

## **PAPER ABSTRACTS (In alphabetical order)**

### **EFL materials in public schools' classroom in Saudi Arabia: An investigation of the extent to which teachers engage in materials/textbooks development in order to design learning experiences to meet the needs of their students as an indicator of teacher autonomy.**

*Sultan Albedaiwi, University of Glasgow*

This study aims to investigate the ways in which teachers use, design and examine their teaching materials, and use the prescribed textbook as an indicator of the extent to which they feel able to respond to the needs of the learners in their classrooms as an indicator of a move towards exercising autonomy. It also aims at exploring the ways they carry out their activities inside classrooms and how such activities could be influenced by the ministry of education rules, the provided teaching materials and textbooks. The study explores the different responses of the teachers to the prescribed textbook and the extent to which they engaged in materials development to adapt or supplement what was provided. It also outlines how through use, design and evaluation of teaching materials teachers are able to enhance their professionalism.

Data was collected through triangulation of policy analysis, classroom observation and interviews of six male EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in Saudi public schools and analysed using Narrative and Grounded theory approaches. There was a clear relationship found between a teacher's sense of autonomy and his/her teaching qualifications. The study also identified a number of new constraints on autonomy, constraints specific to the context, and stemming from both institutional factors and personal factors from the teachers themselves. Ways to effectively reconcile these constraints are suggested.

The hybrid approach adopted for this study proved useful in uncovering much rich information about teachers, teaching materials and teacher autonomy, and a number of ideas were found to accord across the data. However, a number of contradictions in the data remain. It is clear that in some instances, whilst teachers perceive themselves to be autonomous beings in control of their teaching and learning, their realworld behaviour in the observation was not entirely consistent with such a perception.

Finally, the study concludes that more research is needed into the way that teachers can develop autonomy through the use, design and evaluation of their teaching materials and engagement in materials development. Such further study would shed light on the various constraints that inhibit autonomy (both institutional and personal), for which mediating solutions could be found, and all with the aim of promoting and developing teachers' levels of autonomy and their role as materials developers.

### **International experience for engaged global citizens in education**

*Phil Bamber, Liverpool Hope University*

This paper reports upon a Higher Education Academy Departmental Development Grant delivered by the BA Education team at Liverpool Hope University from January 2012 until April 2013. The aim of this project was to produce a workable framework for university

teaching staff to design a curriculum that enables students to develop a rich and complex understanding of what it means to be an 'Engaged Global Citizen' and test it out in a series of different learning contexts. The intention was to explicitly avoid producing a set of instrumental knowledge, skills and attributes but instead place values and dispositions (such as openness to difference, diversity, the other, self-respect, commitment to change and toleration of uncertainty and ambiguity) at the heart of the whole learning process. Crucially the project team has sought to demonstrate how these values can be nurtured and developed through different types of learning experience.

By working intensively with undergraduates and tutors in an Education Studies programme at Liverpool Hope University, the project has been undertaken in four distinct but inter-related phases. The result has been a strategy that can be adapted to fit undergraduate programmes not only in Education Studies but in related subjects where an international dimension is integral. The essential features of our project have been:

- curriculum interventions informed by student voice / experience
- a diversity of disciplinary and cultural backgrounds of tutors
- a reflexive approach by tutors involving examining their own personal beliefs and values
- flexibility in development of actions
- a rigorous evidence- based approach
- a focus on transformative learning
- a partnership with external organisations with expertise in global education
- use of social media and networking

The single most important outcome of the project has been to produce a pedagogically sound framework based on concepts of transformational learning, which transcends some previous homogenised approaches which can be instrumental and gloss over ambiguity and differentiation. This will be presented here in simple diagrammatic form where the intention has been to provide a heuristic device that teachers can use and/or revise to put their own contextual details into that will fit with their learning contexts and their students' needs.

## **Making policy in Scottish education: Can we do it differently?**

*Anna Beck, University of Glasgow*

This paper focuses on the processes by which policy is made and implemented in Scotland, using the implementation of 'Teaching Scotland's Future' (Donaldson, 2011) as a case study. In particular, it identifies powerful actors in the spaces of policy mediation and implementation, and explores the many ways in which a policy agenda can become silenced, distorted or strengthened as it is translated by a policy network.

In short, 'Teaching Scotland's Future' is a policy text that contains fifty recommendations for the improvement of teacher education in its entirety. Education policy-making in Scotland is often described as 'consultative' and 'participative' (Menter & Hulmes, 2008), and is said to reflect some of the values commonly associated with Scottish education, such as meritocracy, democracy and egalitarianism (Raffe, 2004). However, it has been suggested that a certain degree of mythology may surround such claims (McPherson & Raab, 1988).

The current implementation of 'Teaching Scotland's Future' provides an interesting opportunity to explore this further. Over the last three years, two partnership groups have been established by the Scottish Government to discuss and plan the implementation of these recommendations: the National Partnership Group (NPG) and the National Implementation Board (NIB). Both groups can be considered as policy networks that provide a space for the mediation of policy between actors from a number of bodies in Scottish education (Sorenson & Torfing, 2008).

This paper draws on data from thirty semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the NPG and NIB and the analysis of working policy documents. Concepts from theories of democratic network governance (Sorenson & Torfing, 2008) and techniques from policy network analysis (Ball & Junemann, 2012) have been used to conceptualise the work of the NPG and NIB, while elements of Actor-Network Theory (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010; Latour, 2005) have been employed for the mapping of actors' interests and agendas.

Although the NPG and NIB appear to act as spaces in which those involved in Scottish education can input to the policy process, initial findings have shown that there are other networks in which the 'real' policy-making takes place. We have successfully traced the way in which policy actors have used their positions within these networks to limit, distort and drive forwards specific parts of the policy agenda. In doing so we have identified a number of interests and political agendas at work, and revealed an unbalanced distribution of power within these formal 'partnership' groups.

## **Short educational ICT-interventions to increase knowledge and behaviour in media literacy**

*Per Bergamin, Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences*

Media literacy is a critical issue when learning within technology enhanced learning environments (Buckingham, 2013; Hobbs & Jensen, 2009; Simon, Kosnik, Rowsell, & Williamson, 2013). It is still debated controversial how to integrate it in curricula. Within our research we have noticed, that also short interventions, if they are interesting enough for learners, have positive effects on their media literacy. In this context we have evaluated the media courses offered to secondary students by a Swiss telecom provider to improve their media skills. Five modules teaching about "The fascination of digital media", "Law on the Internet", "Social Networks", "Surfing safely", and "Cyber mobbing" were investigated.

Each module consists of 45 minutes teaching by an external specialist. To measure media literacy we used three factors of the competence model of (Gnahs, 2010): Knowledge, Motivation (Interest) and Skills. The objective of the survey was to measure the efficacy of these short interventions and to observe if knowledge and desired behaviour is still elevated after one month. A questionnaire was built up, testing some crucial knowledge of the content and skills that were of five modules and to measure the above mentioned factors. The course group (n=175) and the control group (n=284) filled in the questionnaire at two points of measurement (before and a month after the media courses). The students are from 31 classes in 16 school of five Swiss Cantons. The mean age is about 14 years. In the course group 55% are males, in the control group 47%. We calculated indexes for each module and a general index. The general index increased significantly in the course group compared to the control group. The effect can be estimated as moderate. The values of the single modules increased also in a moderate range with the exception of the module "Law on the Internet" with a high

effect. Another interesting outcome is, that students with a low index before the course got the highest increase. Gender and grade showed no influence on the results. This evaluation shows, that it is possible to improve media skills of secondary school students also with short educational interventions. That is an amazing and promising result. A repetition of the one month effects and a evaluation of the long-term effects of the media courses over four to six months is under progress.

## **Innovating the field of education studies: Knowledge technologies as assemblages**

*David Blundell, Jessie Bustillos Morales, Sandra Abegglen, London Metropolitan University*

The present paper reflects on professional practice and innovations in the context of a first year (Level 4) module - Culture, Curriculum and Technics - offered as part of the BA Education Studies at London Metropolitan University (UK). The module explores a number of important questions about the relationship between technology, knowledge and society and begins to think about how our ideas about each of these contribute to an understanding of what education means. The module also explores what contribution education, knowledge and technology might make to the sustainability of the human era known as the anthropocene. With these highly theoretical (and also philosophical) questions the module moves beyond the scope of what is normally covered in a first year undergraduate module. It seems therefore important to reflect on broader questions, such as, what a knowledge technology is and how this presents a new epistemic position about education. Through the content of the module and the theoretical notion of 'assemblages' from Deleuze and Guattari, the present paper will argue that the knowledge technologies themselves present an 'assemblage' which extend our understandings of the world and how we come to learn about the world. This opens up new possibilities and innovative practices for teaching and learning within Education Studies as a specific field of study that may have the potential to widen our understanding of the discipline.

## **The use of debates as a teaching strategy in increasing students' critical thinking and collaborative learning skills in Higher Education**

*Zeta Brown, University of Wolverhampton*

This paper will explore the use of debates as a teaching strategy that has the potential to heighten students' critical thinking and collaborative learning. Students undertaking a Childhood studies degree had weekly debates that linked media represented topics to theoretical content from the module. This module covered a range of theoretical and practical perspectives in relation to the child, family and society. Therefore, weekly debates included the changing nature of childhood, the diversity of family relationships, childhood obesity and the differing ways in which children are socialised. The research focused on students' perspectives on the use of debates as a teaching strategy in this module. The data was collected using a card-sort and structured interview questions. This research found students held positive perspectives on its use to further critical thinking and presentation skills in session. However, this research found that students sought more structure and placed importance on all students contributing for learning to be extended further. This paper will reflect upon the use of debates in this module and critically consider how the use of debates

could have been adapted to better meet the needs of these students and further enhance critical thinking and collaborative learning.

## **Teacher agency and education policy change – an exploration of the impact of teacher involvement in successful education policy change using the context of teacher education and professional learning**

*Paul Campbell, University of Strathclyde*

Involvement of teachers at the early stages of education policy change processes has been proven to promote a greater sense of engagement and willingness to work with and promote the success of a policy change (Baumfield, et al, 2011). The arguably predominant absence of teachers in this process however results in numerous agencies consulting on and redeveloping policy in an attempt to guide teacher's practice in a way that will make the change intended, but result in a lack of impact and policy changes that are made to merge with current practice and cause minimal disruption.

Flawed power structures in the policy making process has implications for the involvement and impact of teachers in the reform or change process and thus the engagement in the implementation and evaluation process based on pre-determined policy goals and importantly, the perception and reality of policy success (McConnell, 2010).

My study aims to establish if teachers were involved to a greater degree in the early phase of the formulation of the policy change agenda rather than simply the implementation, would this result in successful and sustainable policy change that ultimately has high positive impact for learners across the education system?

