

New horizons: Research reframed

Boola Katitjin (Building 360)

Murdoch University

Friday 14 to Saturday 15 August 2026

Program

Time	Activity
Friday 5-7 PM	Higher Degree by Research Workshop
Saturday 9.30 – 11.20	Opening: President of WAIER, A/P Sian Chapman Acknowledgement of Country Panel Presentation
11.20 – 11.50	Morning tea
11.50 – 12.15	Parallel sessions
12.15 – 12.40	Parallel sessions
12.40 – 1.05	Parallel sessions
1.05 – 1.30	Parallel sessions
1.30 – 2.15	Lunch
2.15 – 2.40	Parallel sessions
2.40 – 3.05	Parallel sessions
3.05 – 3.30	Parallel sessions
3.30 – 3.55	Parallel sessions
4.00 onward	Sundowner Presentation of WAIER Awards

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Forum Website: <https://www.waier.org.au/41st-waier-research-forum-2026/>
Forum 2026 Abstracts: <https://waier.org.au/archives/forums/2026/abstracts-2026.html>
Program of parallel sessions: <https://waier.org.au/archives/forums/2026/schedule-2026.html>
WAIER Forum Archives: <https://waier.org.au/archives/forums/all-forums-index.html>

We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Whadjuk-Noongar people. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this region.

Welcome

This year we warmly welcome you to the 41st WAIER Research Forum, *New horizons: Research reframed*. The WAIER Annual Research Forum is a key activity of the Western Australian Institute for Educational Research and has run since 1986. It provides opportunities for beginning and established researchers to present their work and build collegial networks with colleagues working across WA.

About WAIER

The key function of WAIER is to advocate for, and promote, educational research across Western Australia. We are a cross institutional organisation, with each of the five Western Australian universities, the Department of Education and Catholic Education represented on the WAIER Executive Committee. By means of collegiality amongst research colleagues, WAIER aims to strengthen a culture of collaboration among higher education institutions, government and private sectors and their research staff.

In collaboration with other Australian IERs, WAIER supports educational researchers through publication in our well-respected online journal, *Issues in Educational Research* (IER).

Our vision is to “Encourage and engage in educational research to inform and influence policy and practice”. This is achieved through four strategic pillars:

Inform – disseminate evidence-informed research to local, national and international audiences;

Engage – collaborate with educational researchers, practitioners, policy makers and research organisations;

Encourage – provide support and opportunities for early, aspiring and established researchers;

Influence – shape educational policy and practice.

By utilising these four strategic pillars, WAIER continues to raise the profile of Western Australian educational research and helps drive policy towards better outcomes.

Website address: <https://www.waier.org.au/>

Forum photographs

Please note that photos will be taken during the Forum and may be put on the WAIER website as part of the record of the 2026 Forum. If people have any objection to their photos being used in this way, they need to ensure that they contact a committee member at the Forum to make their wishes known.

Participants are requested not to take photos of *PowerPoint* slides during presentations. This can be disruptive to the presenter and participants and could be a breach of copyright.

Presentations of Awards

The 2026 Awards will be presented by **Mr Liam Staltari, MLA**, Shadow Minister for Education, Early Childhood and Disability Services

2026 Postgraduate Student Researcher Awards

The postgraduate student researcher awards recognise excellence in postgraduate student research in Education. Each WA university selects a doctoral postgraduate candidate who completed their degree within the last 12 months.

Dr Bolormaa Shinjee Curtin University	PhD thesis <i>Linguistic creativity and criticality: English as double-edged catalyst in post-socialist Mongolia</i> https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11937/99287
Dr Victoria Evans Edith Cowan University	PhD thesis <i>An ethnographic study of initial teacher education professionals' embodied policy work in health and physical education in Western Australia and Wales</i>
Dr Nina Rovis Herman Murdoch University	PhD Thesis <i>A critique of neoliberal meritocracy, the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) and its impact on students: A critical realist case study</i> https://researchportal.murdoch.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/A-critique-of-neoliberal-meritocracy-the/991005717669107891
Dr Gemma Thomson The University of Notre Dame Australia	PhD thesis <i>The perceptions of principals and faith leaders regarding the transmission of Presentation charism in Australian Presentation schools</i> https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses/470
Dr Suzanne Stewart The University of Western Australia	PhD thesis <i>Embedding a therapeutic approach into 3-D animated serious games to reduce worry, anxiety, and loneliness in early aged adolescents with neurodevelopmental disorders</i> https://doi.org/10.26182/xwps-v813

For previous Postgraduate award recipients, see the Archives page at <https://www.waier.org.au/archives/awards/postgrad-awards-all.html>

Inaugural 2026 WAIER Prize for Best Thesis in Education

This prize acknowledges an outstanding contribution to educational research from a student who completed their studies at a Western Australian university the previous year. The \$500 prize is intended to support further educational research for the recipient and encourage future engagement with WAIER.

The winner of the WAIER Best Thesis in Education will be announced at the Forum.

2026 WAIER Early Career Award

The aim of this award is to recognise excellence early in an academic/research career and to encourage continuing contributions to research. The award is an incentive as well as an acknowledgment of early success and it is hoped that the person receiving the award would proceed to complete further research of excellent quality.

The winner of the 2026 Award will be announced at the forum.

2025 WAIER Early Career Award

Last year, the 2025 WAIER Early Career Award was presented to Dr Ren-Hao Xu (UWA). Dr Xu conducts cultural investigations of education through a critical lens including research about global education governance.

2026 WAIER Research Grant

Our aim is to support educational researchers conducting research directly relevant to early childhood, primary, secondary, or tertiary education. This grant supports educational researchers who do not have ready access to funds or resources, and is specifically intended as seed funding to support researchers in the beginning stages of their career outside of a degree structure. The total grant money available is \$3,000.

The winner of the WAIER Research Grant will be announced at the Forum.

2025 WAIER Research Grant

Last year, the 2025 WAIER Research Grant was presented to **Dr Jian Zhao (UWA)**. Dr Zhao proposed to use the funds to investigate university educator's use of generative AI in Assessment Design.

WAIER Life Member Award

Dr Gregory Hine is the recipient of a WAIER Life Member Award. Dr Hine will have been treasurer for WAIER for 15 years in 2026. He is currently Associate Professor and Program Coordinator of the Bachelor of Secondary Education at University of Notre Dame Australia.

Panel presentation

Associate Professor Sian Chapman **Chairperson**

Sian Chapman is an Associate Professor and Dean of the School of Education at Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia, teaching into undergraduate and post-graduate Initial Teacher Education programs. Her research interests include education policy and practice, teacher agency and change, and understanding systemic difference through complexity theory. These concepts are explored across a range of topics, including arts education, inclusive education, teacher wellbeing and practice. She has published articles in Q1 journals, including *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, the *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *Journal of Curriculum Studies* and *Arts Education Policy Review*.

