Pepa 1
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Yunqing Xia
University of Auckland

Keywords: Chinese women academic; higher education; narrative study

Returning Home and Facing challenge: Narrative of Chinese Women Academic Returnees in Higher Education

In recent years, the Chinese government has introduced policies encouraging doctoral graduates trained overseas to return, particularly within higher education (MoE, 2021). While academic return is often presented as beneficial for both national development and individual careers (Zweig & Wang, 2013), the experiences of Chinese women academic returnees remain underexplored. This study examines the integration experiences of 20 Chinese women academics who completed doctoral training in Western English-speaking countries before taking academic positions in Chinese universities.

Drawing on a feminist qualitative perspective, this study uses narrative interviews and photovoice method to explore two interrelated dimensions of participants' return trajectories: 1. motivations for returning to China, and 2. gendered challenges encountered during institutional integration. Particular attention is given to how family responsibilities, especially as only daughters under China's one-child policy, intersect with institutional expectations to shape participants' experiences.

Preliminary findings suggest that integration is negotiated through the interaction of gendered family obligations and institutional cultures. The study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of academic return by highlighting how gender, family, and institutional structures jointly shape women's academic careers in contemporary China.

Submitted by: Yunqing Xia, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 2
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Kris LaVenia
The University of Canterbury

Keywords: Autoethnography; Higher education; Embodied inquiry

Knitting Memory, Weaving Community: Craft, Embodied Inquiry, and the Conditions for Flourishing in Higher Education

In universities increasingly shaped by acceleration, fragmentation, and performance pressures, opportunities for meaningful connection and collective care can be difficult to sustain. This autoethnographic study returns to a remembered evening from a monthly knitting group that a colleague and I initiated as university educators seeking opportunities for connection beyond formal academic roles. As we knitted and talked, one colleague remarked that she was delighted to discover co-workers who shared her passions. Recalling the warmth of the room, the rhythmic movement of needles, the feel of wool passing through my hands, and the gradual settling of my body, I use memory as a method of inquiry to examine how ordinary acts of making together illuminate the relational foundations of academic life and offer methodological insights for researchers interested in using memory and embodied inquiry to examine everyday practices of connection and care (Ellis et al., 2011). In doing so, the study speaks to higher education researchers, educators, and academic leaders interested in fostering more relational, sustainable, and humane university communities. Drawing on scholarship on craft and wellbeing, repetitive handwork is understood as a practice that can quiet attention, reduce stress, and foster calm and connection (Corkhill et al., 2014; McCabe & Maguire, 2026). Somatic perspectives highlight how touch, rhythm, and shared presence support emotional regulation and embodied awareness (Ugurlu & Keltner2026). Interpreted through whanaungatanga (relationships), manaakitanga (care), and tiakitanga (stewardship), the knitting group emerges as a modest act of resistance to institutional acceleration, creating opportunities for belonging, mutual care, and embodied presence within higher education.

Submitted by: Kris LaVenia, The University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 3
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Lele Liu
Faculty of Education, University of Canterbury

Keywords: Generative AI; university student perceptions; sociocultural theory

Understanding Students' Perceptions of Generative AI: A Qualitative Study in Higher Education

Generative AI is becoming increasingly embedded in university study, yet students' own perceptions of these tools remain underexplored. This work-in-progress, two-phase qualitative study investigates how university students construct perceptions of GenAI through academic experience, and how those perceptions may continue to develop as students engage further with university study. Informed by sociocultural theory, the study conceptualises these perceptions as mediated by academic practices, institutional guidance, disciplinary and assessment contexts, peer norms, direct tool use, and wider social concerns. Phase One data were generated through semi-structured interviews with ten students enrolled in an entry-level academic writing course at a New Zealand university and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. First-round findings suggest that students' perceptions are not simply positive or negative, but constructed through negotiated boundaries around academic support, trust and verification, authorship and institutional suspicion, learning, and future social responsibility. Phase One analysis has been completed, and a second round of follow-up interviews is planned with the same participants. This follow-up phase examines whether students' perceptions are sustained, clarified, complicated, shifted, or extended with new meanings after further academic experience. The study offers a student-centred perspective on GenAI-mediated learning and academic literacy.

Submitted by: Lele Liu, Faculty of Education, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 5
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Vitor Miranda Ciochetti
University of São Paulo

Keywords: Indigenizing higher education; Indigenous interventions; Indigenous Network; Brazil; Aotearoa.

Reclaiming the University: A dialogue between Pindorama (Brazil) and Aotearoa on Indigenous Interventions in the academy

This paper reflects on a situated attempt to Indigenize the University of São Paulo (USP), located in Pindorama (Brazil). Although USP is one of Brazil's leading public universities, it adopted affirmative action policies only recently. Fewer than 0.1% of its faculty members identify as Indigenous (4 out of 5,306), while Indigenous students make up slightly more than 0.1% of the student body (126 out of 102,766). In this context, I examine the Indigenous Network at USP, a project built through collaborations among professors from the Institute of Psychology, students, and Indigenous communities—particularly the Mbya Guarani of the city of São Paulo—and understood here as a partial, relational, and situated effort to Indigenize the university. Methodologically, the paper draws on a qualitative analysis of the Indigenous Network, based on collaborative fieldwork with its initiatives and articulated with the bibliographical production that records its history and practices, placing this experience in dialogue with the bibliographical production on processes of Indigenizing the university in Aotearoa, especially at the University of Auckland. Through this dialogue between these two contexts, the paper seeks to identify resonances and differences in Indigenous struggles in higher education. It argues that the construction of collaborative work, sustained by ethical dialogues between segments of academia and Indigenous communities, can foster anti-racist formative practices in university curricular policies through actions that generate spaces of belonging, reciprocity between the university and Indigenous peoples, and forms of collective responsibility.