I aim to answer:

- How is the role of the teacher in planning for and executing policy change in teacher education and professional learning currently conceptualised in the literature?
- What role do teachers view themselves as having in the policy change agenda, implementation and evaluation stages?
- What role do teachers believe they should have in the policy change process?
- What are the tensions between how teachers are currently involved in the policy change process and what the role they believe they should have?

This study aims to acquire an understanding of the teacher's role in and beliefs about policy making and develop a model of teacher engagement in policy conception, development and implementation based on the analysis of the data collected. Data will be obtained from semi structured interviews, as well as attitude scales used to analyse the perceptions of teachers as well as key figures within the policy making field in Scottish education (Mills, 2011; Cohen, et al, 2011).

Early results indicate that greater involvement of teachers in decision-making and policy development is the strongest predictor of both teachers' sense of efficacy and professional fulfilment. Teachers' willingness to participate in different policy-making process varies depending on the context or subject matter (Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013; Smylie, 1992).

## **Academic habitus, identity and the challenge of digital scholarship**

*Cristina Costa, University of Strathclyde*

Recent developments on digital scholarship point out that academic practices supported by online technologies may not only be transformed through the obvious process of digitisation, but also, and above all, renovated through distributed knowledge networks that digital technology enable and the practices of openness that such networks develop (Weller, 2011; Costa, 2014). Yet, this apparent freedom for individuals to re-invent the logic of academic practice comes at a price, as it tends to clash with the conventions of a rather conservative academic world (Costa, in press).

Through a narrative inquiry approach, this paper explores how academic researchers engaged in digital scholarship practices perceive the effects of their activity on their professional identity and reputation. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus is used both as a theoretical construct and method to capture and understand the professional trajectories of the research participants and the significance of their digital practices on their perceived academic identity. The result is a sense of disjointed habitus. In light of the findings, this chapter will illustrate how online experiences can question traditional academic habitus with the practices research participants develop online.

## **Equality, education and elephants**

*Sue Davies, University of Wales Trinity Saint David*

The Salamanca Statement (1994) endorsed the idea of inclusive education, contending that mainstream schools with an inclusive culture are 'the most effective means of .....building an inclusive society and achieving education for all'. Raising the achievement of all learners by identifying and breaking down barriers to learning is a difficult challenge, particularly when education systems are struggling to collaborate rather than compete, to develop a consistency rather than uniformity of approach, and to raise and maintain quality standards in relation to outcomes for pupils. This paper looks at current practice in systems both in the UK and across Europe, and the major challenge facing those systems in identifying barriers, drivers and levers for change, and creating a sustainable framework for inclusive education.

## **Audio feedback revisited: A pastoral dimension?**

*Steve Dixon, Newman University*

Audio feedback can be seen as the process by which tutors digitally record assignment feedback as an mp3 file, which is then either integrated or sent back with the assignment to the student. Set within wider discourses of an increased use of blended learning approaches catering for the needs of a new generation of digital learners, previous studies have highlighted how it has the potential to save academics' time, particularly during periods of heavy marking loads, as well as being a medium preferred by students.

However such studies have predominantly utilised a quantitative approach, with little research focused on the potential emotional impact of audio feedback, or indeed, how its use could affect student understanding of the feedback process. These, it is argued, are of crucial importance in understanding the impact of feedback, particularly when set in the wider

national context, where NSS survey results consistently show lower satisfaction scores for assessment and feedback than for other aspects of students' learning experience. This paper will report on the findings of both an extensive literature review and a small-scale pilot study, utilising interviews with first year Education Studies students, exploring their perceptions on the use of audio feedback, and its potential for facilitating an emotional and pastoral connection with marking tutors. The implications for first year undergraduates' understanding of the process of feedback will also be explored, as well as how the use of audio feedback "fits" in first year undergraduates' cultural and digital milieu. Finally, concepts of timeliness will also be discussed – both in the use of audio feedback to reduce marking turnaround times, as well as its pastoral potential, and whether students perceive its use may be effective at particular points within their degree course.

## **Paradigms of education under the network society**

*Robert Doherty, University of Glasgow*

This paper is argumentative in the sense that it supports a proposition, reflecting broader trends in the literature, while looking to anticipate its outworking in shaping the future. Drawing on Castell's network theory, and making use of an analysis framed by institutional activity mapping and forms of critical discourse analysis, the paper explores the idea of global convergence, homogenisation and forms of isomorphism across institutional objectives in education. Forms of policy control such as dissemination, harmonisation, standardisation and agenda setting have accelerated and become more pervasive or possible in the networked society. Stripped to its essentials this paper concludes that no foreseeable termination or significant discontinuity can be anticipated in the short, medium and perhaps long-term future. In conceptualising the dominant discourse of education as programmed by the interplay of networks, their coordination and forms of network power, public education looks destined to become narrower and continuously refined in the service of the new capitalism.

## **Education as fictitious commodity: The strange non-death of ICT**

*Graham Downes and Peter Jones, Bath Spa University*

It is a common-place in Education Studies that education is increasingly subject to processes of marketization and commodification. This paper seeks to specify the nature of education as a commodity and explain how and why it both resists commodification and takes on, dialectically, a particular commodity form. Drawing on Marxist accounts of the commodity, neo-Marxist reappraisals of culture as commodity and Polanyian perspectives on fictitious commodities, the paper argues that current understandings of marketization produce a reification of education as fetishized educational commodity which obscures the social relations and production of value at moments of both discourse and practice.

This argument is then used to explore the specific example of how discourses and practices of ICT produce particular commodity forms of education in the fictitious education market of school choice.

## **Web 2.0 to Policy 2.0: Co-creation of policy in post-compulsory education**

*Nigel Ecclesfield, Jisc*

In 2002 O'Reilly sketched out the topography of emerging Web 2.0 technologies in a meme map that set out the key affordances of those technologies. The authors have been engaged with public sector post-compulsory education and exploring the impact of technology on the management and operations of providers in the post-school sectors and the development of local and national policies to address contemporary educational concerns. It is our contention that current debates on the use and influence of digital technologies plays up the potential of those technologies to change the nature of post-compulsory education e.g. MOOCs with their focus on informational content and the delivery technologies, rather than the institutional and policy context in which the content and technology is applied.

This focus on technology, without a consideration of the context in which it is used, has been described by Winner 2010 as "tools without handles" and by Morozov 2013 as "cyber-utopianism". This paper sets out a rationale for organisational and personal engagement in the formulation of policy, building on our work on an organisational architecture of participation Garnett & Ecclesfield (2008), to address those concerns and incorporate the authors more recent work (2013, 2014) on the nature of post-compulsory education, open scholarship, professional practice and organisational development.

The paper explores how Web 2.0 technologies can be developed in Post Compulsory Education organisational contexts to foster engagement and support collaboration by participants and so enable providers and their constituencies to become key determiners of the content and direction of policy instead of the policy "wonks" (Morozov 2013) or audit agencies such as inspectorates and funding agencies with their centralising agendas. We characterise this dialogical governance approach as Policy 2.0 and will outline how this can be supported by collaborative technologies, and the use of conceptual tools such as the "Policy Forest" to engage specific audiences in education with a range of perspectives and agendas within a given policy context.

Recent government and EU policy has changed the nature of post-compulsory education in the UK without significant input by learners, practitioners or provider organisations into the policy formation, notwithstanding recent initiatives such as FELTAG the English Ministerial advisory group. Policy 2.0 has evolved from earlier projects like the Xchange policy conferences by engaging learners and the wider community into local initiatives (e.g. "MOSI-ALONG" Manchester) and draws on these experiences to set out a model for the co-creation of policy.

### **The case for a new dimension of teachers' professional knowledge: The impact of policy initiatives on the practice and perception of brain based methodology**

*Jacqui Elton, University of Hull*

This research reports on the findings of a doctoral case study based in a local authority (LA) in northern England into the practices and perceptions of brain based methodology by secondary educators. Although the nascent academic field continues to grapple with many of

the arguments that will ultimately define the discipline of educational neuroscience, there are concerns about the prevalence (or the misappropriation) of the use of quasi neuroscience taking place within education (Hruby, 2011; Ritchie, Chudler et al, 2012). To distinguish it from the genuine, if extremely limited educational applications of neuroscience, educational methodology based on unsafe and unsound brain science continues to be classified as “brain based”. Here it is argued that “brain based” is essentially a tautological description of learning originally mooted by “edu-prenuers” who proposed that the adoption of a brain compatible teaching methodology would lead to the preferential state of faster, deeper and more expansive learning.

Introduced in the mid-1990s, mainly under the evocative label of Accelerated Learning, this ‘brain based’ methodology appeared to gain early popular traction amongst educators. In the LA in question, pressures across the secondary education phase prompted an authority wide implementation of a teacher professional development programme based on the pedagogical tenet of Accelerated Learning. Consequently an entire cohort of secondary teachers were thus not only formally exposed to, but were actively encouraged to integrate brain based methodology into their existing pedagogical framework to improve examination results across the LA.

The little research available on the use and perceptions of brain based methodology appears to suggest it remains popular and practiced. This research seeks to discover if this is the case and more specifically what factors can account either for the continued popular application or demise of brain based methodology. Methodologically challenging due to local socio demographics, this study captures the qualitative perceptions of key educators in the LA on the concept of brain based learning and compares this to classroom practice. Data collection methods encompass non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentary analysis.

The results question whether brain based methodology was ever substantially practised, and suggest that its current limited practice can be accounted for by performativity, efficacy and pedagogical concerns. Following on from dominant extant models (Shulman,1987: Banks, Leach and Moon, 1999) the key implication of this research is that there is a case for a new dimension of teacher professional knowledge based on neuroscience, that of neuroscientific pedagogical knowledge.

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## **Neocolonial tensions and conflicts on identity of indigenous students attending international schools in Nigeria**

*Nkechi Emenike, University of Hull*

This paper examines the conflicting narratives of identity of indigenous students attending international schools in Nigeria and argues that international schools promote neo-colonialism, causing indigenous students to consider themselves as something more superior to more traditional Nigerian people in terms of culture and intellect.

Neo-colonialism takes the form of neo-liberal globalisation as a tool for propagating and maintaining western imperialism in developing countries. International education is seen as agency for the promotion of this form of globalisation. The goal of providing education with international mindedness is commonly stated in the mission statements of international schools. However, they are faced with the dilemma of meeting the stated aims of internationalism and globalist demands in their practice at the same time.

These demands entail the transmission of a globally dominant western culture through the use of the curricula, ICT and pedagogies. Furthermore, the schools are managed through organisational structures that reflect the culture and values of their originating countries and affiliations. The local culture is relegated to institutional marginalization in the form of the superficial inclusion in the formal curriculum and annual celebrations of national cultures.