Professor Laura Perry **Murdoch University**

Professor Laura Perry conducts comparative research about educational disadvantage and inequalities, especially as they appear between schools, and the systems, structures and policies that shape them. The aim of her research is to inform policy for improving equity of educational opportunities, experiences and outcomes. Professor Perry's specific research interests include educational marketization, school segregation and stratification, school funding, and between-school inequalities.

Professor Perry draws on the disciplines of comparative education, sociology of education, and education policy to examine these topics.



Dr Cindy Smith **Curtin University**



Cindy lectures in the area of Educational Psychology and has previous experience as a Special Education Teacher specialising in children with behavioural disorders. She has also served as a behavioral specialist, supporting children, families, and schools for success in educational and community settings. Before her current appointment at Curtin University, Cindy worked in universities in the United States and the Middle East to assist with the development of programs to train special education teachers.

Cindy's research interests include mentoring as an intervention for adolescents at high risk, autism, teacher development, and women's studies.



Dr Garth Stahl
University of Queensland

Associate Professor Garth Stahl's research interests focus on the relationship between education and society, socio-cultural studies of education, student identities, equity/inequality, and social change. He was awarded a Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) from the Australian Research Council (2017-2019) where he researched the relationship between extreme disadvantage, masculinities and widening participation (DE170100510). At the University of Queensland, Dr Stahl's teaches at the undergraduate, masters and PhD levels. Recently, he was awarded two ARC Discovery projects:

Renae Isaacs-Guthridge
Curtin University

Renae Isaacs-Guthridge is a Noongar and Yamajti yorga (woman) with matriarchal connections to Countries across both Nations. Her career in education spans 30 years. She is currently employed as an Aboriginal Senior Lecturer at Curtin University's School of Education. Her research prioritises Aboriginal knowledges, voices and perspectives through strengths-based, emancipatory practices. She has contributed to research in Aboriginal education and collective work, and her PhD questions the adequacy of Australia's colonial education system. Renae's community involvement includes currently serving as Chair of the South West Community Legal Centre and Committee Member of the Noongar Boodja Trust Nominations Committee.



Rachael Lehr
President ACEL WA

Rachael Lehr is the foundation Associate Principal at Dayton Primary School, a school that opened in 2023, and the WA Branch President of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders. She is passionate about empowering and supporting teachers and leaders to believe in themselves and reach their fullest potential. Rachael endeavours to 'lead by example', embodying lifelong learning, embracing discomfort, and constantly seeking personal growth. She is focused on the authentic integration of digital technologies and STEM learning into the classroom and believes in the power of instructional coaching to bring about effective change in teaching and learning

Program of parallel sessions

9.30	Level 4, Room 031 Opening: President of WAIER, A/P Sian Chapman Acknowledgment of Country Panel Presentation				
11.20	Morning tea – Level 3				
	Room 3.002	Room 3.028	Room 3.030	Room 3.032	Room 3.034
11.50	Jennifer Achari Reframing disengagement: A trauma-informed systems framework	Maria Outtrim Challenges in school leadership: Experiences of female principals	Pravin Kumar Shaw et al Digital course delivery in vocational education and training	Bobby Victoria Cooper et al. How lecturers feel about teaching online in higher education?	Nila Tanzil Rural school libraries as a place of belonging for students, teachers, and parents
12.15	Suzanne Stewart Reducing anxiety, in adolescents with neurodevelopmental disorders	Gemma Thomson Perceptions of principals re the transmission of Presentation charism	Stephen C Mulholland Mindfulness in vocational education	Paul Murphy Understanding institutional adaptation through complex adaptive system	Dwi Suatman Impact of professional learning on trainers' efficacy
12.40	Leisa Hanson, Impact of a sensory dog on learning participation for SEN students	Jette Oksis The role of education consultants: An appreciative inquiry lens	Bich Nguyen Pre-service teachers' revelations about their self-reflections	Dien Bui et al. Teacher feedback in practice: What teachers are doing and the challenges they face	Wei Zhang & Tanya Fitzgerald Women university leaders in Chinese higher education
1.05	Sarah Gaudieri Lived experiences of neurodiversity in the classroom	Nina Rovis-Hermann Student experience, education reality, and the limits of measurement	Kirsten Lambert & C. Gray Teacher attrition in regional, remote and rural schools	Brandon Davids Development of a framework for understanding creative self-efficacy	Monika Sidabutar Indonesian teachers conceptualise independent learning
1.30 – 2.15	Lunch				
2.15	Roisin Glasgow-Collins et al. Relationships and sexuality education in faith-based schools	Thanh Huy Nguyen Integrating AI into pre-service early childhood teacher education	Una Donnelly Teaching of Aboriginal texts in the secondary English classroom	Shoshanna Allnutt Working mothers and the ethics of educational institutions	Arifur Rahman, et al. Digital citizenship in Bangladesh: Culture, policies and perceptions
2.40	Cindy Ann Smith, J. Fyfe & N. Shukla Developing classroom teachers for students with autism	Simranjeet Kaur et al. Educators' digital self-efficacy for fostering young children's digital play	Allison Bell Ancient Aboriginal art in ACARA and SCSA curriculum and the translation gap	Jen Featch Privilege, capitals and the elite schooling experience	Bolormaa Shinjee English as double-edged catalyst in post-socialist Mongolia
3.05	Kim Andreassen, C. Smith et al. Co-designing consent education for young people with disability	Madlen Griffiths, K. Murcia & S. Mennell Fostering children's critical thinking about AI	Natasha Rosky Reimagining educational research through narrative inquiry	Victoria Evans et al. Maintaining cultural histories in health and physical education	Anamaria Isticioaia-Budura Perspectives of experienced EAL teachers
3.30	John Shenton, C. Smith & J. Churchman Prison education attendance and incidents of harm		Katherine Stevens & Allison Bell Reframing literacy and arts education	Tamara Reads, S. Murphy & S. Kuzich Premier's Reading Challenge and student engagement	
4.00 onwards	Sundowner: Post graduate Awards,				

HDR Workshop:

5 PM, Friday 14 August 2026

From thesis to contribution: Articulating your research story

Facilitated by Associate Professor Sian Chapman

How do you move from *describing* your thesis (part 1) to clearly articulating what it *contributes* to educational research and practice (part 2)?



This interactive workshop supports postgraduate research candidates to reframe their research story, clarify their contribution, and practice communicating their work to different audiences. Designed for HDR students across all stages of projects, the session offers practical tools, reflective discussion, and structured writing time to help participants confidently articulate why their research matters, and to whom.

Part 1: Share your research. An opportunity to share HDR research project with other participants through a prepared infographic. Details provided on registration and an opportunity to attend an Infographic Design workshop in June is also available.

Part 2: Move from describing research to articulating the contribution of your research.

7 PM: Dinner at a local venue for those who wish to continue conversations

Abstracts

The abstracts of presentations are set out here in alphabetical order according to the name of the first author. They can also be found on the WAIER archive site at <https://waier.org.au/archives/forums/2026/abstracts-2026.html>

A Chairperson will be appointed for each session. The Chair's duties will be to open the session on time, to facilitate questions from the audience in the latter part of the session, to ensure that the session finishes on time and to formally thank the presenter.