Submitted by: Vitor Miranda Ciochetti,
University of São Paulo

V1 12112026

Pepa 6
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Siqi Li
University of Canterbury

Keywords: AI; Foreign language speaking anxiety; Willingness to communicate

Exploring the Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Chatbots on Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety （FLSA） and Willingness to Communicate （WTC) amongst Chinese International Students in a New Zealand University

Recent advances in generative artificial intelligence (AI) have transformed English language learning, particularly speaking practice. While AI chatbots offer immediate feedback, flexible access, and personalised interaction, their influence on learners' emotional experiences, such as Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA) and Willingness to Communicate (WTC), remains insufficiently understood. This is especially relevant for Chinese international students in New Zealand, many of whom experience high speaking anxiety and limited opportunities for English communication outside the classroom. Drawing on Sociocultural Theory (SCT) as the overarching framework, this study will investigate how AI-mediated speaking practice may influence learners' emotional and communicative experiences. Key SCT constructs, including mediation, scaffolding, the Zone of Proximal Development, internalisation, and perezhivanie, will be used to explore how AI tools may shape language learning processes. FLSA and WTC will be adopted as analytic lenses to examine learners' affective and communicative development during AI-supported speaking practice. Using a qualitative longitudinal multiple-case study approach, the research will follow approximately 8–12 Chinese international students enrolled in New Zealand universities. Following ethics approval, data will be collected through semi-structured pre-, mid-, and post-interviews, AI–learner interaction transcripts, and reflective journals over a 12-week period. The study aims to explore how learners experience changes in speaking anxiety and willingness to communicate, and how AI-mediated speaking practice may influence their English-speaking experiences both within AI-supported interactions and in real-life human-to-human communication contexts. The presentation will outline the study design and discuss the anticipated contributions of the research. In particular, it will consider how AI chatbots may function as mediational tools that provide accessible, low-pressure opportunities for speaking practice, potentially supporting learners' confidence and communicative engagement. The study aims to contribute to emerging discussions on AI-enhanced language learning and provide insights for educators working with international students in higher education contexts.

Submitted by: Siqi Li, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 7
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Qian Li
University of Canterbury, NZ

John Everatt
University of Canterbury, NZ

Jean Kim
University of Canterbury, NZ

Lily Ping
University of Canterbury, NZ

Keywords: Digital Multimodal Composing; EFL Writing Performance; Learner Engagement

Digital Multimodal Composing and Writing Performance and Engagement among Chinese English Language Learners in Higher Education

Framed by a multimodal approach to learning, the Multiple Representation Thesis in writing, and a multidimensional perspective of engagement, this mixed-methods study examined whether writing performance and engagement were associated with completing digital multimodal composing tasks, including PowerPoint presentations and video-making. Participants were Chinese university EFL students in compulsory English courses. Some (n=148) completed courses involving English writing tasks only (monomodal) whereas others (n=140) completed courses involving English tasks that also comprised PowerPoint presentations and video-making (multimodal). English writing assessments were administered at the beginning and end of the courses, with an engagement questionnaire completed at the end. Quantitative data were analysed using two-way ANOVA to examine differences between monomodal and multimodal classrooms and across English writing proficiency levels. Results indicated that both groups improved writing performances from pre- to post-test across content, organisation, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. However, there were no significant differences between two groups. Additionally, higher-proficiency learners demonstrated higher engagement than lower-proficiency learners but no significant differences between monomodal and multimodal groups were found except that the monomodal group showed greater cognitive engagement. End-of-course interviews with students experiencing multimodal composing were analysed thematically to consider its benefits and challenges in Chinese EFL classes.

Submitted by: Qian Li, University of Canterbury, NZ

V1 12112026

Pepa 8
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Jie Li
University of Canterbury

John Everatt
University of Canterbury

Jo Fletcher
University of Canterbury

Jean Kim
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Intercultural competence, Chinese university EFL students,

Intercultural Competence and Chinese University English Foreign Language Students

Intercultural Competence (IC) can be seen as supporting the ability to communicate effectively across cultures, which has the potential to support foreign language development. This research aims to investigate IC among Chinese university students studying English Foreign Language (EFL) in China. As a starting point, there is the need for a theoretically based reliable assessment of IC. The research reported in this presentation reports the development of such a scale based on Byram's (1997, 2021) framework. Three studies involving over 400 Chinese students resulted in a questionnaire comprising the five factors in Byram's model: attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness. The scale and factors showed good evidence for validity and reliability, including relationships with a similar scale (Chao, 2014). This evidence will be discussed and provide a basis for investigating proposed relationships between IC and EFL learning. Further studies looking for relationships between the IC and reading comprehension will be discussed, as well as the perspectives of 10 university teachers considering using IC in their EFL classrooms. The findings of these studies will be used to consider the theoretical and practical features of IC within a context of EFL.