Findings from questionnaires, vignettes and interviews from 5 international schools in Nigeria showed that student identity conflicts are underpinned by an ideology struggle between individualism promoted by the international schools and communitarianism which is the ideology of their indigenous community. The paper concludes by suggesting that neo-colonial structures, which are embedded in international education, devalue the local culture and contribute to the identity conflicts experienced by indigenous students.

## **Student engagement through academic writing: Process reflections of a community of enquiry**

*Diahann Gallard, Angela Daly, Elizabeth Smears, Angela Garden, Lewis Parry, Leanne Mills, Liverpool John Moores University*

Student engagement is a broad term that is used in HE to convey the ways that students are involved, participate and are represented. Engagement through academic writing, leading to the co-production of a peer-reviewed student journal 'Spark', has been the focus of engagement with students from the Education Studies and Early Childhood Studies programmes in the Faculty of Education, Health and Community at LJMU. This student journal publication was intended to showcase and celebrate high quality academic writing produced by students, however, we have also found it an opportunity to realise and engage student-researcher aspirations among undergraduates. 'Spark' evolved within a community of enquiry framework and has a team approach to the editing and publication processes. The 'editorial team' of Spark, comprised of students and staff, have worked together to organically restructure the editorial process of the journal. Primarily, the aim was to enable students to see themselves as researchers, 'producers of knowledge' (Neary, 2009) and participants in academic and scholarly activity.

Later, revisions to the process further allowed representational and democratic voice of students to emerge, as student-researchers engaged in authentic academic practices, particularly in relation to writing and editorial decision making. This presentation will provide an overview of the process, and will include the reflections and perspective of the students and staff who have been part of the editorial team. It will give consideration to the benefits and limitations of enquiry led methods, solution focussed process and democratic practice within the context of an Education Studies programme. Finally, there will be recommendations made for others to take account of when looking to engage students through their academic writing or in a community of enquiry.

## **Synthetic phonics in English primary schools: Screaming checks, nonsense words and (how do you) say ‘ho ho ho’?**

*Howard Gibson, Bath Spa University*

The politics underpinning the statutory arrival of synthetic phonics in English primaries has enervated many an eminent literacy expert of late. Prof Wray, referring to the Rose Review that led to the 2012 requirement that all primary schools in England must teach it ‘first and fast’, said, ‘Government ministers, and Rose himself, try to dress the report’s recommendations as based on a consensus derived from research. This is actually nonsense... What has actually happened is that pressure groups with axes to grind (and, usually, teaching programmes to sell) have caught the ear of politicians and the Rose Review was never going to be a balanced interpretation of the evidence’ (Wray, 2006; see Hynds, 2007). Prof Clark has reasoned that ‘there is no evidence to support phonics in isolation as the one best method, nor for synthetic phonics as the required approach’ (Clark, 2013). Prof Dombey has argued that the government needs ‘to think about much more than phonics if we are to help our children become effective and committed readers and writers’ (Dombey, 2013). The politics of teaching reading has never been dull.

This paper looks not so much at the broader politico-educational debate, nor the veracity of the numerous claims for a more balanced approach to teaching reading, but at problems associated with the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check (2012) in which pupils are required to sound-out ‘pseudo words’. Leaving aside issues of stress, cost and reporting ‘failure’ to parents, there is evidence to suggest it fails fluent readers who look for meaning in nonsense words by offering ‘storm’ for ‘strom’ or ‘groom’ for ‘proom’ (see Walker et al. 2013; NAHT, 2012). Although a child’s accent is to be accepted (DFE, 2012), it is also problematic in that it still fails to deal with Frank Smith’s ‘ho ho ho’ conundrum (think ‘hot’ ‘hour’ ‘honest’ ‘hoist’) or the pronunciation of a nonsense word like ‘sheb’ (think ‘shed’ ‘sheep’ ‘sheik’ ‘sherbet’), for grapho-phonics complexities still haunt English orthography. There is also emerging evidence to suggest that such a screening test may also have adverse and enduring consequences for the development of pupils’ skills and attitudes to reading that last into adulthood (e.g. Thompson et al., 2009).

## **Listening to our ‘diverse’ students and preparing learning futures to enhance the retention and academic success of all. Reflections on a HEA International Scholarship 2013-2014.**

*Suanne Gibson and Alison Black, Plymouth University*

Against a backdrop of what some perceive as a failed rights agenda for students with ‘disability’, this study began as a quest to find a way forward, to look beyond rights legislation and develop an inclusive pedagogy linked to ‘relationship’. Initially the work looked at questions of ‘disability’ then moved on to engage with ‘intersectionalities’. This resulted in a broadening of focus to encompass a wider scale study providing rich layers of understanding regarding student diversity and university experience. With centres of student stakeholders and facilitators working within university settings in Australia, Europe, New Zealand and the U.S.A. the aim was to include groups of students who, on the basis of self selection, considered they represented diverse components of their university’s student population.

‘Diversity’ was defined as representing self identities linked to disability, ethnicity, sexuality, gender and/or socio-economic background. On average, 300 undergraduate students of education were invited to take part in an online survey at each centre. On the basis of survey responses, a small sample group were selected from each centre to form follow up focus groups where discussion and data analysis took place. The focus groups explored participants’ understandings of ‘diverse learners and/or learning’, ‘inclusive forms of education’ and ‘experiences of inclusive provision at university’.

This paper reflects on some of the project’s findings, considers what participants perceive as important questions for the future of inclusive higher education and engages with what appears to be the important matter of ‘relationship’ in the quest to strengthen diverse learner outcomes. This paper has been written by the project leader with input from project participants- students and centre facilitators.

## **Starting from the discipline: The development of early career academic leadership**

*Steve Harris and Terry Nolan, Newman University*

The concept of Organisational Leadership is undergoing renewed scrutiny by academics and practitioners across all sectors of industry and public life including within the UK Higher Education Sector. This research was commissioned by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) to help remedy an apparent reluctance on the part of ‘early career’ academics (ECAs) to take on leadership roles. Research data points to generally confused perceptions regarding the expanded remit of a modern academic that goes beyond research and teaching, into administrative management, societal engagement and the demands of an increasing neo-liberal agenda for market-oriented approaches to Higher Education.

The initial focus of this research was to determine whether leadership needs differ between academic disciplines. Interviews were conducted with ECAs and HoDs from across three disciplines in three HEIs with respondents drawn from ECAs in each discipline together with acting or past Heads of Department.

Using a phenomenological approach, interview data was collated under thematic headings. Although disparities were observed in the types of work-related objectives set by academics from the Russell Group university compared with those from the other two institutions, no distinctions were apparent in respect to what leadership means or how appropriate competencies may be developed. Moreover, an ambivalent attitude prevails towards the general notion of leadership and its applicability to the academic role. The overriding impression is that leadership somehow ‘happens’, to a greater or lesser degree, during the course of a typical career. Nonetheless, leadership does appear to surface across all academic roles at some point. Its development in individuals also appears to emulate the ‘apprenticeship’ model whereby differing levels of leadership are expected of academics by virtue of their qualifications and experience, even in situations in which they have received no formal training.

In order to add structure and help reduce ambivalence around the issue, Hogan and Kaiser’s (1995) model of generic leadership competencies has been adapted to fit the variety of roles likely to be undertaken by academics. The model’s four ‘Domains’ makes the distinction between ‘Intrapersonal’, ‘Business/Academic’, ‘Interpersonal’ and ‘People-Leadership’ competencies and, in so doing, supports the validity of both the individual-centric and the ‘distributed’, group-centric notions of leadership within the academy.

Finally, provisional suggestions are offered with regards to the identification and development of leadership potential from the initial recruitment stage, together with the developmental methods most appropriate for the task.

## **Assembling a sandwich – one slice or two?: Heads of Departments and creative professionalism**

*Steve Harris, Newman University*

Much has been written by scholars concerning the seemingly insidious nature of neoliberal economic policies, which are implemented to varying degrees within HEIs by systems and approaches that seek to rationalise and measure action and thereby coerce professionals to conform to organisational need. This small-scale research project, utilising an ecological conceptual framework, settles its lens on four Heads of Departments (HoDs), across two schools, within an institution that is currently undergoing significant transformation both to its curriculum and departmental structures. Against this backdrop, investigation focussed firstly on identifying past and contemporary phenomena that were considered significant to co-researchers in terms of enabling them to construct their own conscious HoD identities. Once this had been explored enquiry then focussed on locating the space where co-researchers believed individual agency could be enacted within current organisational structures. Utilising a phenomenological approach findings were explored firstly on an individual basis with co-researchers and then emerging patterns and themes were drawn out.

Initial analysis of findings indicate that all HoDs felt their identities were informed by significant professional others rather than events. Whilst they valued a democratic style of management, co-researchers felt that they are required to operate within a ‘squeezed middle’; one responded that they felt like the filling in a sandwich, where the upper layer of bread (senior management) was less substantial and sustainable than the lower layer (HoD’s team and support staff). Indeed there was a general feeling from the HoDs that senior managers

valued and expected unquestioning compliance from their staff and were less invested in the institution. Despite concerns from HoDs regarding the potential for burn-out and identity meltdown, all acknowledged that the space for individual agency was still significant; although it was now achieved primarily within their own subject area, facilitated by a degree of disengagement with and subversion of organisational dictate at times. This session will present findings and then invite general discussion.

## **Discomfort, avoidance and shame: Teaching and researching dangerous knowledge**

*Joanna Haynes, Heather Knight and colleagues, Plymouth University*

Conflict and controversy are to be expected in university teaching, but higher education pedagogic discourse tends to minimise the trouble and disturbance involved in generating sophisticated knowledge. Knowledge is 'dangerous' or 'troublesome' when a sense of disturbance is experienced; when certain concepts are difficult to communicate or grasp; when the subject matter is politically or morally sensitive; when tutors or students experience or express strong and unexpected emotions; when group dynamics become problematic. This presentation reports on an ongoing pedagogical research project on teaching and researching dangerous knowledge. A key aim is the development of insights and critical responses to the ethical and emotional complexities of working with disturbing knowledge in higher education. A key question is how to work with such complexity so that it becomes educative.

Over the last three years, with funding from Pedagogic Research Institute and Observatory at Plymouth University, a group of staff have been logging tutors' accounts of difficulty or disturbance in their work. In this study tutors were invited to report on occasions when they experienced a sense of danger in their classrooms or in other interactions associated with their university work, such as tutorials or placement visits. The project team developed and used a writing frame to prompt and log dialogues with participants. These were mostly face to face and occasionally electronic dialogues. We have previously presented at BESA conference with second year Education students who became involved in logging and analysing their own experience of disturbance and danger in their university studies. In this presentation we give examples of major themes from emerging from our cross-coded analysis of the collected tutor accounts. These have included risk, discomfort, shame, avoidance and diminishing professionalism.

These themes are discussed in the context of literature on ethical and emotional dimensions of teaching, reviewed and discussed by the research group.