There is no change-over time between presentations. Presenters need to load their computer files before the sessions begin, i.e., before 11.50 am, or 2.15 pm.

Reframing disengagement: A trauma-informed systems framework for alternative education

Jennifer Achari

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Australia's flexible and alternative education sector is expanding rapidly, yet it has lacked a national evidence base for trauma-informed practice, and the young people it serves are still too often theorised through deficit and disengagement. This presentation draws on the first national study of the sector to reframe that account. It argues that many students are disengaged not from learning, but from systems that have yet to understand how trauma and adversity shape educational experience.

The mixed-methods design integrated a grey literature scan, expert interviews, a national practitioner survey (n = 113), and seven focus groups, analysed through a synthesis of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, Ungar's differential impact theory, and Levitas's utopian method. From this, two contributions were developed: the eight-element *Trauma-Informed Alternative Education Framework* and the *6S Transformation Model*, which together position safety, belonging, and systemic understanding as foundational conditions for learning.

This presentation foregrounds what this reframing opens for research - an empirically grounded, theoretically integrated framework that can be tested, extended, and applied across settings. It invites discussion of where a credible pedagogy of hope might lead, and what a trauma-informed research agenda for education should pursue next.

Working mothers and the ethics of educational institutions

Shoshanna Allnutt, Sally Lamping and Darren Bryant

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Teaching is a unique profession, with teachers expressing a high level of care for the holistic development of young people. However, despite the centrality of care to a teacher's work, this labour is often gendered, invisible, and structurally undervalued. This presentation will explore the experiences of five working mothers who are teachers in Western Australia, underscoring how their professional care work compounds the invisible labour performed at home.

The study explored how teachers who are working mothers navigate the intersecting demands of professional care, maternal responsibility and emotional labour, struggling against ideal worker norms created by institutional expectations. Data was collected through a demographic questionnaire then through semi-structured interviews. Data was analysed through first and second cycle coding. Through an exploration of the study's emerging themes, this presentation will explore how teachers' identities and perceptions towards the profession develop contextually as a result of life history, family background and personal school experiences, highlighting the shift in professional identity as motherhood significantly reconfigured their view towards work-life balance. Drawing on this, the presentation will provide recommendations for educational institutions to support working mothers' careers.

"Nothing about us without us": Co-designing consent education for young people with disability

Kim Andreassen, Cindy Smith and Jacqueline Hendriks

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Young people with disability face disproportionate rates of sexual violence yet remain largely excluded from the design of consent education. This PhD research aims to reframe how consent is taught by co-designing accessible, inclusive teaching and learning materials for students with disability aged 12–16, guided by participatory action research and design justice principles.

This presentation explores findings from two scoping reviews. The first, centering youth voice, identified that young people with disability prefer pedagogical approaches that combine structural clarity with relational safety – explicit instruction alongside trust, autonomy, and affirmation. Building on this, a broader review of 110 consent education resources revealed significant gaps in resources which align with the pedagogical approaches youth with disability want, as well as in skill domains young people and sexuality education experts identify as essential, including enthusiastic consent, empathy, media literacy, and coping skills. Together, these findings illuminate both what is available and what is critically missing in consent education for disabled youth, with implications for educators and researchers across Australia. This research contributes new horizons for inclusive sexuality education, informing curriculum design, teacher training, and disability-affirming educational practice.

Present but peripheral: Ancient Aboriginal art in ACARA and SCSA curriculum and the knowledge translation gap

Allison Bell

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Ancient Aboriginal Australian art traditions are increasingly recognised as globally significant records of human creativity, cultural continuity and knowledge transmission. Despite this significance, little research has examined how ancient Aboriginal art is represented within contemporary Australian curriculum frameworks. This study, the first phase of a larger study, investigates the representation of ancient Aboriginal art within the Australian Curriculum (ACARA V9.0) and the Western Australian Curriculum (SCSA), focusing on HASS and Visual Arts.

Using a hybrid human-AI curriculum audit methodology, curriculum documents and supporting materials from ACARA and SCSA were systematically analysed. A coding protocol was developed to identify and classify references to Aboriginal art according to degrees of explicitness, temporal framing, educational function and curricular status. AI tools were employed for preliminary document mapping and data extraction, with all occurrences subsequently verified and coded manually by the researcher.

Findings suggest a curriculum knowledge translation gap in which archaeological understandings of ancient Aboriginal art have not yet been translated into educational knowledge. While other ancient civilisations are commonly represented through artistic and cultural achievements, ancient Aboriginal art remains peripheral, fragmented or implicit. This presentation argues that the challenge is not simply one of inclusion but of representation.

Teacher feedback in practice: What teachers are doing and the challenges they face

Dien Bui, Elaine Chapman and Stephen Houghton

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Teacher feedback is widely recognised as a powerful influence on student learning. This presentation draws on a mixed-methods study conducted in Vietnamese secondary schools. Quantitative data were collected from 2,886 teachers, complemented by interviews with school leaders and teachers, classroom observations, and student focus groups. Together, these data provide a comprehensive picture of teachers' feedback practices and the realities of implementing feedback in classrooms.

The presentation examines the forms and frequency of teacher feedback while highlighting the factors that influence teachers' feedback practices. Emerging findings suggest that teacher feedback is dynamic and context-dependent rather than a set of fixed strategies. The presentation concludes by discussing how a better understanding of teachers' everyday feedback practices can inform interventions to improve feedback provision in schools.

How do lecturers really feel about teaching online in higher education?

Bobby Victoria Cooper, Cindy Ann Smith and Sonja Kuzich

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Online learning in higher education continues to expand rapidly, creating exciting opportunities for new research and innovation. This presentation will share some early insights from a nationwide questionnaire completed by lecturers across Australia, offering a first look at emerging trends, challenges, and possibilities in online teaching/learning.

As a participant, you'll be invited to take part in interactive activities where you will have the opportunity to discuss some of the key findings and respond to prompt questions. This session introduces the questionnaire as a core component of a larger PhD project, and you will gain a preview of the broader research direction and hear more about the next stages of the study as it evolves.

Development of a framework for understanding creative self-efficacy

Brandon Davids

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Creative self-efficacy sits as a sub-construct within broader self-efficacy theory and is often treated as an individual belief. However, its development occurs within pedagogical, social, and interdisciplinary contexts. Further, little is known about how creative self-efficacy manifests in post-secondary creative industries education. This presentation explores a theoretical framework developed through Bandurian philosophy, particularly self-efficacy and human agency, alongside general transferable skills. It considers how curriculum may mediate creative industries students' creative self-efficacy and aspirational development. The framework was applied to the reflective learning journals of 17 commencing creative industries students at the Perth campus of a private national higher education provider. It began with six domains: proficiency, feedback, teamwork, emotional regulation, visualisation, and modelling. Reflexive thematic analysis indicated that these domains were more interdependent than the initial framework anticipated.