Submitted by: Jie Li, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 9
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Rita Stageman
Unitec, School of Healthcare and Social Practice

Hayden Pyke
Unitec, School of Healthcare and Social Practice

Keywords: Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs), Professional education, Equity

Exploring Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences in Professional Education

This presentation explores the application of Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) to professional education programmes. Unlike traditional, faculty-mentored research, CUREs democratise access by engaging whole classes in authentic research experiences, demonstrating particular benefits for first-in-family and underrepresented students. This approach resonates with whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and tiakitanga, providing collaborative research processes that build relationships, offering guided and supported experiences to students, and ensuring a protected classroom environment that allows students to take the risks research requires.

The authors present an exploratory pilot study adapting the CURE model to an undergraduate social work course, where students generated research questions based on child welfare content covered in class, then investigated these using secondary datasets. Of the nine students who completed a validated post-course survey, eight reported much or extensive gains in research skills, all reported large/very large gains in ethical conduct, and eight reported large/very large gains in self-confidence. Given the small sample, findings are presented descriptively. While CUREs remain largely unexamined outside the hard sciences, this pilot suggests the model may translate successfully to professional education. Given the cultural rationale offered here, dedicated research into Māori and Pasifika students' experiences of CUREs is discussed as an important next step.

Submitted by: Rita Stageman, Unitec

V1 12112026

Pepa 11
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Associate Professor Patrick Shepherd
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Synaesthesia; colour; Arts education

Using colour to unlock Arts learning: Synaesthesia as a useful tool for educators

Synaesthesia is a neurologically based condition in which stimulation of one sensory or cognitive pathway automatically and involuntarily triggers experiences in another, such as hearing colours or assigning colours to letters and numbers. Beyond being a curiosity, synaesthesia offers a powerful lens for understanding learning as multisensory integration. Research suggests it is relatively common—perhaps as frequent as 1 in 23 people—and shows notable overlap with dyslexia, indicating shared differences in neural connectivity (Ward, 2013). Participants in this study were initially recruited through media and advertising, then completed tests of genuineness (TOGs), questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. They described their synaesthetic experiences, everyday applications, and its influence on creativity and learning. Particular attention was given to audition colorée (coloured hearing), the most common form, and its relevance to music education within the Arts learning area of the New Zealand Curriculum. Data gathered from nearly two decades of research on synaesthetes across Aotearoa New Zealand suggest that synaesthesia may function as a cognitive tool, enriching memory, association, and creative thinking. This aligns with neurological accounts emphasising cross-activation between sensory regions (Ramachandran & Hubbard, 2001). Rather than asking whether synaesthesia enhances creativity, this research reframes it as a resource for designing richer, more inclusive, multisensory approaches to learning in the arts.

Submitted by: Associate Professor Patrick Shepherd, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 12
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Millie Locke
University of Auckland

Keywords: relational pedagogy, place responsive education, sustainability of practice

Sustaining Embodied, Relational, Place-Responsive Music Education

This paper draws on long-term engagement in music education across school and university contexts to examine how an embodied, relational, place-responsive pedagogy, grounded in situated and experiential ways of knowing and being, is enacted, and what conditions enable or constrain its sustainability in contemporary education. It adopts a practice-informed approach, drawing on sustained professional experience alongside theoretical reflection.

Embodied, relational, and place-responsive approaches to music education can be enacted in ways that foreground music as a primary mode of knowing, with other arts disciplines integrated to support relational learning. However, their ongoing sustainability depends on more than individual enactment, requiring conditions that enable them to be shared, recognised, and collectively sustained over time.

The paper argues that such pedagogy depends on supportive conditions, including collegial relationships, shared frameworks, and participation in communities of practice. Drawing on experience within ONZA (Orff New Zealand Aotearoa), alongside wider professional structures such as MENZA and the emergence of the Arts SIG, the paper highlights both the potential and fragility of these conditions. The issue is not whether good practice exists, but whether the conditions exist that allow it to endure.

Submitted by: Millie Locke, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 13
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Dr Brontë Jones
The University of Auckland

Keywords: Performing Arts; Intersectionality; Pedagogy

Title: Whanaungatanga in Motion: Performing Arts as Engaged Pedagogy in ITE

This paper presentation explores the performing arts studio as a site of Whanaungatanga; a vital site for connection that realises the transformative potential of the performing arts (Dance and Drama) in Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Drawing on my doctoral research and experiences as a first year Professional Teaching Fellow, I examine the performing arts studio as a site of whanaungatanga, where pre-service teachers engage in collaborative, inquiry-based practices that foster deep, relational connections. The study investigates how arts-based pedagogies serve as a foundation for challenging existing conventions in ITE, promoting a shift toward inclusive, equitable teaching practices. Through an exploration of pedagogy, this presentation provides a framework for how teacher educators can better facilitate spaces that are culturally responsive, critical, and value intersectionality. Drawing upon bell hooks' concept of engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994) and Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) framework of intersectionality, this study examines how the performing arts studio can foster a space where student teachers navigate the complex, intersecting identities of their learners. This research underscores the necessity of the arts in ITE as a core pedagogical strategy for developing teachers who are connected, caring, and critical. References Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. University of Chicago Legal Forum, 1989(1), 139–167. hooks, b. (1994). Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom. Routledge.