## **Expenditure and displacement impacts of mobile higher education students**

*Kristinn Hermannsson, University of Glasgow*

Students in higher education are highly mobile, they move between countries and within countries to seek education. Typically this involves young adults moving from home to access the higher education institution of choice. From the point of view of an individual student and his family significant amounts have to be spent to pay for term time costs. These are at least partially funded through saving incomes earned locally. These term time expenditures are then spent at the place of study, typically a central city.

This gives rise to a spatial demand-shift effect, where students increase consumption where they study and reduce consumption where they are from. Because of this, the location of HEIs can have an important impact not only upon their host economies but also on the localities where students originate from. This paper analysis the flow of students within Scotland and the resulting spatial shift of consumption expenditures. Student records data are used to determine the origin and term time destination of Scottish HE students and HE students in Scotland, allowing for differences in mode of study and term time accommodation. I analyse the flow of students in and out of Scotland, as well as between central and peripheral regions within Scotland, focusing on the Highlands & Islands (H&I) and its interaction with the Rest of Scotland (ROS). Using survey-based expenditure profiles and a custom built 2-region Input-Output table the economic impact of these student flows are estimated for both sending and receiving regions.

## **The art and silence of anti-racist education**

*Heather Knight, Plymouth University*

Critical race theory argues that there are two dimensions of anti-racist work: economic and cultural. Antiracist practice seeks to address cultural aspects of discrimination through challenging thought processes, attitudes and discourses. Policies have included prohibiting offensive language such as racist name calling to protect certain ethnic groups from abuse. However, when set against a backdrop of media stories presenting immigrants as a threat, such silencing discourses can lead to resistance, blocks and fears that become difficult to communicate. This research explores ways in which arts projects can support education about issues of racial diversity when these prove difficult to articulate. Qualitative data has been collected through interviews with White teachers and students' and observations of participation in diversity arts projects in schools in Devon. Silences and absences permeate the research process and the findings to such an extent that they have become meaningful and purposeful elements of the data. Fears of 'looking racist' (Leonardo 2009) are found to lead to silences, pauses and caution in my research interviews. School students express anxiety about discussing ethnicity in educational contexts, for fear of being called racist. Fear can thwart the dialogue necessary for working through troublesome issues of 'race' and racism. When fears and blocks are left unaddressed, silencing discourses are in danger of pushing racist language and behaviour away from the gaze of the teacher, whilst they continue in corridors, the playground and local community. Students' stories of the presence of racism stand in contrast to teachers' reports of its absence. Initial analysis highlights ways that arts projects can speak across the silences, making visible the absences and providing a medium for engagement.

## **A degree in Education Studies? What can I do with that?**

*Caroline Lewis, University of Wales Trinity Saint David*

'Adapt or die' (BBC, 2010), these prophetic words were delivered by former Education Minister Leighton Andrews to the higher education institutions of Wales in 2010. On one hand this statement can be considered a *fait accompli* in terms of the requirement to physically restructure higher education institutions within the Principality, but on the other can be considered a call for such organizations to re-consider the very nature of their existence and the services they provide.

Bourner (2011) clearly understands this pressure on higher education institutions to reform and reorganize alluding to reduced funding and the need to ensure continued economic viability. While many acknowledge that there is no such thing as a job for life anymore and while this may lamentably be true as any glance at the daily broadsheets will attest to, it does call into question what should a model of higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century look like? What is it that graduates today receive that sets them apart from the others? If we take the view of John Taylor Gatto (2002) who states that ‘*well-schooled people are irrelevant*’ as truth, then we also need to ask of ourselves, what sort of people are relevant? Added to this the increased marketisation of higher education which now visualizes students in more of a consumer role all means that change is needed to ensure the continued viability of the system in a form which delivers the necessary goods both now and in the future.

This is a particularly pertinent issue for Education Studies, a broad-ranging discipline that can potentially lead to any number of professional roles. Across the UK a cursory glance through the prospectuses will highlight the varied range of degrees that exist under the banner of Education Studies or some derivation thereof. The question is then, in such a broad and widely interpreted discipline, is there enough being done to enhance the employability skills of our graduates or do we release them into the murky waters of the current job market without the requisite paddle? What is it that students want from an Education Studies course and how well does such a degree serve them in the current employment market? This paper uses a case study approach to determine current perceptions of Education Studies both from the student and academic perspective to envisage a way forward in a complex and challenging higher education environment.

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## **Enhancing the curriculum: The place of drugs awareness in education studies**

*Caroline Lohmann-Hancock, University of Wales Trinity Saint David*

This paper aims to explore the place that ‘drugs awareness and substance misuse’ workshops have within an Education Studies programme as a way of enhancing curriculum content. Health and wellbeing education is high on the political agenda for the policy makers in England, Scotland and Wales as a way to reduce underachievement in excluded groups including substance misuse (DfES, 2013; Education Scotland, 2013; DfE, 2013). Although not a discrete ‘subject’ in any school curriculum it has been acknowledged that pupils taking drugs are more likely to truant and engage with criminal activities which in turn impacts upon academic achievement and life chances (Ward & Williams, 2014; Johnston *et al*, 2011). Issues of underachievement have been a preoccupation with a range of Education Minister in recent years and a range of interventions have been proposed (Walker & Donaldson, 2010).

One of the questions raised in this paper is whether such content should be included within an Education Studies degree at all. Certainly, although not explicitly cited within the benchmarking document, there is implicit reference to ‘a framework for understanding some aspects of human and social development’ within a ‘diverse range of groups within educational settings’ including ‘health/social care environments’ as well as more formal curriculum delivery (QAA, 2007, pp. 2-3). The delivery of such subjects can be highly emotive and ethically challenging for educators and students alike. Beyond the ethical issues there are also pedagogical challenges of designing content and how to position such workshops within individual modules. Questions need to be asked regarding whether these workshops actually enhance the curriculum or are it just another ‘fashionable’ addition to a theoretically and politically grounded degree. There will also be a consideration of ‘how’ or ‘whether’ students actually use this knowledge in their future careers. Some would suggest that the inclusion of drug awareness and substance misuse workshops merely reflects the post-modern world in which we live where change and risk is endemic for individuals and communities. The key conclusions from this paper are that such workshops do not ‘easily fit into the ‘traditional Education Studies curriculum’, although they are implicit in the current benchmarking document. A final question is whether drugs awareness should be the responsibility of educationalists or left to professionals, such as youth and health workers, who have specific training in this area (Walker & Donaldson, 2010).

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## **Autonomy and the four capacities**

*Alison Mackenzie, University of Glasgow*

The purpose of the Scottish curriculum is encapsulated in the four capacities of a CfE, namely, to create successful learners, effective contributors, responsible citizens and confident individuals. These capacities, along with their associated skills, values and dispositions, all point, it seems, to a highly individualistic conception of the aims and purposes of education (see Biesta, 2008). I wish to question this claim.

While there seems to be little reasoned support for the selection and espousal of these four particular capacities and the values they embody, some justification can be found in A Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Executive, 2004). The reasons advanced for the four capacities are based on the virtues of wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity. Seemingly

an arbitrary selection (Gilles, 2006), these values have been prized in varying degrees by many philosophers such as Aristotle and Rawls, and have underpinned the enduring idea of a liberal education (see Hirst 1972; Nussbaum, 1998).

In this conceptual paper, I will argue that the capacities might be seen as embodying the ideals of a liberal education, more particularly that they may embody the ideals of autonomy, a concept that, in its various guises, has over time shaped philosophical thought about the person. In the liberal philosophical tradition, the separateness of persons is a basic fact for normative thought and action. It is the individual who is to be educated, where education is seen as the ‘deliberate, purposeful activity directed to the development of individuals’ (Hirst, 1972:391). The deeper idea is that, following Seneca (1995), students’ minds should be liberated from habit and tradition, to question the status quo and cherished values. Students should be nurtured to be critical so that they can increasingly take command of their minds, so taking responsibility for their own thought and actions. Autonomy, thus, should be an important aim of education (Dearden, 1972).

Autonomy is not, as has been conceived by poststructuralists and critical theorists, necessarily individualistic, rational and abstract; and autonomous agents are not in danger of being too self-sufficient, removed from meaningful relationships to be participatory and leading members of their communities. Such beings are firmly rooted in the social world of persons, developing their plans, goals and values in social relations with others. Indeed, autonomy is valuable in any field in which we can advance reasons for action. These aspirations are articulated in a CfE.

I will not suggest that the capacities are not unproblematic. Inevitably they are since they embody values deriving from (representatives of) the state or some supposed national narrative about the nation’s values. I am not unaware either of the criticisms that we are educating human capital to be harvested for economic wealth creation. I will acknowledge such issues. I propose that we approach CfE from a different, perhaps now unfamiliar angle, given the predominance of postmodernist and poststructuralist thought in educational discourse, to ask if there is a positive account to be made of a CfE and the four capacities.

## **The cruel world of forced academisation: Senior leadership experiences at Macadamia Primary School**

*Trevor Male, University of Hull*

In October 2012 Macadamia School was placed in Special Measures under the terms of the revised Ofsted School Inspection Framework of September 2012. This reformulated Grade 3 introduced a new category entitled “requiring improvement” which raised the requirement for what is considered to be acceptable performance. From an overall grade of ‘Satisfactory’ in the previous inspection in January, 2011 the school was now judged to be ‘Inadequate’ in three of the four categories. Subsequently it was placed in Special Measures which thus made it prone to the opportunity for the Secretary of State to require it to become an Academy. This option was invoked and this research reports upon the effects of the impact of that judgement and the early stages of the forced academisation process on school leaders.

‘Macadamia’ is a pseudonym used because the school has been subjected to the external application of processes in order to effect and accelerate central government policy and this appears to resonate with the notion of using a sledgehammer to crack a nut. It is a large

mixed gender primary community school in the North of England with a population of 536 pupils aged 3 to 11 years. Following the inspection the Local Authority suspended the governing body and appointed an Interim Executive Board (IEB). No changes were made to the senior leadership team at that time, but the school was partnered with a larger 'successful' local primary school.

The research reported here is drawn from semi-structured interviews with the headteacher, some governors, including the chair, and the attached local authority inspector which produce evidence that demonstrates the negative impact caused by the twin effects of the school being placed in special measures and the enforced academisation process. The principal researcher was a member of the governing body of the school and was present during the initial series of extraordinary governing body meetings convened to consider the implications of the situation arising from the Ofsted report. She was thus in an excellent position to see the impact of the twin processes at first hand, an outcome assessed to be a multiplying rather than added effect. The headteacher subsequently left the school and the final act of the deposed governing body was to approve the preferred sponsor who already has responsibility for many other schools within the local region. By October 2013 the school had full academy status with an interim headteacher.