This presentation explores how the domains manifested within the study and how their emerging relationships were interpreted across the mixed-method findings and student learning journals. Modelling manifested as a significant integrative mechanism, making creative practice, standards, and ways of acting visible to students. The presentation reflects on how theory can develop through iterative engagement with data and offers emerging implications for creative media curriculum and teaching practice.

Using autoethnography to facilitate an empathetic approach to the teaching of Aboriginal texts in the secondary English classroom

Una Donnelly

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This project has been designed in response to the need to provide an authentic voice for the experiences of Aboriginal people in Western Australia in Secondary English education by non-Aboriginal teachers using Aboriginal texts. Non-Aboriginal teachers can be reluctant to use Aboriginal texts in their classes due to a lack of confidence with and resources on Indigenous histories, cultures and knowledges. While we know that there is an underrepresentation of texts which include Aboriginal ways of knowing, doing and being in the curriculum, there is little written about how to support Secondary English teachers to build empathy in their students as they read about the experiences of Aboriginal people.

The research involves an autoethnographic study of one former non-Aboriginal Secondary English teacher in Western Australia who engaged with Aboriginal texts throughout her teaching career. It uses the theoretical frameworks of Standpoint Theory and Cultural Interface Theory to support the idea that the teacher's own positionality and intersectional factors can reveal parallels with the lived experiences of Aboriginal people and ultimately influence how they engage with Aboriginal texts. This presentation will describe the process and challenges of the researcher in writing an analytic autoethnography and how this might translate to other Secondary teachers in the learning area of English wanting to do the same.

Maintaining cultural histories in Health and Physical Education teacher education through contextual rules

Victoria Evans, Dawn Penney, David Aldous and Christine Cunningham

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his presentation reports on how the cultural histories of Health and Physical Education Teacher Education (H/PETE) in Western Australia (WA) are maintained through contextual rules. Drawing on the conceptualisation of embodying policy work, contextual rules are positioned as one of three sets of rules and signify the way in which historical policies and cultural norms are (re)produced through embodying actions. The presentation draws on data from a 6-month, two phase ethnographic study exploring the embodying policy work of H/PETE professionals in WA, centring on one institution, referred to as 'Karri Institute'.

The first part of the presentation provides a brief overview of ethnography and Phase 1 of the study, which involved 22 participants and utilised 22 semi-structured interviews and documentary methods. Next, the presentation outlines the 6-phase reflexive thematic analysis process and draws attention to one of the interrelated themes generated: maintaining the status quo. Findings from Phase 1 are presented, illustrating how the historical and contextual policies of/for HPETE are carried through contextual rules and cultural norms specific to institutions and secondary Health and Physical Education (HPE) programs. In conclusion, the presentation provides critical reflection and recommendations for teacher educators and researchers working in H/PETE nationally and internationally.

Daddy wouldn't let me drive the BMW: Privilege, capitals and the elite schooling experience

Jen Featch

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Elite schooling is positioned in Australian education as a pathway to opportunity - institutions in which model citizens are incubated, while also functioning as a site for the reproduction of social inequality. In this presentation, I use autoethnography to critically examine my experiences of attending an elite private girls' school in Perth, Western Australia during the 1980s. This presentation is drawn from a paper of the same name, that is the first journal article within my doctoral thesis by compilation. In it, I use personal vignettes as sociological data to interrogate how privilege, belonging and exclusion have operated within elite schooling. The analysis is informed by Bourdieu's ideas of capital, habitus and symbolic violence, alongside sociological critiques of meritocracy and the neoliberal, normalisation of school choice. While access to cultural and institutional capital ultimately enabled my academic success(es), there are also deeply felt ethical contradictions of elite schooling - marginalisation within privilege, shame alongside advantage, class disavowal, and the everyday practices through which inequality is normalised and legitimised.

Methodologically, I position autoethnography as both a sociological and an ethical research practice. I examine the un-asked for privileges of attending such a school that have emerged through the decades and consider ways in which this ongoing analysis can contribute towards a more critical, nuanced and conscious understanding of power and oppression, particularly in the education space. In choosing autoethnography for this narrative, I seek to situate my elite schooling experiences and subsequent emotions within a broader, sociological framework. I argue that sociological research has an ethical responsibility to interrogate privilege as well as disadvantage, including my own complicity within formalised systems of inequality. By making visible the ordinary, embodied workings of elite schooling, this work contributes to sociological understandings of education as a powerful mechanism through which inequality is reproduced and contested.

Understanding difference and sustaining wellbeing: Lived experiences of neurodiversity in the classroom

Sarah Gaudieri

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Research has established the neurological foundations and impacts of ADHD, specific learning disorders and sensory processing disorder (SPD), on learning, mental health and wellbeing. Yet less is known about how these developmental neurological differences are experienced in classrooms through the combined perspectives of students and teachers.

This qualitative study explored the lived schooling experiences of young adults in Western Australia diagnosed with ADHD, dyslexia, dysgraphia and/or SPD, alongside teachers' experiences in supporting students with these diagnoses. Using critical hermeneutic phenomenology, semi-structured interviews were analysed

through iterative, interpretive cycles that moved between individual accounts, shared patterns of meaning and broader educational structures. Analysis focused on how personal, relational and systemic influences shaped wellbeing for both students and teachers.

In this presentation a conceptual model illustrating a critical understanding of the lived experience of developmental neurological differences in the Western Australian classroom will be introduced alongside recommendations for policy and practice to strengthen inclusive, wellbeing-focused education for neurodiversity. By centring both student and teacher voices, this research reframes inclusion as a shared wellbeing responsibility requiring relational understanding, informed practice and systemic change.

Beyond the secular assumption: Scoping the evidence base for relationships and sexuality education delivery in faith-based schools

Roisin Glasgow-Collins, Sharyn Burns, and Jacqui Hendriks

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Good quality, comprehensive relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is vital for young people's development as informed sexual citizens. However, access to comprehensive RSE remains inequitable, and one of the least examined contexts is faith-based schooling. Although faith-based schools educate significant proportions of students across OECD countries, research has largely overlooked how a school's religious ethos may shape RSE practice, delivery and outcomes.

This presentation introduces a doctoral scoping review currently underway, examining the practice of RSE in faith-based schools across OECD countries, and the enablers and barriers to its delivery. Guided by the Arksey and O'Malley framework, the review systematically searched six academic databases alongside grey literature sources published 2010-2026, with screening against predefined inclusion criteria.

Preliminary findings indicate an under-explored field, with the available literature concentrated in a small number of countries and faith traditions. We argue that the absence of faith-based school contexts from mainstream RSE research has real consequences for the equity and consistency of the education young people receive. In sharing these preliminary findings, this presentation makes a case for reframing RSE research to include faith-based contexts, as a matter of both methodological rigour and educational equity.

"How did you do that so quickly?" Fostering children's critical thinking about AI

Madlen Griffiths, Karen Murcia and Sarsha Mennell

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As artificial intelligence (AI) infiltrates children's everyday lives, it is paramount for educators to foster critical thinking skills in young children so they can discern misinformation and differentiate between what is real and artificial. Early childhood educators play an important role in guiding children's development of critical thinking skills needed for navigating an AI-influenced world. Education literature

discussing critical thinking is considerable but there is little research into how this skill develops in early childhood.