Submitted by: Dr Brontë Jones, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 14
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Gisela de Castro
The University of Waikato

Keywords: children's letters; digital archive; reading platform

AFOA.NZ: The Procedures and Outcomes of an Interactive Videobook Based on Children's Letters About Their Places in Aotearoa New Zealand.

A Flight Over Aotearoa New Zealand (www.afoa.nz) is a multimodal research-creation that investigates creative processes by developing an open-access digital reading platform from text, image, sound, animation, and interactivity. The puzzle-based methodology granted freedom to young authors and collaborators, engaged them in creative productions, and enabled diverse representation, while organising the surprising audiovisual outputs into an interactive videobook for children based on children's letters in Aotearoa. Through children's epistolary production, seventy letters have been curated and transformed into 22 animations, each linked to an NZ region on an interactive map. This approach offers possibilities of reading and place-based knowledge through intersections of geography, literature, music, design, visual arts, and audiovisual media. Supported by Vilém Flusser's thoughts (The Codified World, 2007), the investigation invites reflection on how re-reading those letters beyond literature by 'audiovisualising' them. The geopoetic approaches and fibre-based practices of contemporary artists, such as Anna Bella Geiger (1933), Sheila Hicks (1934) and Alexandra Kehayoglou (1982), inspired the platform's aesthetic. The results were impressive. Children demonstrated strong environmental awareness and discussed social justice and urban challenges. The project aims to present the outcomes of these creative processes to further engage new students in reading and writing. Potentially, the research can assist educators by sharing this innovative digital material. This reading platform and digital archive serve as both a literary work and a research database, facilitating future studies on how children perceive their place in the 2020s, valuing their voices, and exploring transdisciplinary methodologies for new ways of reading.

Submitted by: Gisela de Castro, The University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 15
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 529
SIG: Assessment

Hancine Samvelyan
academyEX, Auckland, New Zealand

Keywords: interactive oral assessment; authenticity; complex environments

Speaking in Motion: Oral Assessment in an Age of Disruption

Over the last five years, interactive oral assessments (IOAs) have been implemented in a range of tertiary education environments. Initially, IOAs were used to enhance assessment authenticity, bolster equity and act as a bulwark against student misuse of artificial intelligence in assessments. From this perspective, IOAs were implemented in a masters programme at academyEX with the express purpose of enhancing assessment equity. Shortly afterwards, two other masters programmes at academyEX implemented IOAs to respond to the increasing need for assessment forms that could make learner thinking more visible, support accessibility and create space for dialogic reflection. In these contexts, IOAs became a site of humanness, namely restoring equity by honouring oral and indigenous knowledge traditions, and asserting authenticity in an era where AI-generated written submissions increasingly obscure the learner behind the work. This paper presents research conducted across three masters programmes in the form of a qualitative multiple case study research design, supported by cross-narrative analysis and synthesis. Abductive reasoning is used to strengthen triangulation of the literature review, the narratives and some expertise in education and technology. The empirical findings provide grounded support for a theoretical framework that explains how IOAs evolve across complex and rapidly evolving environments.

Submitted by: Herbert Thomas,
academyEX, Auckland, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 16
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 529
SIG: Assessment

Amy Hooper
University of Canterbury

Mark LaVenia
University of Canterbury

Jane McChesney
University of Canterbury

Valerie Sotardi
University of Canterbury

John Everatt, University of Canterbury

Keywords: Numeracy, Mathematics, Assessment

Can Paper Make a Difference? The Impact of Supporting Materials on Digital Numeracy Assessment Outcomes

In 2024, Aotearoa New Zealand introduced the Numeracy Common Assessment Activity (CAA), a high-stakes digital assessment that is a co-requisite for all NCEA levels. Despite advantages, this shift to a digital delivery can lead to parity/equity concerns. Implementation varies across schools, with some providing printed copies of the examination to support students' working and others restricting students to the digital platform alone. This can create a non-standardised assessment environment, potentially compromising the comparability of results. Forming the beginning of a doctoral research project, this study explores factors that may impact comparability. Literature indicates that divergence from paper-based to digital-screen based presentations can lead to disparity. Different types of mathematics items may be prone to procedural impacts: complex, multi-step tasks benefit from scratch/note paper, diagrams/figures, etc. How these are used with screen versus paper presentation is being tested in an ongoing study contrasting different presentation formats given to a group of Year 10 students. Types of questions (e.g., those with more complex language or assessing different cognitive skills) also impact performance, and contrasting each will inform assessment process. The findings aim to inform more equitable and consistent approaches to the implementation of digital Numeracy CAAs within New Zealand schools.