## **Biology education to promote responsible global citizenship**

*Renato Margiotta, University of Glasgow*

In the United Kingdom and Europe there have been a number of attempts to engage school science with citizenship education (Jenkins, 2006). In addition, the need for responsible global citizenship and sustainable development has recently been emphasized (Johnston, 2011). However, literature reports challenges for developing the link between science and citizenship education from the perspective of science educators (Davies, 2004).

Biology teachers working in the secondary schools of Scotland are now required to consider citizenship issues within their subject teaching because the new Curriculum for Excellence promotes the adoption of integrated and interdisciplinary approach to citizenship education. Research findings show that teachers' beliefs are a decisive component in reforming education and in the implementation of the programs (Pajares, 1992; Bybee, 1993; Handal and Herrington, 2003; Underwood, 2012).

Therefore, this study explored biology teachers' perspectives on dealing with global citizenship education in the context of school biology. The understandings of how biology teachers make choices about curriculum design and pedagogy and how they interpret and mediate biology in their practice as citizenship educators in a period of educational innovation can inform other science curricula in Europe which aim at linking school science with citizenship education.

Twenty biology teachers from twelve different Local Authorities of Scotland participated in semi-structured, in depth interviews. Aim of this study was to identify different ways in which biology teachers experience the phenomenon of educating for global citizenship and how this relates to their interpretations of the links between school science and global citizenship education.

The specific research questions addressed by the study were: how do teachers conceive global citizenship education in their role as biology teachers? How do the different perspectives look like? What aspects of biology are highlighted as fruitful areas for linking to global citizenship?

A phenomenographic analysis of the transcripts has employed to explore emergent patterns in the teachers' conceptions of global citizenship education in the context of biology instructions. Iterative readings of the interview transcripts revealed interrelation between school biology and global citizenship education and differences in the understandings of the biology educators, concerning the nature of teaching global citizenship through science. Findings of this study were categorised in an emergent taxonomy with the following major categories: (A) global social justice context; (B) sustainable development, biosphere and environment conservation; (C) individual development.

## **Post-neoliberal youth policy and its effects on youth service provision: The molar force of policy in youth service assemblage**

*Ian McGimpsey, University of Birmingham*

This paper presents findings from an ESRC-funded research project about youth work practice and subjectivity in the context of youth service policy. I explore the changing nature of policy related to youth services in the continuing aftermath of the financial crisis of 2007/8, and the effects on local service provision.

The research took place between 2010 and 2013, during the greatest upheaval to youth services in over 50 years, and in a wider policy context of austerity, localism and 'open public services' reform. These reforms have dramatically reduced financial flows to youth services, and introduced new policy narratives of 'social investment' accompanied by novel organisational forms, networks, and contractual arrangements that have changed the nature of risk for service providers. I argue this collectively amounts to a distinct phase of 'post-neoliberal' policy making in education and youth services. Meanwhile, 'youth' has changed as economic conditions have accelerated longer-term trends towards greater complexity and attenuation of transitions into adult life.

This paper works with Deleuze & Guattari's notions of assemblage and desiring-production to develop education policy sociological analyses appropriate to the fluidity and mobility of policy and public services at this time. This approach takes seriously the idea of policy as a force that not only enforces categorisations and symbolic territories, but that decodes and deterritorializes in processes that see longinscribed categories of youth service and public and voluntary organisation lose definition. The project consisted of 10 ethnographic case studies undertaken over two years in youth services across England.

This conceptual and empirical basis is used to consider the constitutive force of policy in its interaction with the materiality of local communities, by exploring the productive interconnections of policy discourse, subjects, buildings, localities, and monetary flows.

In this paper I follow the molar lines of policy to argue that contemporary youth service assemblage serves to destabilise characteristic aspects of youth services in the UK. The terms of 'social investment' have driven forms of service evaluation that support 'impact investment', and have created heightened insecurity around youth practitioner employment.

Open-access, community-based provision has become increasingly unthinkable, while project forms of working dominate that rely on deficit categorisations of young people, and that shorten relationships and formalise interactions with young people. Ultimately, I claim that post-neoliberal policy making has further diminished the capacity of youth services to operate politically even as young people suffer growing social and economic injustice.

## **Inclusion/Exclusion: The framing of a policy dilemma**

*Des McNulty, University of Glasgow*

Over the last five years there has been a substantial reduction in the number of school exclusions in Glasgow. This is a result of strong managerial intervention from the Director of Education who has closely monitored the number and length of exclusions, querying exclusion decisions and intervening on a case by case basis, while providing a policy steer which discourages the use of exclusion other than in exceptional circumstances. In the presentation, this policy change will be placed in the context of changes in the leadership and management model in schools, wider policy considerations about the consequences of school exclusion on the current and future behaviour of young people, policy initiatives coming from central government in relation to school exclusion, resistance to limits on the use of exclusion from teachers and their representative bodies and local initiatives to limit exclusion by authority managers. My interest will particularly focus on how school-based educational and disciplinary considerations interact with a wider policy debate and beyond school policy considerations which prevail at local and central government level.

## **Reflections on career transition of a man on moving from specialist policing into Early Childhood Education as an academic**

*Patrick Meehan, Canterbury Christ Church University*

Constructing a professional identity in a male-dominated, traditional occupation such as the police force (Bittner,1974, Bayley 1979, Fielding 1988 & 1994) has been examined by the literature. Literature on career transition in educational organisations focuses on the personal capabilities and skills of the postholder for the demands of the job (such as Nias 1989, Dunning, 1998, Corn 1993, Draper and McMichael 1998, Daresh and Male 2005). However, there is limited research that examines career transitions from male dominated professions into female dominated professions such as the field of early childhood education (Haase, 2008, Timmerman and Schreuder, 2008, Cushman,2009).

Thus, this research project draws upon the philosophical ideas of “habitus” (Bourdieu, 1988, Bourdieu and Passerson 1977/2000) and the concept of “being and becoming” (Delouze and Guattari, 1980) and investigates the dimensions involved in professional males’ career transition from male dominated occupations to the field of early childhood studies. The research objectives of the projects were to examine:

1. The construction of professional and occupational identities (based on Britz,1997, Paoline, 2003) and the reconciliation of the situational self with substantial self (based on the work of Nias,1989)
2. The concepts of working personality (based on Skolnick, 1966) and habitus Bourdieu, 1988, Bourdieu and Passerson 1977/2000).

3. The differences in the constructions of pedagogic practice and knowledge acquisition in former and current occupation in terms of pastoral kindness (Clegg and Rowland, 2010) versus professional authority (Leatherwood and Hey, 2009) through the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1980) on being and becoming.

This research project is based on a longitudinal auto/biographical methodology and used educational biographies to collect data as it aimed to gain an in depth understanding of how one is moving away from one post that holds a professional identity to a new one. This methodology offered the research project a rich narrative that analysis has revealed the plurality and complexity of dimensions during the career transition. The key findings of this project suggest that in constructing a professional identity from a male perspective that moved into a female dominated field, there is a need for greater empathy, kindness and recognition to overcome personal self image and feelings of isolation and inadequacy. It also found that male professionals in early childhood struggle with ontological insecurity due to the stereotypical ideas and “academic press” that western societies have constructed for the role of males and females in the field. It was found that the career transition process has personal, organisational, occupational and cultural dimensions and requires a set of skills to reinvent oneself mentally emotionally and physically.

To conclude it is important to recognise the high levels of self-doubt and prior life experiences of male professionals in early childhood and what implications this includes for curricula and training in the sector. Although there is a vast body of literature and research concerning the role of males as professionals in the field of early childhood, a male moving into the field brings with it a unique set of circumstances relating not only to the occupational expectations or standards but also to the personal and organisational dimensions hence an underpinning danger of homogenization of males in ECS to the aims of the market and government targets.

## **A journey in search of sustainability: ESD in EDS? Phase 2**

*Richard Millican and Tim Morgan, University of Gloucestershire*

This paper aims to share our experience thus far of trying to make our commitment to sustainability, and the fact that it underpins much of what we do in Education Studies, more explicit. We are in phase 2 of a small piece of action enquiry in which we are exploring ways of articulating and conveying that commitment and ensuring that it is overtly embedded throughout the programme.

To help us in this aim we are utilising the UNCECE competencies (see UNECE 2012 Learning for the Future at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/ESD\\_Publications/Competences\\_Publication.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/ESD_Publications/Competences_Publication.pdf)) and have been exploring ways of embedding education for sustainable development principles in Education Studies by revising module learning outcomes and providing opportunity, through the programme assessment process and a portfolio, for students to demonstrate their competence.

The process has thrown up challenges for us as practitioners and is encouraging us to think afresh about what we do and about what ESD means. It is also providing challenges regarding the recording and assessment of these competencies which continues to make the journey an interesting one. Last year at the BESA conference we discussed the first phase and

talked about the first leg of the journey and how we had explored the competencies and mapped their synergies with the existing programme, identifying gaps and finding ways to achieve coverage. This year we've been considering how best to create, record and assess student engagement alongside the programme and how to acknowledge their achievements.

We'd like to share progress thus far and seek thoughts and opinions re what we have done and about our plans for where we go from here.

## **Using electronic portfolios to support the integration of workplace learning and vocational education and training in the Scottish construction industry**

*Douglas Morrison, City of Glasgow College*

In recent years the prevalence of e-portfolio systems in vocational education and training has been on the rise. Initially considered little more than digital repositories, they have become synonymous with the development of meta-cognitive skills and are widely recognised as being effective mechanisms for recording and creating value from workplace learning.

A case study of the existing integration of e-portfolios into a modern apprenticeship program delivered by a Further Education provider is presented, and a coherent approach to future development, design and implementation of learner-centred portfolios is proposed. This qualitative study aims to establish the extent to which e-portfolios can enhance academic and vocational learning experiences and outcomes in the construction industry in Scotland.

Drawing on cultural consensus modelling, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, the study creates a narrative of learner experiences and employer expectations of e-portfolios. In particular, the key challenges of communication, collaboration and consistent training opportunities are discussed. The FEAT model (functional, educational, administrative and technical) is adopted to frame the common themes emerging from the research. The research will be of particular value to further education institutions, student groups, awarding bodies and training and funding agencies.

Three key research questions are posed:

1. What are the conceptual understandings of implementing e-portfolios in vocational education and training within the research community?
2. How effectively are (paper-based) portfolio systems currently used to support the integration of workplace learning and college based learning in the Scottish stonemasonry and conservation industry?
3. What are the perceptions of key stakeholders in the industry towards developing a robust e-portfolio framework supporting the training of modern apprentices in Scotland?

Early results suggest that existing mechanisms for integrating workplace and college-based training are ineffective. Common themes emerging from the research include inconsistent training opportunities for apprentices working with a diverse range of employers, insufficient opportunities to engage in critical thinking and problem solving in the workplace, lack of communication between key stakeholders in the apprenticeship training community and a general willingness to explore the integration of learner-centred e-portfolios into the existing curriculum.