This study examined a series of learning experiences, developed from the five 'Big Ideas' of AI. Children from an Early Learning Centre were invited to participate in these experiences and video data of their engagement was examined for evidence of critical thinking and for the practitioner-researcher's supporting pedagogy. The qualitative study adopted a dual model of analysis including multimodal observations of the children and interviews with the practitioner-researcher who conducted the learning experiences. Analysis of the observed pedagogy for critical thinking was framed by dialogic inquiry, modelling thinking, and scaffolding inquiry.

Findings highlight the importance of educators using intentional pedagogical strategies for facilitating young children's critical thinking and the need for schools and teacher education institutions to provide targeted resources and professional learning to support this. Further research is recommended for validating pedagogical strategies and process skills used by children as they are thinking critically. We suggest a critical thinking framework through which educators can support young children as critical thinkers.

From escalation to engagement: Exploring the impact of a sensory dog on learning participation for SEN students in a mainstream secondary school

Leisa Hanson

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This study investigated the role of a sensory dog in supporting emotional regulation, engagement, and participation in learning for secondary students with additional needs in a mainstream school setting. As Australian schools experience increasing numbers of students presenting with complex social, emotional, and behavioural needs, there is growing interest in innovative approaches that promote inclusion and engagement. Despite the increasing use of sensory dog programs, limited research has explored their application within mainstream secondary education.

Guided by the question, "In what ways can a sensory dog enhance and improve the learning environment and engagement of students with additional needs?", this study employed an autoethnographic methodology incorporating three ethnographic narratives. Critical incidents, teacher observations, and student interactions were analysed to examine how sensory-dog interventions influenced students' experiences of schooling.

Findings demonstrated that the sensory dog supported emotional regulation, reduced escalation, and facilitated re-engagement with learning. Students experienced increased feelings of safety, trust, and connection, enabling greater participation in classroom activities. The dog also acted as a social mediator, strengthening communication and relationships with peers and staff. Teachers reported increased pedagogical flexibility and a greater capacity to respond to student distress. The study contributes to emerging research at the intersection of inclusive education, trauma-informed practice, and human-animal interaction, highlighting the potential of sensory dogs as relational supports within secondary school environments.

Reflection on practice: Perspectives of experienced EAL teachers

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The aim of this study is to generate propositions concerning the perspectives of 12-14 experienced English as an additional language (EAL) teachers on their use of reflection-on-practice strategies. This is significant because there are gaps and inconsistencies in the research of experienced teachers and their use of reflection-on-practice in Australia, particularly for those working in the Vocational Sector (VET) such as nationally registered training organisations (RTOs) and ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) providers. Research has identified that reflective practice is a central pillar in teacher education and therefore, professional practitioners and educational programs have much to gain from this form of professional inquiry. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon the interpretivist approach which places the individual and the society as two inseparable units (O'Donoghue, 2007).

The study has been conducted within a qualitative interpretive research paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2022, Robinson, 2011). Experienced EAL teachers have been interviewed throughout Australia, and the analysis is being conducted employing grounded theory methods namely open and axial coding (Braun & Clarke, 2022). A consent form and information sheet were provided to head of studies and participants. Pseudonyms have replaced the names of the participants and they were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. The findings may have the potential to show significant concepts such as the importance of time to reflect on one's practice aiming to build propositions that will inform the development of guidelines for EAL teachers and address the gaps in the knowledge.

Educators' digital self-efficacy for fostering young children's digital play and learning in early childhood education and care centres in Western Australia

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This project addresses the technological integration for early childhood educators in the early childhood education sector. The study examines the role of digital self-efficacy among early childhood educators (EC educators) to foster digital play for 4 to 5 year old children in early childhood education and care settings in Western Australia. The EC educators are expected to integrate digital technology to support young children's learning and provide them an opportunity to be digital citizens according to early years curriculum documents. The research highlights variability in the digital self-efficacy of the EC educators. This study explores how educators understand and develop digital self-efficacy, and how their beliefs and contextual factors affect their use of digital technology for fostering digital play for young children aged 4-5 years.

Using a constructivist paradigm and interpretivist epistemology, the research draws on semi structured interviews, document analysis and narrative vignettes to investigate educators lived experiences. The study has been conducted across four different types of early learning centres by purposefully selecting two kindergarten

educators from each centre. Bandura's self-efficacy theory provides the conceptual lens, focusing on the challenges, barriers and enablers for the early childhood educators. Preliminary findings indicate that digital self-efficacy is influenced by the early learning centre contexts, the policies, opportunities for professional learning, and teacher training. The study offers insights for the need of a professional development training for the EC educators, an agency for educators to embed digital play and availability of digital resources to strengthen educators' understanding and confidence to use digital tools for, with and by children to improve their digital self-efficacy.

Frontier masculinities, gender, power and teacher attrition in regional, remote and rural Australian schools

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Teacher attrition in rural, regional, and remote (RRR) Australian schools is a persistent challenge, yet existing research often frames the problem in terms of individual resilience or workforce logistics, obscuring the structural and gendered dynamics that shape retention. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with 21 primary and secondary teachers in a regional mining town and one remote school, this study adopts a critical feminist lens to explore how gender, frontier masculinities, and spatial inequities intersect to produce conditions of precarity for teachers, particularly teacher-mothers. Reflexive thematic analysis revealed five interrelated themes: motivations for working in RRR schools; lack of affordable housing and childcare; limited leadership opportunities for women; hegemonic frontier masculinities and drinking cultures; and exposure to violence, suicide, and trauma. Findings highlight how RRR teaching is structured by entrenched gender hierarchies, localised masculinised cultures, and policy frameworks that neglect gender equity, thereby shaping who remains in the profession and who exits. This study argues that addressing teacher attrition requires critically informed, gender-responsive, and contextually grounded policy interventions that attend to the relational, embodied, and socio-material conditions of teachers' labour in RRR schools.

Mindfulness in vocational education: Exploring students' lived experiences

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While mindfulness is increasingly present in education, its application in vocational education and training (VET) remains under-researched. This study is the third phase of a broader qualitative EdD research design which examined the perceptions and lived experiences of two groups – one focusing on lecturers and the other on students from six vocational disciplines in a large metropolitan TAFE in Western Australia. This presentation discusses the findings from the students' experiences.

Using a phenomenological case study approach, the aim of this study was to better understand how 36 VET students experienced mindfulness after participating in a

six-week mindfulness program. Students reported they associated mindfulness with improved focus and reduced stress, although some experienced discomfort or disengagement, highlighting the importance of emotionally sensitive implementation. The findings highlight both the benefits and challenges of implementing mindfulness in VET. As interest in mindfulness continues to grow, greater understanding of these experiences may help inform how mindfulness is introduced and implemented within vocational education.