Submitted by: Amy Hooper, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 18
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Rehua 529
SIG: Assessment

Yan Wu
University of Canterbury, NZ

John Everatt
University of Canterbury, NZ

Jo Fletcher
University of Canterbury, NZ

Lily Ping
University of Canterbury, NZ

Keywords: Reading comprehension; Multilingual learners; Literal and critical reading

Assessing Literal and Critical Reading Comprehension across Chinese and English

Understanding written text is a key part of academic learning in increasingly globalising education contexts, where students are expected to engage with both literal and critical reading. However, reading comprehension is often treated as a single construct in assessment, despite involving multiple dimensions and processes. This research focuses on literal and critical reading in the first language (L1-Chinese) and second language (L2-English) of Chinese university English Foreign Language learners. Both dimensions are important for academic success, but how they develop across languages in multilingual learners needs further research. The initial part of the project involved the development of measures in Chinese and English assessing literal and critical reading. The four measures were based on comprehension frameworks and evaluated in terms of item properties, difficulty, and overall scale statistics. Data were collected from L1-Chinese students (N>60 per study) in China using L2-English in academic reading. This presentation will discuss the findings and the challenges of operationalising and assessing more complex reading skills in multilingual contexts. This study suggests that current approaches to assessing reading comprehension may not fully capture differences between literal and critical reading, highlighting the importance of accurate representation of learner ability in globalising education contexts.

Submitted by: Yan Wu, University of Canterbury, NZ

V1 12112026

Pepa 19
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Jessica Smith
UCOL

Associate Professor Tara McLaughlin
Massey University

Associate Professor Zhenlin Wang
Massey University

Dr Linda Clarke
Massey University

Keywords: Social-emotional teaching, teaching strategies, teachers' knowledge

Social-emotional teaching and learning: ECE teachers' strategies in Aotearoa New Zealand

This presentation explores the importance of social-emotional teaching and learning within Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Aotearoa New Zealand. Grounded in social constructivist theory, this first phase of the presenters' doctoral research explores ECE teachers' perspectives of social-emotional teaching and learning, the strategies teachers use to support this learning, and how teachers' own wellbeing influences their social-emotional teaching.

Utilising a quantitative research design, a survey was distributed widely across ECE services and data were collected over three months in early 2026. A total of 326 responses were recorded, with over 70% of respondents being in a teacher or head teacher role and the remainder in an in-training, support, or management roles. This survey investigated teachers' knowledge of social-emotional teaching and learning, and their confidence in implementing teaching strategies drawn from Kōwhiti Whakapae. This survey also explored how participants had gained their knowledge of social-emotional strategies, and the relationship between teacher wellbeing and the capacity to effectively support tamariki social-emotional learning.

Initial findings of this phase of the doctoral research contribute to growing understanding of approaches used to support tamariki to develop social-emotional competence within ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand. Findings also explore how teachers have gained their knowledge of social-emotional teaching strategies (such as initial teacher education, resources, and professional learning and development), and how teachers' wellbeing impacts on social-emotional teaching. By identifying both enabling factors and barriers to implementation, this research provides insight into how ECE settings can support teachers to foster tamariki social-emotional competence. These findings have implications for strengthening teacher education, informing professional learning opportunities, and supporting policy and practice that prioritises teacher wellbeing and high-quality social-emotional teaching.

Submitted by: Jessica Smith, UCOL

V1 12112026

Pepa 20
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Raella Kahuroa
University of Waikato

Hoana McMillian
University of Waikato

Keywords: early childhood; educational time; indigenous pedagogy

Attending to āta: Relational temporalities in early childhood education

Contemporary education systems are frequently shaped by constructions of time that privilege efficiency, productivity, and measurable outcomes. Within early childhood education, such temporal orientations can constrain opportunities for relational attentiveness and meaningful engagement. This paper presents emerging work from a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI) project exploring āta as a bicultural orientation toward time in early childhood education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. While āta can function linguistically as an intensifier, this study engages with āta as invoking intentionality within pedagogical relationships and processes. Grounded in kaupapa Māori methodology, the project works alongside kaiako from a kindergarten and kōhanga reo to explore how relationships are experienced and enacted within everyday pedagogical life. Focusing specifically on pūrākau journals generated by kaiako, this presentation examines the use of pūrākau as method for noticing and interpreting the relational flow of time as experienced by kaiako. Emerging analysis using a mauri model suggests that āta privileges intentional and relational ways of being that shape how care, attentiveness, and engagement are enacted within educational settings. The paper argues that attention to āta and mauri offers possibilities for rethinking dominant constructions of educational time. In doing so, it contributes to contemporary conversations concerning Indigenous pedagogies, relational ethics, and culturally grounded approaches to meaningful engagement in early childhood education.

Submitted by: Raella Kahuroa,
University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 21
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 9:45:00 AM to 10:15:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Xingmin Zhong
The University of Auckland

Keywords: Children's humour; Phenomenography; Phronetic Iterative Analysis

Children's Ways of Experiencing Humour in Early Childhood Education: A Phenomenographic Study Using Phronetic Iterative Analysis

Young children's humour is often studied through adult-defined categories, developmental accounts, or observable responses such as smiling and laughter. While such work has shown that humour matters for children's social, emotional, and cognitive lives, it tells us less about how children themselves understand what is funny, what humour does, and how humorous moments unfold in everyday relationships. In this presentation, I explore the methodological possibilities of combining phenomenography (Hajar, 2021; Marton, 1981) with Phronetic Iterative Analysis (PIA) (Tracy, 2018) to study children's humour in early childhood education. Drawing on a qualitative study with twelve Chinese preschool children aged 4–6, including six focal children, data were generated through naturalistic observations, informal conversations, video-supported reflection, and narrative-based creative activities such as drawing, storytelling, role-play, and photography. Phenomenography oriented the analysis towards variation in children's ways of experiencing humour, while PIA supported iterative movement between children's emic meanings, field notes, analytic memos, and theory-informed interpretation. PIA helps explain how a particular way children understand humour is produced in interaction; phenomenography frames this as one way humour becomes meaningful for children. Emerging analysis suggests humour may be understood as a situated, relational, and co-constructed meaning-making rather than a fixed trait or behaviour.