This research is being carried out as part of Masters of Education Programme at the University of Strathclyde.

## **School exclusions: What role for public social partnerships?**

*Mark Murphy, University of Glasgow*

A growing presence in academic literature is research on partnerships, a large subsection of which is dedicated to research on the benefits or otherwise of *local* partnerships. This is not surprising, as partnerships and other forms of public participation in decision-making have become central to policy-making in the UK. Not only that, partnership-based models of working have become an increasingly popular way of delivering public services. This upward trend is not just confined to the UK: international research shows that there is a proliferation of social partnerships in public policy and service delivery. This is certainly the case in the broader European sphere, where partnerships have become an institutionalized part of the urban policy landscape.

But what do we mean by partnership working? And just as importantly, is such a form of working an effective alternative to more ‘traditional’ forms of service delivery? These are two of the core questions governing an ongoing evaluation of a Scottish-based partnership project designed to reduce levels of school exclusion. Based on findings from the interim report for the study, the evaluation suggests that achieving the right balance between organisational and inter-personal effectiveness, aligned with a shared set of core values and principles, is a useful benchmark in developing effective initiatives for service delivery in the field of school exclusions. At the same time, the local and dynamic nature of such initiatives means that so much depends on what takes place at the ‘ground-level’ of service delivery.

The paper discusses these findings in the context of a growing body of literature that emphasises the limits of partnership working. Previous research suggests that its merits vary and consensus over ‘best practice’ is fragile at best. Like other forms of working, partnerships do not offer panaceas to the deep-rooted problem of school exclusion, and the jury is out on their benefits regarding efficiency and effectiveness. This paper suggests that there are certain factors in successful partnership working that are more important than others, but this should not be used to ignore the complex and multi-faceted nature of school exclusions at the local level.

## **Exploring the continued professional development of higher education professionals as they participate in online social spaces.**

*Muireann O’Keeffe, Institute of Education, London*

This study is embarking on an exploration of online activities and practices of a group of higher education professionals and endeavours to investigate if online activities are influential to academic professional development. Various studies have investigated how the participatory web can empower academic researchers. Some anecdotal evidence exists that participation in online spaces can support professional development.

Systems have become common place to assure quality of higher education and support the continuing development of academic staff. The establishment of centres for teaching and

learning, which offer qualifications in learning and teaching practices aim to enhance quality of teaching in higher education.

Demands from the government and European Commission require the professionalisation and development of academic staff in higher education. A recent survey of academics working in Irish higher education reported that while formal approaches to accreditation of teaching and learning activities are valued, openings for informal peer exchange and more non-formal approaches are also called for.

In light of this I wish to explore the participation and engagement of a specific group of Irish higher education professionals in informal online social spaces and investigate if this participation is influencing their professional development as academics. Participants of this research are consenting graduates of an academic development programme from an Irish higher education institution. This research takes a case study approach as it presents the online practices and activities of this group of participants. In the research I will seek to answer (1) what the online activities and practices of these higher education professionals are; (2) How are the online activities and practices supporting the professional development of these higher education professionals?; (3) What the barriers and enablers exist in engaging in online activities and practices?

Data is currently being collected through the exploration of the online social spaces of participants. During this investigation a list of common practices and activities is being assembled. Next semistructured interviews with participants about their practices and activities will be initiated. I propose to thematically analyse the data and present findings of this analysis in June. Thereafter my study will continue and if necessary I will carry out further data collection with other higher education professionals outside of the initial participant group. While this research is exploratory, interpretative and limited to a confined context of Irish higher education professionals, findings from this study might lead to recommendations for the encouragement of online activities with academics for their potential professional development.

## **Designing a new model of teacher training**

*Tina Page, University of Hull*

The form and structure of teacher training throughout much of Europe is changing in response to a range of pressures including increasing problems with teacher retention, a greater role for schools in training, growing concern with quality management and government austerity. France, Germany and England have very different conceptions of the position of the teacher as regards key issues such as styles of teaching, ability to adapt the curriculum and pastoral care. Do the changes in teacher training in England encourage the development of a radically different kind of teacher from the old model, do such changes take the form of a convergence on a new model moving away from old patterns or are the distinctive old models simply adapted to the changed teacher-training environment?

To address these critically important questions my research examines the changes to the structure and content of ITE programmes to gauge their impact on the quality of teacher training in each country. In each country the method of inquiry is semi-structured interviews with key personnel in three teacher training institutions, in France, in Germany and in England: the programme director in each institution with overall responsibility for the quality

and effectiveness of the training, and teacher trainers, in charge of teaching methods and pedagogy for cohorts of students training to be teachers either at primary or at secondary level. Teacher training institutions in all three countries are faced with similar problems such as teacher retention and attrition, shortage subject areas, the perception of teaching as a profession. The drive for raising the attainment of school pupils in each country has led to a plethora of government initiatives in schools, and scrutiny of the effectiveness of teacher training.

## **Attachment awareness in schools – a model in partnership working or a sell-out?**

*Richard Parker, Bath Spa University*

Attachment awareness in schools has increasingly been seen as an important element in academic, professional and political discourse over the past ten years. It is argued that developing such approaches enhances the learning and school experience of vulnerable students, promotes well-being for staff and students, and enables appropriate provision to be made for those who find difficulty in coping with classroom situation.

If the development of attachment aware practice is to be successfully achieved, there needs to be a significant shift of emphasis at national level, in terms of government policy, frameworks for inspection, continuing professional development for teachers and initial teacher education. This shift also needs to take place at a local level, taking into account the changing role of local authorities, the role of academies, trusts, teaching schools, new third sector partners, and the new statutory role of the Virtual Headteacher.

Higher Education has a major potential role to play, as a local partner with schools, trusts, local authorities and other organisations, as well as a strategic partner with national organisations such as the National College for Teaching and Leadership, Ofsted and Teach First. Secondly, HE is a provider of training, and can offer programmes of CPD, including postgraduate masters programmes, initial teacher education and undergraduate studies. Thirdly, as research establishments, universities should be engaged both in action research on and the critical evaluation of attachment awareness.

These roles could be seen as potentially contradictory and ethically challenging, particularly when seen in the broader context of universities' struggle for survival in a fragmenting world of partnerships, marketisation, reduced resources, and a political imperative to move all teacher education into schools. I will present a case study of the programme of activities developed by Bath Spa University on attachment, alongside Bath and North East Somerset(B&NES) Local Authority, local schools, the National College and a number of third sector organisations, including:

- A pilot programme with B&NES schools
- Training materials for teachers
- Working with national groupings of virtual school headteachers
- A partnership bid to develop a national research database, to inform a national quality standard
- A Masters programme on Attachment and Learning

I will consider what criteria should be used to evaluate the success or otherwise of this programme, the extent to which it has impacted in any meaningful way on the everyday school experience of vulnerable young people, and the broader ethical and political issues raised.

## **Education policy: What could Scotland possibly learn from Wales?**

*Andy Reynolds, University of Wales Trinity Saint David*

Over the 1999-2014 period, Wales has used devolved powers in education. This paper will contain a detailed review of recent education developments in education policy and practice in Wales, including the Foundation Phase (3-7), the Breakfast Clubs Programme, the Enterprise Troopers programme, the SEN/ALN initiative, the Key Stage 2 and 3 Curriculum, Qualifications Wales, the Welsh Bac, the new Teacher Training Centres and the Higher Education mergers and the funding of the Welsh Universities. There will be a brief analysis of the power of politics within the two diverging education systems and a discussion regarding the possible continued effect of political influence in education policy in Wales and Scotland. The paper will then reflect upon these strategic developments and finally debate what the government in Scotland could possibly learn from the ‘Senedd’ in Cardiff?

## **Storying student ecologies of belonging: A participatory research study of students’ interfacing with the Academy**

*Lynn Richards, University of Wolverhampton*

This paper will explore how the contemporary lives of undergraduate students impact on their engagement with the Academy and, by implication, how the ways in which being a Higher Education student are incorporated into their current lifestyles. Framed within the broad topic of student engagement, the paper considers the evolving nature of the topic and its concomitant absence of student voice within the current literature (Trowler, 2010). At a time when universities, certainly those post-1992 universities, are endeavouring to compete with each other for student allegiance, the topic of student engagement is key to issues of retention, attainment, and progression; student attrition brings with it loss of revenue and subsequent reduction in statistical measures of success. The nature of what constitutes student engagement is therefore a necessary prerequisite in order that it can be effectively utilised.

The ability to respond to students’ needs and welcome all comers is premised on the Academy being aware of current ways of being a student. This paper reports on a pilot study, within a professional doctoral thesis, of second year undergraduate students in a Faculty of Education as a way of uncovering student lives in the ‘here and now’ and gathering stories of how students engage with the Academy on an ongoing, everyday basis; this presents itself as a gap in the current literature. The research employs a narrative study of lives using participant action research methodology. Findings focus on the affective dimension of belonging where meanings ascribed to places are discursively constructed by students.

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## **Primary Education Studies- a different voice, a different choice**

*Lynwen Roberts and Sue Ainsworth, University of Wales Trinity Saint David*

In this symposium, two senior lecturers discuss their experiences of developing a revalidated degree programme in Primary Education Studies in a transformed university. The University of Wales, Trinity Saint David has recently undergone a major merger and is now a transformed University with three campuses across South Wales, and one in London. The group also comprises two colleges of Further Education – Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion. New faculties have been formed, and new systems have been developed. The five yearly cycle of revalidation of the BA Primary Education Studies programme has also occurred during this period of change.

The voices of students and the Faculty have been responded to in the newly revalidated programme which will be taught from September 2014. The BA Primary Education Studies degree at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David is in an unique position, offering the programme through the medium of Welsh, through the medium of English and bilingually. A major programme in the Faculty of Social Sciences, the BA Primary Education Studies is one of two degree programmes available in the UK (UCAS 2014) which focus on education studies in the primary phase. Placement activities, a range of assessment methods and optional modules at Level 6 will develop graduates' skills, capacities, attributes, knowledge and understanding for employable and sustainable futures.

## **Political discourses of higher education: The discursive separation of 'academic' learning from skills required for progression in ideological reform agendas**

*Richard Sanders, Newman University*

As with New Labour, contemporary political discourses of education centre upon economy driven ideological reform, with recent developments also aligning the coalition government with a neoconservative reform agenda (Ball, 2013). This reform climate can be seen to be engendering top down autocratic control (McGettigan, 2013), where the voice of academic practitioners is becoming increasingly marginalised. This reform context highlights a discursive distinction between 'academic' learning and the skills perceived to be required in terms of students' progression from university (Willets and Cable, 2011). Separate 'academic' and 'vocational' pathways are suggested for education and this signals the belief within the political domain that 'public good' ideals do not sit neatly with economic imperatives (Collini, 2012).