Effective blended learning: Understanding institutional adaptation through complex adaptive system

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Blended learning is now an established feature of higher education, with growing attention being paid to its impacts on teaching, learning and institutional practice. Yet less is known about how blended learning becomes embedded and sustained through the combined experiences and interactions of academic and professional staff.

This qualitative study explored the experiences of academic and professional staff ($n = 9$) at an Australian university as they adapted to blended learning following the disruption of Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT). Using Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) as an interpretive lens, semi-structured interviews were analysed to examine staff experiences of this transition and the processes that underpin the ongoing evolution of blended learning. Analysis focused on four interconnected CAS concepts: emergence, inter-dependence, non-linearity and attractor states, alongside constant interactions, feedback and adaptation occurring across the system.

By examining the experiences of both academic and professional staff, this presentation illustrates how blended learning has emerged and stabilised as an attractor state within the higher education system and not as an implemented policy or institutional change. This CAS perspective offers a clearer understanding of institutional adaptation and highlights the importance of recognising inter-dependence, feedback and collective adaptation in shaping sustainable change in higher education.

Smile in the mirror. You look amazing! Pre-service teachers' revelations about their tendencies for harsh self-reflections

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This study is an extension of Nguyen and Ilich (2026) published in *Issues in Educational Research*, 36(1). Fourteen high achieving pre-service teachers (PSTs) volunteered to deliver micro-lessons to illustrate high impact teaching strategies for their peers. They were then asked to respond to a brief questionnaire to reflect on their experience when participating in the micro-teaching activity. *Nvivo* analyses revealed the complexity of the participants' emotional experiences as they grappled

with their teaching effectiveness and the dual identities as students and future teachers. There was a tendency for severe self-criticism, insecurity and an aversion to rewatching their teaching videos. However, after gathering the courage to view their own videos, the PSTs slowly came to terms with their limitations to appreciate their strengths and focus on growth. The study suggests that video-based learning (VBL) offers a useful and objective method to help PSTs avoid subjective, harsh self-condemnation and develop better emotional regulation to build stronger self-efficacy.

From policy to practice: Integrating AI into pre-service early childhood teacher education in Vietnam

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Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping curriculum design, teaching and assessment in higher education, creating new opportunities and challenges for teacher education. Despite growing interest in AI in higher education, there is limited research examining how AI is integrated into pre-service early childhood teacher education in developing country contexts. This study examines academics' perspectives of how AI concepts and tools can be implemented within an early childhood teacher education course at a Vietnamese university and explores the factors perceived shaping this process.

A case study was conducted, drawing on qualitative data that included semi-structured interviews with a course coordinator and a unit coordinator responsible for curriculum design and course delivery. Additionally, relevant institutional and national AI policies, curriculum documents, implementation guidelines, and selected international AI frameworks were also analysed. Data were examined using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis method.

Early interpretations suggested that AI was viewed as an important element of future teacher education, supporting lesson planning, content development, and student learning. However, implementation is influenced by AI literacy, staff confidence, professional learning, curriculum flexibility, institutional support, and concerns regarding ethics, information reliability, and equitable access to technology. This study contributes practical evidence for supporting AI literacy development in pre-service early childhood teacher education and offers recommendations to further curriculum development, educator capability, and responsible AI integration in pre-service teacher preparation programs.

The role of education Consultants: An appreciative inquiry lens

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This presentation examines the role of education consultants in supporting school improvement in Western Australia, through the lens of appreciative inquiry (Cooperider & Whitney, 2005).

Appreciative Inquiry provides a lens for focusing on positives rather than deficits and applies a strengths-based philosophy and a creative process when examining education consultants' roles. The appreciative inquiry process goes through stages in a 5-D cycle: discover, dream, design, and destiny. This process illuminates the potential for education consultants facilitating transformative change. The study allows a refocus, shifting from traditional subjects in educational research (schools, teachers, students and school-leaders), and considers the often-overlooked consultant role that is substantially resourced in most education systems and in Western Australia education sectors.

The presentation aims to provoke discussion on integrating appreciative inquiry principles into research as both a theoretical and methodological approach.

Navigating challenges in school leadership: Experiences of female principals

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This study investigated the challenges experienced by female principals in Catholic composite and secondary schools (CCSS) in Western Australia. Composite schools were defined as schools catering for both primary and secondary students. The research was underpinned by a constructivist paradigm, drawing on an interpretivist approach and a symbolic interactionist perspective to gain insight into participants' lived experiences. An instrumental case study methodology was employed to explore the complexities of female leadership within the Catholic education context.

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with 14 female principals and supplemented by researcher field notes. Analysis of the data revealed six key challenges faced by participants: the multifaceted and demanding nature of the principalship; issues relating to the safety, health and wellbeing of the school community; the breadth of financial and property management responsibilities; increasing compliance and regulatory requirements; limitations in principal preparation processes; and experiences of gender discrimination.

The findings highlight the complexity of leadership roles undertaken by female principals and the unique challenges they encounter within Catholic schooling. In response, three recommendations are proposed for Catholic Education Western Australia: the provision of ongoing and targeted support for female principals, enhanced leadership development focusing on work-life balance and wellbeing, and the implementation of comprehensive strategies to address gender discrimination and promote greater equity in leadership.

Digital citizenship in Bangladesh: Culture, policies and secondary school teachers' perceptions

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In the post-digital era, the lives of secondary school students have become increasingly intertwined with social and digital media. This situation has highlighted

the need for digital citizenship education to avoid the misuse of technology, including cyberbullying and cybercrime. Despite growing global attention, little is known about the status of digital citizenship culture in developing countries such as Bangladesh, especially in relation to secondary schools. This study explores digital citizenship culture and school policy in Dhaka, Bangladesh, focusing on the perceptions and practices of secondary school teachers.

Grounded in an interpretivist paradigm, this qualitative project is guided by the complex adaptive systems and S3 framework of digital citizenship. Data collection will draw on document analysis as well as semi-structured interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, such as secondary school teachers, deputy principals, and recently graduated students. Aiming to contribute to effective digital citizenship frameworks in South Asia, it is anticipated that findings will promote innovation in ICT policy and teachers' professional development.

Premier's Reading Challenge and student engagement: A reflection on student perspectives?

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The Premier's Reading Challenge or equivalent (PRC) is run in every state and territory in Australia, with 2026 being the 25th year of the longest running challenge. The aim of the PRC is to encourage students to develop a lifelong habits of reading for pleasure - "to read, to read more, and to read more widely" (NSW Department of Education, 2026). How effective are these challenges in nurturing student engagement in reading for pleasure, though, and how do schools effectively implement the PRC to maximise these potential benefits?

This presentation will highlight key findings from research which examines the PRC in three Australian states, drawing on experiences and insights from teachers and teacher librarians who run the challenge in schools. Best-practice examples will be highlighted, demonstrating how strong school support of the PRC can reflect the principles of Cremin's *Reading for Pleasure* pedagogy with particular emphasis on the role of an influential reading mentor. The experiences of students will also be explored, presenting selected vignettes of student stories about their developing role as reader through their participation in the PRC, with particular attention to the ways in which the challenge may have impacted this developing reader identity through belonging to a community of readers.