Submitted by: Xingmin Zhong, Faculty of Arts and Education, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 22
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Monica Cameron
Te Rito Maioha - Early Childhood New Zealand

Keywords: Assessment, Disability, ECE

Teachers' assessment of children with disabilities in early childhood education (ECE)

Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 2017) is founded on the values of inclusion, empowerment, belonging and the right of every child, including those with disabilities, to participate with and learn alongside their peers. Teachers' assessment practices are in turn expected to reflect these values and to empower all learners. However, assessing children with disabilities remains an ongoing challenge for many ECE teachers (Cameron, in press).

This presentation reports on current approaches to assessing children with disabilities, drawing from a broader survey exploring ECE teachers' assessment knowledge, practices and purposes. The survey incorporated both open and closed questions, with statistical and thematic analysis then used to examine the 254 responses. Findings highlighted that teachers recognised assessment as being vital for promoting equity and supporting the rights of children with disabilities. However, study findings also showed possible contradictions, such as the role of formal assessment tools. Potential gaps in teachers' assessment knowledge and practices, such as the range of tools available, were also identified.

These findings raise questions about the assessment of children with disabilities and how teachers can ensure this happens in ways that align with Te Whāriki. The potential implications of current practices, and suggestions for strengthening and researching the assessment of children with disabilities will be outlined, and will be of interest to teachers, academics, policymakers, and stakeholders.

Submitted by: Monica Cameron, Te Rito Maioha - Early Childhood New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 24
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Jo Ward
Te Rito Maioha

Keywords: Belonging, inclusion, whanaungatanga

Belonging in Action: Supporting Kaiako from Minority Cultures in ECE Settings

This presentation draws on qualitative research exploring the experiences of belonging among kaiako from minority cultures in early childhood education settings in Tāmaki Makaurau. While Te Whāriki positions belonging as foundational, findings indicate that kaiako belonging is often complex with limited opportunities to express their culture and identity. Participants in this research described tensions between "fitting in" and authentically belonging, highlighting the impact of unexamined assumptions, lack of voice, and constrained spaces for cultural expression. At the same time, the research identified practices that foster belonging, including relational trust, recognition of identity, and inclusiveness.

Responding to the conference theme of Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga, Manaakitanga, this presentation moves beyond identifying barriers to offer practical, strategies for leaders and teaching teams. These include creating intentional spaces for dialogue, embedding culturally sustaining practices, and rethinking induction, communication, and shared leadership. By centering kaiako voices, this presentation contributes to collective efforts to strengthen inclusive, equitable early childhood environments where diversity is not only acknowledged but meaningfully enacted.

Submitted by: Jo Ward, Te Rito Maioha

V1 12112026

Pepa 25
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Jingyi Guo
University of Waikato

Keywords: early childhood education centres, migrant families, (not)belonging

Migrant Families (Not)Belonging in and through an Early Childhood Educational Centre in Hamilton, Aotearoa

Ongoing migration has made early childhood education (ECE) centres diverse spaces, where families from different cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds come together. These centres are not only places where children gather, learn and play, they are also important spaces in which migrant families negotiate belonging, difference, care, institutional expectations and community connection. Informed by geographies of education, children's geographies and relational theories of space and place, I consider ECE settings as educational spaces where children, parents and teachers collectively shape migrant family (not)belonging. Based on an ethnographic study in a culturally diverse ECE centre in Hamilton, Aotearoa New Zealand, the research draws on immersive observation, parent interviews, teacher micro-focus groups, child-centred participatory methods and reflexive fieldnotes. Through children's routines, friendships, emotions and learning of new norms, migrant parents become familiar with local education practices, teachers, other families, and wider community expectations. Also, everyday interactions within the centre shape how migrant families are included, recognised, or made to feel out of place. I present initial findings that children's agency, together with everyday human and more-than-human encounters in ECE spaces shape migrant families' experiences and negotiations of (not)belonging, these processes extend beyond the centre to support wider community connection and social cohesion.

