action in Australian Schools: A Qualitative Study**

Alexandra MARINUCCI

Monash University

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**Abstract:** One in seven young people experience a mental health disorder at some stage across their adolescent development. Schools need to include mental health education, or mental health literacy (MHL) to address youth mental health in an accessible environment. MHL is understanding how to obtain and maintain good mental health, understanding mental disorders and their treatments, decreasing stigma related to mental disorders and enhancing help-seeking efficacy. Engaging youth as partners in research can play a crucial role in aligning preventative mental health approaches with their needs. MHL skills should be taught before the need for them arises and neglecting youth voice in research risks misinterpretation of their needs and misguided intervention approaches. This study aimed to understand what young people want to learn about related to mental health literacy. Several online group discussions were conducted with 13 participants aged 11 to 18 years old. Eight themes were generated from these discussions: (1) limited mental health education and understanding in school, (2) struggle to help seek, (3) negative mental health attitudes, (4) desired content about mental health education, (5) understanding of mental health, (6) school as a place for support, (7) suggestions for mental health education, and (8) ways for schools to be responsive to youth needs. All of the participants in this study expressed concerns about the lack of school-based mental health education and the lack of adequate mental health literacy. It is evident that changes are needed in schools to address the mental health needs of young people.
Keywords: mental health literacy, young people, perspectives, experiences, education.

Biography: Alexandra is a PhD Candidate, Research Assistant and Teaching Associate in the School of Educational Psychology and Counselling at Monash University. Alexandra is also a registered psychologist, currently practicing in a school setting with children. Alexandra’s research focuses on mental health literacy and wellbeing for young people within school settings.

Abstract: Parenting experiences in the context of mental illness: A qualitative comparison between Chinese mothers and fathers

Lingling CHEN
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Abstract: Hidden Abstract

Biography: Lingling Chen is a PhD candidate from the Faculty of Education, Monash University. Her research interests are family mental health and parenting. In her PhD research, she investigated the parenting experiences of Chinese parents who have a mental illness, using a qualitative approach.

Abstract: ‘Rowing a boat upstream’: An autoethnographic exploration of student wellbeing

Weiqi JIANG
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Abstract: Studies of student wellbeing show the importance of psychological wellbeing in students’ learning in schools. However, the understanding of how social wellbeing influences psychological wellbeing is underdeveloped. This autoethnographic study examines the mutual influence between psychological wellbeing and social wellbeing. It aims to provide an insider’s account of a doctoral student’s critical moments and document her interpretation of social and psychological perspectives of those moments. The results of this study show the undervalued impact of social equality, equity, and justice on students’ learning and feeling. The research results represent a further step towards developing a less anxious, more considerate, and more respectful educational environment for students’ learning and thriving.

Keywords: Autoethnography, educational equity, psychological wellbeing, social wellbeing, student wellbeing.

Biography: Weiqi Jiang is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. Her research interests include sociology of education, doctoral students' academic identity, and education policy.
Abstract: My research investigated the place of educational programs in aged care facilities through the implementation of a program of regular piano lessons for residents. Using a qualitative case study methodology, the research explored aged care residents’ experiences in learning to play piano. Since the aged care homes are unlikely places for formal learning and since older adults, especially in residential care, are not considered likely candidates for learning, this research opens the door for innovative and transformative thinking about where and to whom educational programs can be delivered. By addressing the educational needs of residents in aged care facilities, this research fills the gap in literature. The research took place in two of Melbourne’s residential aged care facilities engaging two residents (a nonagenarian female and an octogenarian male), to participate in a 12-months weekly individual piano lessons. The data was collected through video recording of lessons, observations, interviews, emails and reflective journal. Data analysis was done using Nvivo and hard copy analysis with identifications of themes. The case studies revealed that passion for music was a major driver in participants’ motivation to engage in a long-term piano lessons program. This participation led to experiences of positive emotions, positive attitude, successes and challenges, exercise of control, maintaining and building new relationships, improved self-confidence through autonomy and independent skills development, and discovering new identities through finding a new purpose and new roles in life. Speaking through participants’ voices,

Keywords: Positive ageing, Music education, Passion, Wellbeing, Quality of life.

Biography: Ellina Zipman is a PhD research candidate at Monash University Faculty of Education. She is a music educator and aged care specialist, interested in positive ageing through instrumental music learning.
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