When quality conceals harm: Student experience, education reality, and the limits of measurement

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Standardised education systems promise objectivity, fairness, and quality. What they cannot promise, and are structurally incapable of accounting for, is the full reality of the students who move through them. This presentation argues that contemporary quality frameworks in education do not merely fail to capture student experience;

they are epistemologically designed to exclude it. When quality is defined by what can be ranked and reported, the things that cannot be ranked and reported cease, institutionally, to exist: the midnight self-surveillance, the profound emotional distress, the feeling of having no choice but to endure what academic performance demands.

This presentation draws on a critical realist case study of students navigating Australia's high-stakes ATAR pathway. Using Foucauldian critique of neoliberal governmentality alongside Bhaskar's challenge to the epistemic fallacy, it exposes the ideological architecture that makes structurally produced consequences feel like personal failure. It concludes with an urgent call to reposition student experience, not as supplementary data, but as the primary evidence of whether education is working at all.

From understanding to possibility: Reimagining educational research through Narrative Inquiry and Utopia as Method

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Educational research has long sought to understand and critique educational experience. But what if understanding lived experience is only the beginning? This presentation argues that qualitative research has the potential not only to explain educational realities but also to imagine more ethical and socially just educational futures.

Drawing on my doctoral study of how educators and staff experience and reimagine sexual consent education in Australian all-boys' boarding schools, this presentation uses that context to illustrate how narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and Levitas' *Utopia as method* (2013) work together to reframe qualitative educational research. Narrative inquiry provides a way of understanding lived experience, while *Utopia as method* (2013) extends that understanding towards imagining educational futures. Together, these approaches illustrate what becomes possible when qualitative educational research treats lived experience not as the destination of inquiry, but as the starting point for imagining educational futures.

Through the narratives of seven educators and staff, lived experience becomes more than an object of analysis; it becomes a catalyst for questioning assumptions and imagining new possibilities for educational relationships, policy and practice. Rather than concluding with critique, this presentation invites discussion about how qualitative researchers might reframe lived experience as the beginning — not the endpoint — of research, opening new horizons for imagining more hopeful, ethical and socially just educational futures.

From complex platforms to low cognitive designs: Digital course delivery in vocational education and training

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Digital delivery of vocational education and training (VET) takes place through learning management systems (LMS), digital courses delivered within LMS, and low cognitive design approaches that aim to reduce mental demands on learners. Currently, no theoretical comparison of their effects on VET learners exists in the literature. This study addresses the gap through a conceptual review using theoretical frameworks such as cognitive load theory, cognitive theory of multimedia learning, community of inquiry model, and technology acceptance model, which covers dimensions that determine whether a digital VET delivery environment supports cognitive processing, multimedia design, social and instructional environment, and platform acceptance.

The review finds that the traditional LMS has a strong data infrastructure but imposes the highest risk of extraneous cognitive load and is structurally limited in supporting complex procedural skill development. Digital courses are the delivery format most responsive to evidence-based improvement, with instructional design quality as the primary determinant of their effectiveness. Low cognitive load design approaches address the structural limitations but lack sufficient empirical evidence in VET contexts. The study proposes a conceptual framework that VET institutions and instructional designers can use for a specific learner profile and vocational content type.

Examining the relationship between prison education attendance and incidents of harm and instability

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This study examines correctional statistics drawn from publicly available governmental publications for prisons, from England and Wales, Australia, India, and Nordic Countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland). This study aims to investigate whether there is any correlation between educational attendance and self-harm, assaults on staff and prisoner-on-prisoner assaults.

A correlational design using government datasets was employed with prison education as its independent variable to examine whether attendance is associated with the dependent variables: self-harm, assaults on staff, and prisoner-on-prisoner assaults. The results from England, Wales and India suggest that prison education may be associated with differences in prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, prisoner-on-staff assaults and self-harm. Data from Australia and Nordic countries show weak or no correlations, largely due to the limited available data and small sample sizes. Although findings suggest a positive relationship between prison education and these outcomes, further research is needed using more comprehensive data before a firm conclusion can be drawn.

Linguistic creativity and criticality: English as double-edged catalyst in post-socialist Mongolia

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This presentation introduces my PhD thesis, which explores the sociolinguistic transformations of post-socialist Mongolia through the dual lenses of linguistic *creativity* and *criticality*. Drawing on qualitative methodologies, the study explores how Mongolian young people engage with English in both online and offline contexts.

The thesis is structured as six publications, grouped into two thematic categories. The first theme, *linguistic creativity*, examines how Mongolians creatively use translingual repertoires in daily communication, public signage, and social media platforms. It highlights the dynamic process of *translingualism* and *relocalisation*, in which global linguistic resources are adapted to make meaning in the local contexts. The second theme, *linguistic criticality*, addresses the sociopolitical dimensions of language use, focusing on issues such as linguistic racism, accentism, and inequities in English language education. It critically examines how unequal access to English contributes to marginalisation, particularly for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who face systemic barriers and potential exclusion.

The findings demonstrate that while English operates as a resource for global mobility and modernity, it is also a mechanism that reproduces social hierarchies and exclusionary practices. The thesis contributes to sociolinguistics in a peripheral Asian context and calls for more inclusive, context-sensitive language policies and pedagogies.

How do Indonesian science teachers conceptualise independent learning? Preliminary findings from a qualitative study

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Independent learning is increasingly important in education, yet its meaning is inconsistently understood. Most studies focus on students' independent learning skills or the effectiveness of instructional interventions, with less attention to teachers' views and how those views shape classroom practice. Addressing this gap is important because teachers' beliefs influence how they design learning experiences intended to foster learner independence. I present preliminary findings from a qualitative study examining how middle school science teachers conceptualise independent learning. Data from semi-structured interviews with six teachers across six schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, were analysed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis.

Preliminary analysis indicates that teachers conceptualise independent learning in multiple, interconnected ways. Participants described it as involving learner responsibility and a self-regulatory process of planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reflection. Additionally, teachers viewed independent learning as a pedagogically supported process requiring purposeful instructional guidance. These findings led to a conceptualisation of independent learning as a metacognitively regulated process, supported through purposeful pedagogy. The findings contribute to discussions about independent learning and highlight the importance of understanding teachers' perspectives when promoting learner independence in school contexts. The presentation concludes by considering implications for educational research and classroom practice, particularly in science education.

Developing effective classroom teachers for students with autism through supervised, research-based, classroom training

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Students with autism and other neurodiverse conditions are rapidly increasing in Western Australian schools and teachers report feeling under-prepared to support this population of learners. More effective methods of training pre-service and inservice teachers and other professionals who support this vulnerable population of students are needed. This presentation reports initial findings of a research study measuring the effectiveness of research based, supervised, practical, hands-on training for educators and other professionals who work with individuals with autism.

Research participants received 30 hours of supervised, hands-on training in research-based methods of instruction for students with autism. Research questions were specifically designed to better understand any changes in participants' confidence in working with students with autism as well as changes in specific skills. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilised pre and post to measure any changes. Strengths and limitations of the study will be discussed as well as implications for future research.