Submitted by: Jingyi Guo, University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 26
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:55:00 PM to 3:25:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Dilini Chathurika Pallege Ralalage
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, Aotearoa, New Zealand

Keywords: Environmental Literacy , Play Pedagogies, Eco-spirituality

Teachers' Perceptions of Affordances and Challenges in Promoting Young Children's Environmental Literacy (EL) through Play Pedagogies in Sri Lankan Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centres

Teachers' Perceptions of Affordances and Challenges in Promoting Young Children's Environmental Literacy (EL) through Play Pedagogies in Sri Lankan Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centres Chathurika, P.R.D1, Ritchie, J2, Glasgow, A3, chathupall@myvuw.ac.nz, jenny.ritchie@vuw.ac.nz, ali.glasgow@vuw.ac.nz Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, Aotearoa, New Zealand This presentation draws from a doctoral project that explored how participating Sri Lankan teachers perceived their affordances and challenges in promoting young children's environmental literacy through play pedagogies in Sri Lankan ECE centres. This qualitative study adopted an ethnographic approach and was theoretically grounded in a sociocultural perspective intersecting with Buddhist philosophy. Findings are primarily derived from video-stimulated recall interviews with the head teacher at the focal centre and a video-cued focus group interview with three further teachers from different ECE centres, and used reflexive thematic analysis. Affordances included the teachers' own childhood experiences, particularly those involving nature play and participating in religious communities and families together with the professional mentorship and teaching experiences, shaped their understanding of the aims and benefits of play-based and eco-spiritual pedagogies in promoting environmental literacy. Two primary challenges emerged, which appeared to exert interconnected influence: parents' misconceptions regarding learning with nature-based play and the competitive and academically orientated ECE system in Sri Lanka. These challenges were found to limit the duration and the frequency of promoting immersive nature play experiences in ECE settings. Raising parental awareness, involving parents and grandparents in nature-based programmes, and governmental policy changes were identified as necessary steps to address these challenges. Overall, these insights offer a novel theoretical lens, demonstrating how this Buddhist grounded sociocultural context particularly informed these teachers' perceptions regarding fostering environmental literacy among young children as an intergenerational approach to ecological sustainability.

Submitted by: Dilini Chathurika Pallege Ralalage, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, Aotearoa, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 27
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Dr Emela Achu Fenmachi

Keywords: Culturally Responsive Pedagogies, Parent-teacher Relationships & Collective Upbringing

Concepts of Early Childhood Learning and Development in Cameroon, West Africa.

Culturally responsive teaching approaches recognise children's everyday experiences, cultural beliefs and language to ensure positive learning outcomes. This study explores conceptions of early childhood learning and development in Cameroon, drawing on parents' and teachers' perceptions of parental involvement and children's holistic development. The study is framed by socio-cultural and West African perspectives of childhood and development, foregrounding relationality, collective care and responsibility in children's learning and well-being. Data were obtained through semi-structured interviews, observations, field notes, and informal conversations, providing rich insights into everyday experiences and practices shaping childhood. Findings revealed the important role of parents, siblings, extended family members and the community in nurturing children's development and the need for responsive and reciprocal home-school connections. Analysis further revealed the challenges between Euro-Western educational models and indigenous practices, underscoring the importance of inclusive teaching and learning environments that honour indigenous knowledge and caregiving practices. These findings are also relevant in multicultural contexts like Aotearoa New Zealand, whereby acknowledging and valuing different values and beliefs, strengthening partnerships with whānau and embedding culturally responsive pedagogy can enhance equitable and positive outcomes for all children.

Submitted by: Dr Emela Achu Fenmachi,
Centre for Education and Foundation Pathways, Waikato Institute of Technology (WINTEC), Hamilton.

V1 12112026

Pepa 28
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:15:00 AM to 10:45:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Noviana Mustapa
Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Siti Aisyah
Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Erie Siti Syarah
Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Keywords: food literacy, early childhood education, ethnopedagogy, local wisdom, learning stories, project-based learning.

Contextualizing Food Literacy in Early Childhood Education: An Ethnopedagogical Learning Model Based on Indonesian Local Food Wisdom

Food literacy in early childhood education extends beyond knowledge of healthy eating; it encompasses children's ability to recognize, appreciate, prepare, and make informed food choices within their cultural and social contexts. The aim of this study is to develop an ethnopedagogy-based learning model for teaching food literacy in early childhood education by integrating local wisdom and cultural food practices and project-based learning. This research employed a qualitative approach using a learning stories approach as an assessment strategy to document children's learning processes, participation, meaning making and emerging competencies. Ethnopedagogy informed the research design by positioning local food wisdom, cultural practices, family knowledge, and community traditions as the foundation for learning activities, while the learning stories approach guided the analysis by interpreting children's actions, conversations, and artifacts as evidence of culturally situated food literacy development. The participants were 30 preschool teachers and 250 preschool children who participated in 15 project-based learning programs conducted in preschools in Indonesia. Data were gathered through teacher observations, learning story documentation, children's project work, reflective conversations and artifacts of learning. The findings suggest that local wisdom offers rich pedagogical resources for introducing food literacy through familiar ingredients, traditional food preparation, community practices and collaborative inquiry. The model based on ethno-pedagogy encouraged children to explore food through sensory experiences, cultural stories, hands on activities, and social interaction, including observing colors and textures, smelling local ingredients, touching and sorting food materials, washing, mixing, shaping, and preparing simple traditional foods in respectful and meaningful ways. Teachers reported that the learning stories approach enabled more authentic assessment by capturing children's curiosity, collaboration, communication, independence, and cultural appreciation. In conclusion, the study reveals that the integration of ethnopedagogy in food literacy and project-based learning constitutes a meaningful model for early childhood education, promoting children's health awareness, cultural identity, and active participation in learning.