Drawing upon practitioner perspectives at Newman University – and utilising Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodology (Fairclough, 2009) - discursive reform meaning configurations (Fairclough, 1995) within grey literature (Alberani et al, 1990) are inspected and critiqued. Through the inspection of how these meaning configurations are transformed down to a micro institutional context, the authors are seeking to enter into a constructive debate around what is needed for undergraduate student progression within higher education. Here, the discursive separation between 'academic' learning and skills required outside of university is specifically brought into question.

These experiences at Newman University, as well as the experience of others within HE (Sarson, 2013), suggest that the current reform agenda will not successfully address issues of student progression. The analysis highlights the importance of formative learning for students - in terms of its reflective, metacognitive and critical functions (Mills, 2002) that cannot be easily quantified and valued economically (Collini, 2012). Here we would argue the distinction between 'academic' learning and 'vocational/technical' skills is not useful for students in terms of progression, and a more nuanced, shared stakeholder understanding is required. In order to move the focus of reform from an individual stakeholder to a collaborative group, the authors of this paper suggest that stakeholders should adopt the position of 'professional activists' (Sachs, 2000) to find an agreed way forwards that will be centred upon the needs of undergraduate student progression.

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## **Policy and practice: Tensions in professional identity of Newly Qualified Teachers**

*Sam Shields and Megan Murray, University of Hull*

A study was designed to address research questions raised by Pillen, Beijgaard, and den Brok (2013) regarding tensions in professional identity of newly qualified teachers (NQTs). These tensions include

1. the shift in identity from student to teacher;
2. mismatch between desired and actual support; and
3. contradictory conceptions of learning to teach.

This paper reports on data gathered from questionnaires sent to 85 NQTs. Preliminary findings relate NQTs' backgrounds, training routes, and school contexts to the types of tensions they identify and how they resolve these conflicts. Based on our findings, we outline the next stages of research into how to support beginning teachers during training and into their NQT year.

## **Shifting attitudes and critical thinking in students of Childhood Studies**

*Anne-Marie Smith and Nia Young, University of Bangor*

This paper presents the results of a pilot study to explore the ways in which third year students in the School of Education feel their attitudes and critical thinking skills have developed since beginning their studies. The study focuses on students on the BA Childhood studies and uses the notion of 'threshold concepts' (Meyer and Land 2006) to explore how ideas of childhood conveyed in particular modules could lead to what Perkins' calls 'troublesome knowledge' (Perkins 1999).

The pilot study adopts a mixed method approach; the first is the Critical Thinking Test to evaluate the critical thinking skills of the cohort; the second will use focus groups to elicit students' personal narratives about their journey 'through' key concepts and ideas learnt and discussed in Childhood Studies modules. The latter data provides rich insight into the challenges faced by students and also the strategies adopted to navigate through 'new' knowledge. The participants are part of a cohort of final year undergraduate students; six English medium and six Welsh medium students.

The results are used to inform practice within the School of Education, and in broader terms how instruction in analytical thinking skills facilitates the development of critical thinking in students.

## **Children of migrant workers in urban public high schools: An analysis of the dual role of education**

*Yue Song, University of Glasgow*

With the development of the reform and opening up process in China, millions of people from rural areas are migrating into cities. However, the household registration is often applied strictly and this limits access to a range of rights and benefits. These migrant workers fail to secure permanent residency on an equal footing with registered urban residents even though they work in the city. This rural-urban segregation has consequences beyond access to political and economic rights and resources, and has deepened to shape cultural and ideological perceptions. This deepening has a profound influence on the children of migrant workers moving to study in urban high schools. Though nowadays children of migrant workers can study in urban public schools alongside local resident, the rural-urban structural conflict still exists and impedes social relations between rural-urban groups.

The research will investigate difficulties or opportunities encountered by children of Chinese migrant workers after they have entered urban public high schools and as they face the realities of contact with city culture. The research will explain what kind of role education plays in effecting such children dealing with rural-urban cultural conflict. By using questionnaire, in-

depth interview, different reactions and experiences of children of migrant workers to their school lives would be described and explained comprehensively in this research.

The discussion on the role of education, as an agent of cultural reproduction and an opportunity for multicultural fusion, is mainly based on Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Reproduction and Inclusive Education Model. There exists difference in children of migrant workers' adaptation to urban life. Some children of migrant workers have negative reactions, such as failing to joining urban students' groups, appearing resistance to teachers' low evaluation, spending money irrationally to chase "fashion" and fallen behind in study. Meanwhile, some react more positively like active social interaction with urban students and teachers and more hard-working study. This two opposite attitudes are constructed by the dual function of education. Education, as an agent of cultural reproduction and an opportunity for multicultural fusion, influences children of migrant workers on different adaptations to rural-urban cultural conflict. Moreover, to clarify dual roles of education is a feasibility examination of the implementation of Chinese inclusive education in seeking a balanced and coordinated development between rural and urban areas.

## **Europeanising higher education: Intergovernmentalism and Neofunctionalism in higher education policy**

*Sarah St. John, University of Glasgow*

In the quest for a brighter economic future in Europe, we find education at the core of the European Union's current ten-year growth strategy, the Europe 2020 Strategy, in which it frames education centrally to a series of interrelating targets. However, since education was omitted from the Treaty of Rome, and although - still today - Higher Education cannot be considered as a fully fledged area of Community competence, a marked development in Community involvement in Higher Education can be noted.

The expansion of Community competence into the field of Higher Education can be tested in the framework of the two rival theories: Intergovernmentalism and Neofunctionalism. Intergovernmentalists argue that a policy area will not be created if that is not the aim of the member states; while Neofunctionalists argue that a policy area could develop due to the process of spillover regardless of the member states' preferences. The aim of this paper is to establish the extent of neofunctionalist theory in the development of Higher Education policy and whether there is evidence of intergovernmentalist theory.

The research method to be adopted is documentary analysis by means of collecting two sets of official documentation produced at the European level. The first set will consist of documents that directly address Higher Education, while the second set will consist of those that are related to Higher Education. The study will endeavour to span the period from the first document to the most recent. By analysing the documentation linked to Higher Education and the sequence of these two sets of documents, it will be possible to suggest whether activities in Higher Education at the European level have resulted from spillover or whether they were the result of intentional expansion to the European level.

The literature makes the strong case that member states have kept a tight hold on their control in Higher Education, resisting its release to the supranational level. Therefore, the hypothesis proposes that development in Community competence in Higher Education is predominantly a result of spillover in the framework of neofunctionalist theory. However, development has

occurred intentionally in the framework of intergovernmentalist theory when cooperation has taken place on member state terms and outside the Community arena.

## **How boys keep falling behind in secondary education and what policy makers can do**

*Gijsbert Stoet, University of Glasgow*

GCSE and A-Level courses form the core of British secondary education. Here I report an analysis of 12 years of exam scores (2001-2013), with a focus on sex differences. Although both boys' and girls' exam performance improved considerably between 2001 and 2010, the percentage of boys attaining A grades was consistently lower than that of girls in nearly all GCSE and A-Level subjects, and boys were underrepresented in most A-Level subjects. Further, there remains a strong division between the sexes in subject choice, with more boys in STEM topics and more girls in social sciences, care, and languages.

The latter finding implies a failure of policies to increase girls' participation in STEM fields; based on this, the talk discusses recommendations for future research and policies in regard to gender and education.

## **The innovative use of screencasts in higher education**

*Chris Wakeman, University of Wolverhampton*

Screencasting, or video screen capture, has become a popular and convenient practice that is integrated into many learning activities and provides an effective platform for sharing information and ideas. This reflective paper describes and analyses the innovative use of the screencasting technique in contemporary Higher Education. The research approach adopted by the author is a form of reflective phenomenology in which experience is used as the basis for the study of a present day educational phenomenon. The main focus of the work is initially on the use of screencasts in mainstream teaching and student support where examples of screencast usage are demonstrated and evaluated. Later in the paper attention turns to the use of screencasts for staff development or information sharing. Again, examples are provided and briefly analysed. Finally, the author outlines some further opportunities for screencast use and closes with a brief outline of next steps. In essence, the reflective approach to academic writing that is adopted within the paper provides opportunities to integrate theory and practice in the context of authentic practical experience.

## **Education for transformation: Critical pedagogical thoughts, practice and Paulo Freire**

*Mark Wilson, Canterbury Christ Church University*

This conceptual paper aims to discuss the role of educators from a critical pedagogical paradigm. It will consider the historical context and major influences on critical pedagogy and explore the implications for, and relevance of, Freirean theory on educational practice today. It will be argued in this paper that educators must be concerned, and committed, to advancing democratic ideals and raising critical consciousness – an awareness of the learners'

social reality through reflection and action – in order to enable students to think critically about the world and to develop the confidence and capacities to transform it.

Learning is active; it's experiential and experimental – based on dialogue, questioning, exploring and discovery. The aim of education is to develop similar qualities in the learner (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1973). Rather than teaching what to think, education should be concerned with the teaching of how to think. It is widely argued that education continues to suffer from narration sickness, whereby the content, in the process of being narrated by educators to students, remains detached from reality, disconnected from the world and lifeless (Freire, 1970; Illich, 1971). Yet education has the capacity to be transformational (Freire, 1970). This paper concludes that education should be less about the acquisition of decontextualised facts; and more a process of critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanisation. However, a problem that might arise is that if one has to be told about critical thinking then it's likely that one will not get it anyway. Thus, this paper explores these issues focusing on the questions:

1. How do educators make students actually become engaged in issues of social justice?
2. Is a critical pedagogy enough to do this alone, or even relevant?

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## **The role of attachment theory in education and implications for training: Is “love” a forbidden disposition in education?**

*Mary Wood and Ioanna Palaiologou, Canterbury Christ Church University*

The concept of attachment has influenced the early childhood education. In England since the introduction of the EYFS curriculum framework there is a mandatory requirement in all early childhood settings that host children from birth to five to allocate a key person. A vast volume of research aims to investigate how quality of provision for young children is enchanted and thus enables their learning well being and growth. One of the key issues that have been debated within the English early childhood education system is care and education and a number of studies try to investigate the role of attachment theory across the sector. However, this research is still limited and dominated by the care versus education debate. There is also discussion on the role and responsibilities of the key person in early years settings as well as a debate in regards the qualifications of people who work in the sector.

Thus, this research project aimed to investigate the early childhood studies undergraduates students' perspectives on the role of the key person in relation to attachment theory. There are two main research objectives:

1. to investigate whether ECS students have core in depth understanding of attachment theory and its implications in early childhood education

2. to examine students' perspectives on how they can provide "love" and "affection" to young children whilst still maintaining fully professional relationships with the children and their families.