Reframing literacy and arts education: A new integrated approach to motivate, engage and connect students

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Arts-based integrated teaching and learning provides powerful opportunities to engage students in literacy in ways that are accessible, motivating, and inclusive, as shown by the research of Chapman et al. (2019), Ewing et al. (2025) and Gray and Pascoe (2025). Arts-integrated learning has also been shown to empower and enable student agency and personal voice (Macintyre et al., 2017), particularly for students who may lack motivation, are neurodiverse, have special educational needs, or are English as an additional language or dialect.

At a time when students are experiencing increasing cognitive overload and teachers are encouraged to rely on 'pay-per-use' programs or 'quick-fix' AI solutions that often lack authenticity, our developing framework demonstrates how teaching through the Arts can support diverse learners, while fostering meaningful engagement in literacy. Drawing on our combined experience as primary-trained educators and academics, this presentation introduces an adaptable framework that enables teachers to connect the SCSA English curriculum and the arts curriculum areas of drama and visual arts to create engaging, authentic learning experiences. We argue that while contexts differ, arts-based literacy learning offers expansive opportunities to strengthen students' engagement, comprehension, expression, confidence and agency, making literacy learning both meaningful and transformative for all students.

Embedding a therapeutic approach into 3-D animated serious games to reduce worry, anxiety, and loneliness in early aged adolescents with neurodevelopmental disorders

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The most prevalent neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs) in mainstream secondary schools are Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and Specific Learning Disorders (SLD). Adolescents with NDDs are at heightened risk of anxiety, depression, and loneliness, with negative interpretive bias contributing to worry and poorer mental health outcomes. Although secondary schools can be complex and ambiguous environments, they also provide opportunities to deliver technology-based interventions. This research sought to determine what adolescents with NDDs worry about, whether this differed from their neurotypical peers, the situations in which ambiguity was encountered, and whether a 3D animated serious game could modify negative interpretive bias and reduce mental health difficulties and loneliness.

Four interrelated studies were conducted. Survey and qualitative findings demonstrated that adolescents with NDDs worried about similar issues and experienced loneliness in similar contexts to their neurotypical peers, particularly in relation to peer relationships, academic success, and the future. *Evaluation of Minds Online*, a 3D animated serious game incorporating Cognitive Bias Modification of Interpretation (CBM-I), demonstrated a shift towards more benign interpretive bias following the intervention, supporting the potential of technology enhanced school-based interventions to improve the mental health and wellbeing of adolescents with NDDs.

Impact of professional learning and development on trainers' efficacy

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This presentation reports findings from a broader study investigating professional learning and development (PLD) among trainers in Indonesian training centres. Specifically, it examines the relationship between trainers' perceptions of PLD impact and their self-reported teaching efficacy. A mixed-methods design was employed, involving survey data from 105 trainers and interview data from 34 participants. Correlation analyses indicated that all three scales of PLD impact, namely reaction, learning, and outcomes of professional learning, were positively associated with teaching efficacy. Among these dimensions, outcomes of professional learning demonstrated the strongest relationship with teaching efficacy. Multiple regression analyses further showed that perceptions of PLD impact explained 27% of the variance in teaching efficacy, with outcomes emerging as the strongest independent predictor.

Qualitative findings provided insight into these relationships by demonstrating that teaching efficacy was strengthened when learning acquired through PLD was translated into professional practice. Participants reported that PLD enhanced their

instructional knowledge, teaching skills, and confidence, particularly when new approaches could be applied in authentic teaching contexts. The findings also highlight the importance of organisational support and targeted development opportunities in facilitating the transfer of learning into practice. Overall, the study suggests that PLD contributes to stronger teaching efficacy when learning extends beyond participation and results in meaningful changes to professional practice.

Rural school libraries as an enabling place and a place of belonging for students, teachers, and parents in the Nagekeo district, Indonesia

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This study explores the role of school libraries in rural, underprivileged communities in the Nagekeo district, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, examining how these spaces function as both enabling environments and sites of belonging for students, teachers, and parents. Using a qualitative research design grounded in thematic analysis, the study honours the diverse voices of the school community by drawing on focus groups with students, parents and teachers, semi-structured one-on-one interviews with librarians and principals, and observations conducted within school libraries. Findings reveal that, beyond their conventional role as repositories of books, rural school libraries serve as vital enabling spaces that foster a sense of belonging, connection, and shared ownership among students, educators, and families. These libraries emerge as sites where equitable literacy development is nurtured and where teaching and learning practices are meaningfully transformed.

This research offers practical insights into the characteristics of an effective rural school library model, with implications for strengthening reading culture and advancing educational equity in underserved communities. The study contributes to broader conversations on school library development, community engagement, and inclusive education in resource-limited contexts, particularly within the Indonesian archipelago and comparable global settings.

Perceptions of principals and faith leaders regarding the transmission of Presentation charism in Australian Presentation schools

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In the current demographic context of the Australian Catholic Church, where many religious congregations are ageing and diminishing, the transmission of charism has become both a significant and urgent responsibility and challenge for lay leadership. We are fast moving towards a world where the Presentation Sisters; a religious congregation, will be known 'more on paper than in person, remembered in history, rather than encountered in relationship.'

The study explored the perceptions of principals and faith leaders nationally regarding the transmission of Presentation charism in Australian Presentation schools. Using a qualitative instrumental case study, the research investigated how principals and faith leaders perceive the nature of Presentation charism, how it is

evidenced in their leadership approaches in Presentation schools, and the perceptions of principals and faith leaders as to what is required to transmit Presentation charism in Australian Presentation schools. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, researcher field notes and a document search. The presentation will provide several recommendations pertinent to the profession and for further research regarding transmission of charism in Catholic education settings.

The politics of visibility: Gender, authority and women university leaders in Chinese higher education

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Efforts to increase the visibility of women in university leadership are often read as evidence of institutional progress. This article questions that assumption by examining how women's leadership authority is publicly represented through official institutional digital materials in Chinese higher education. Drawing on a qualitative interpretive analysis of institution-authorised digital profiles, leadership biographies, portraits, and university news concerning 27 women university leaders in mainland China, the article develops the concept of regulated visibility. The concept synthesises Brighenti's account of visibility as relational and ambivalent with Fraser's distinction between recognition and redistribution.

The analysis shows how official digital representation can recognise women leaders as legitimate institutional figures while also shaping the terms on which their authority becomes publicly recognisable. Across the corpus, women's leadership is represented through formal position, professional and academic achievement, political or institutional alignment, event-mediated visibility, and moralised narratives of service and care. These forms of visibility do not provide evidence of internal decision-making power or the redistribution of institutional authority. Rather, they show how universities publicly stage women's leadership within gendered, organisational and governance-specific conditions. By conceptualising official digital representation as a site of regulated visibility, the research contributes to feminist higher education scholarship on gendered authority, recognition, and the cultural politics of leadership legitimacy.

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