This is a small scale qualitative longitudinal study. Data from group interviews and session observations was collected over four years of third year students in ECS from one university. Analysis of the results indicated that although students believed that attachment theory is important, they appear to have only a rudimentary understanding of attachment theory. There was a conflict between students' views on attachment and the early years settings managers' views. Finally, there is a lack of recognising their role as key persons and the complexity of the role within the EYFS curriculum.

### **'Working it out': According to student perception, what purpose does an optional placement module serve on the Education Studies degree course?'**

*Sharon Woodward Baker, University of Derby*

The title of research was 'Working it Out', According to student perception, what purpose does an optional placement module serve on the Education Studies degree course?'

This study was interested to find if the module under investigation;

- Identified opportunities placement offered students
- Explored the impact placement had upon student beliefs of professional attributes
- Held implications for further career choices

Previous study in the field by Little and Harvey (2007) informed research design and offered terms of reference for what was meant by professional attributes. Research aimed to extend key discourse by Hodgkinson (2009) in whose small scale study Education Studies was observed to offer a continuum of employability and identified graduates' destinations. This research aimed to assess student 'readiness' to place themselves on such a continuum and communicate what employment skills they saw to be personally valuable. The implications for teaching and learning in Education Studies were considered through Morrison (2013) where the purpose of the 'placement module' was examined to consider if, as practitioners, we need to be more aware of how students perceive their own potential.

The study design was qualitative and gathered student interactions and values, outlined in Atkins and Wallace (2012). To gather student perception two data collection tools were used, a focus group, useful according to Agar and MacDonald (1995, cited in Smithson, 2010) which encouraged rich student led data. A second tool of a semi-structured interview was deployed offering triangulation of results in order to address the complexities of extracting reliable focus group data, as noted by Smithson (2000).

Results showed students observed placement as having three main purposes, as academic, as professional and as transformational. Dominant themes emerged such as assuming an alternative identity, adoption of actors' behaviours, the concept of performance space and the relationship of this to employability.

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## **SYMPOSIA**

### **Symposium: Going beyond compliance: Sustaining career-long professional learning and professional standards.**

*Delivered by colleagues from University of Glasgow, GTCS and SCEL*

Regulation of the teaching profession through professional standards is seen in many education systems as a key driver for maintaining and improving teacher quality. The focus on teacher quality continues to preoccupy policy makers at national and international levels and 'quality' has featured prominently as part of the overarching themes at three out of the four International Summits on the Teaching Profession that have taken place since 2011 (Asia Society, 2013). One of the issues is supporting teachers' ongoing development and progression once they have achieved formal registration and recognition as a teacher, for example in England through the award of Qualified Teacher Status or in Scotland by confirmation of having met the GTCS Standard for Full Registration. Papers within this symposium will discuss this challenge of moving beyond compliance with mandatory professional standards to develop sustained professional learning for all teachers and leaders.

In Scotland in recent years there has been considerable focus and effort to conceptualise the nature, form and challenge of adopting career-long approaches to teachers' professional learning and progression. This has resulted in the development of a new professional Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning. This has not occurred in isolation but has formed part of a major systems wide programme of reform of teacher education that has included the development of a new 'Professional Update' scheme, revised procedures for annual professional reviews and development of a Masters' framework for ongoing professional learning.

These initiatives reflect ongoing policy development and debate on the purposes of standards for the teaching profession in Scotland and the relationship between professional standards and teachers' professional learning. Professional standards are now very much part of the landscape of many educational systems. Nevertheless, questions have been raised about the design, purpose and use of professional standards in education. In particular, with regard to the question of the use of standards, there are significant debates about whether standards are simply regulatory or whether they can also have a developmental function.

The papers within this symposium begin by surveying some of the debates about professional standards in teaching followed by an overview of the way in which the use of standards has evolved in Scottish teacher education. The focus then turns to the current set of reforms

related to teachers' career-long professional learning (Donaldson, 2010) and the place of standards in this reform programme. The papers will consider some of the issues that emerged during the development of the recent set of standards (GTC Scotland, 2012) and their related use and conclude by exploring the implications of professional standards for professional learning across a career.

Acting as discussant, Dr Maria Flores will facilitate small group discussions enabling participants to discuss the papers presented and approaches outlined before responding to the issues raised in a final plenary.

## **Presenters**

Paper 1: 'Evolving concepts and practice in regulation and development through professional standards.'

*Margery McMahon, School of Education, University of Glasgow*

Paper 2: 'Going beyond compliance – policy development and engagement in redesigning 'career long' professional standards.'

*Gillian Hamilton, Head of Education Services, General Teaching Council Scotland*

Paper 3: 'The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning – supporting teachers' continuing development.'

*Rosa Murray, Education Advisor, General Teaching Council Scotland*

Paper 4: 'Leadership development through professional standards'

*John Daffurn, Scottish College for Educational Leadership*

## **Symposium - Education Studies at Plymouth University: Critical studies on inclusive practice in education**

*Gemma Howard, Penny Qi, with Suanne Gibson and Joanna Haynes, Plymouth University*

In this symposium undergraduate students of Education Studies talk about the origins of their third year research enquiries, the theories that have shaped them and the findings of their small scale data collection and analysis. Both students have set out to investigate an aspect of provision for children with specific educational needs.

Penny Qi's study focuses on communication and explores barriers to children's communication at school and the impact a lack of communication skills has on a child with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), in terms of their self-esteem. It originates in reflections on her early life as a young child moving countries, learning additional languages and her experience as a multilingual child in the English primary school system. The research has been informed by her reading of the 2008 Bercow Review of provision for children's speech, communication and language needs and literature on factors influencing the adjustment of immigrant children to schooling. She reports on the outcomes of her study of a group of primary school children with identified SLCN, and her use of picture prompts to initiate conversations with the children about their experiences at school.

Gemma Howard's research project stems from her passion for learning outside the classroom and observations made during a voluntary work placement in a school's 'eco-club' involving

outdoor pursuits with children identified as having ADHD. Gemma's study draws on Kaplan's (1995) Attention Restoration Theory and subsequent empirical research on the relationship between natural environments and low levels of ADHD symptoms. Gemma's study explores alternatives to medication in making educational provision for children with ADHD. Her presentation reports on the findings of her qualitative study involving in depth interviews with a range of education practitioners.

## **Symposium: Higher Education Academy project on employability and education studies**

*HEA Employability project assorted staff*

While Education Studies courses have their origins in teacher education, an increasing number of courses have little connection to specific school-based careers. Moreover, the number of students on undergraduate Education Studies courses at present far exceeds the number of places available on all teacher education pathways. This project explores trajectories of Education Studies students and considers the extent that existing provision meets their employability needs. Research teams, consisting of Education Studies students and lecturers from University of Warwick, De Montfort University, Manchester Metropolitan University, King's College London and Liverpool John Moores University are engaging in collaborative enquiry with between 20 and 25 other UK HE providers. This symposium discusses some of the project's ongoing findings.

### ***Individual papers:***

#### **Expanding horizons: the purpose and practice of placements on undergraduate Education Studies degrees**

*David Menendez Alvarez-Hevia, Steven Naylor, Jane Bates, Sue Lewis, Jane McDonnell, Will Curtis*

While undergraduate Education Studies degrees have their origins in teacher education, an increasing number of courses have little connection to specific school-based careers. At present, the number of students on undergraduate Education Studies courses far exceeds the number of places available on all teacher education pathways. This paper presents findings from an eighteen month HEA funded project exploring the extent that existing Education Studies provision meets students' employability needs. Collaborative research teams, consisting of Education Studies students and lecturers from the University of Warwick, De Montfort University, Manchester Metropolitan University and Liverpool John Moores University have been visiting 20 UK higher education providers to explore the how employability is understood, valued and enacted on Education Studies degrees.

To date, fieldwork has highlighted the wide range of practices and experiences related to placement activity. While almost all of the courses we visited provide some form of placement opportunity, the provision has varied tremendously. The paper outlines some of these differences and identifies areas of commonality across courses. It identifies common difficulties – practical issues related to finding placements and administration, and experiential issues related to a lack of clarity over purpose and restrictions on the types of placement setting and activity permissible. An interesting dynamic that has emerged from the

research is the ‘experimental’ function of placements on many Education Studies courses, allowing for a great deal of freedom. Notably, participants reported most positively on opportunities that provided them with the experimental breadth to be autonomous, to ‘try out’ a range of environments, and to make both theory and practice meaningful. Drawing on the experiences of students and lecturers interviewed during fieldwork, the paper concludes by recommending a number of features of placement ‘best practice’.

## **To teach or not to teach? Skills, placements and aspirations: employability in education studies - findings from collaborative research**

*Caroline Bradbury Matthews, Manchester Metropolitan University*

This paper presents findings from a collaborative research project that explores ideas about employability in education studies. The project was undertaken by small research teams formed by lecturers and students from three partner institutions. Data was gathered through an online survey and semi structured interviews at a wide range of HE institutions across the UK who offer undergraduate education studies programmes. Interviews were conducted with participants representing students, lecturers and course leadership. Researchers particularly elicited views on perceptions of employability and attitudes to the importance of developing it within HE programmes, finding that the extent to which the development of employability was implicit varied. For some employability was seen to be grounded in providing CV writing and interview techniques whereas for others it meant developing self confidence and transferable skills including criticality. In addition, there was consideration of how possible career trajectories were marketed and considered within courses and how students’ initial aspirations were consolidated or transformed as their degree progressed. The extent to which teaching was seen to be the only choice was an obvious aspect to consider. Furthermore, researchers gained knowledge on the use of placements and how successfully they nurtured employability. It was interesting to note how placements contributed to either limiting or expanding students’ perceptions of career choice. Similarly, some disparity became apparent between students’ and course providers’ perceptions of the purpose of placements. These issues and their implications will be explored in detail in this paper.

## **Getting our hands dirty with research: student insight into collaborative educational research**

*Rebecca Suart, Warwick University and Eva Knapova, Manchester Metropolitan University*

This paper shares the experience of a group of education studies students from three partner universities who have been involved in a collaborative research project. The study takes a ‘student-lecturer’ collaborative approach to explore students’ and academics’ attitudes to employability on education studies degrees. Our discussion addresses the benefits gained by students as co-researchers considering their experience constructing knowledge with both lecturers from partner institutions and the insights gained from students on the same degree. Firstly, we will explain how the power dynamics between lecturer as expert’ in the initial stages of the project shifted to a more equal team as students became more comfortable and confident in the contribution they could make. As student researchers we were able to work in the larger project cohort, across universities and with other academics to gain invaluable insights into the world of academia. These experiences have diversified our thinking in ways that would not have been achievable without access to a broad range of views from

teams/lecturers and from the experience of visiting different universities. Finally we conclude with a discussion about how this process has benefited us personally and how we plan to use this experience in the future.