Submitted by: Noviana Mustapa,
Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

V1 12112026

Pepa 29
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Sophia Li
Manukau Institute of Technology

Keywords: postdigital education, relational pedagogy, ECE

Re-anchoring Education in Postdigital Conditions: What Early Childhood Education Can Teach AI-Saturated Systems

Technology has become deeply embedded in all levels of education. Platforms, AI tools, and digital systems now shape how teaching, communication, assessment, and learning take place. But what happens when these systems stop working? A major global disruption to learning platforms in May 2026 revealed not only technical problems, but also a deeper question: what keeps learning together when the technology fails?

This presentation argues that Early Childhood Education (ECE) may have important lessons for the wider education sector in technology-saturated times. While ECE is often positioned at the margins of technological innovation, the field has long centred relationships, responsiveness, flexibility, and human connection. These qualities become especially crucial when digital systems become unstable or uncertain. Drawing on postdigital perspectives, this presentation explores how ECE approaches to teaching and learning can help re-anchor education within increasingly technology-dependent environments. Rather than asking how ECE should adapt to technology, this presentation asks what the rest of education can learn from ECE about sustaining learning, trust, and continuity in changing postdigital conditions.

This conceptual paper employs a postdigital theoretical lens and critical literature synthesis to develop an argument about how ECE relational pedagogies can inform responses to technological disruption. The presentation also aims to open a wider kōrero about educator roles, relational pedagogy, and what matters most when technology can no longer hold everything together.

Submitted by: Sophia Li, Manukau Institute of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 30
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Saba Javed
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Emotions, ECE teachers flourishing, Martha Nussbaum, Te Whāriki

Teachers' Emotionality and Flourishing in Te Whāriki through Nussbaum's Intelligence of Emotions

This paper foregrounds the importance of teachers' emotions and flourishing in early childhood education by drawing on Martha Nussbaum's concept of the intelligence of emotions as cognitive, evaluative, and intelligent. Emotions, in Nussbaum's view, possess the power to change the inner world by influencing thoughts, judgements, and actions. Human flourishing is therefore deeply intertwined with the emotional life of humans. By foregrounding emotions in this way, the study positions them as central to enhancing their emotional and overall well-being through a document analysis approach. This study aims to close textual reading of Te Whāriki to investigate how teachers' emotions are represented, implied, or overlooked within its principles, strands, and learning outcomes. Positioning emotions at the centre of curriculum interpretation opens space for strengthening teachers' emotional well-being, their flourishing, and recognizing its role in high-quality early childhood education. This perspective highlights the need to value teachers' emotional lives not as peripheral but as foundational to their professional flourishing and to the learning environments they create. Ultimately, the study implies that acknowledging teachers' emotional lives is essential for shaping policy, curriculum design, and professional learning that support manaakitanga, relational practice, and the flourishing of the early childhood workforce, thereby enhancing children's development.

Submitted by: SABA JAVED(Author),
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 31
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Kathleen Keisha Constantino
University of Auckland

Keywords: Reflexive journaling; Decolonial methodology; Early childhood education (ECE) research

Reflexive Journaling as a Methodological Tool for Early Childhood Research

Reflexive journaling is already widely used in qualitative education research. However, it is often used as an ethical and hygenic research practice than as a site for analysis. This work repositions reflexive journaling as a methodological tool for early childhood education (ECE) research. Drawing on experience from an ongoing study on intergenerational learning within Filipino families, I am learning that my own interpretive frames and language choices actively shape what I have heard from the families of young children during the first round of pakikipagkwentuhan (storytelling) sessions. To address this in the succeeding data collection activities, I began using reflexive journaling during data collection and immersion, and in first-cycle coding. This surfaced contradictions between my framework-laden expectations and participants' own accounts of teaching, care, and cultural transmission. I theorise that reflexive journals can be analysed as a documentation of researchers' own expectations and interpretations. It also functions as a decolonial brake that ensures researchers stay grounded in the families' own language and perspectives, and that interrupts premature thematic conclusions during preliminary analysis. With this, I offer practical tools such as prompts, reflexive memos, and coding techniques that hold the families' in vivo phrasing as the spine of analysis. It is my hope that sharing this methodological practice can inform ECE researchers in their commitment to centring family and community knowledges.

Submitted by: Kathleen Keisha Constantino, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 32
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Dr. Madoka Takemoto

Keywords: Culturally sustaining practice, superdiversity, belonging

Early childhood community supporting cultural navigation of Japanese children in New Zealand

Aotearoa New Zealand is now superdiverse, characterised by the rapid increase in diverse ethnic population and diverse social environments This presentation aims to support developing ideas of culturally sustaining practice in New Zealand early childhood context embracing unknown and differences. This presentation draws on the presenter's doctoral thesis, which investigated five Japanese children's experiences in different ECEC settings in New Zealand. A qualitative multiple case study method was used to analyse children's experiences through child observation, parent interview, teacher interview, and policy analysis. Rogoff's Learning by Observing and Pitching In framework (2014; 2021) was used as a theoretical framework along with critical multiculturalism theory to view the children in the context of New Zealand early childhood settings. The particular focus for this presentation is how members of the ECEC community, including parents and teachers, supported the Japanese children in developing their cultural identity and sense of belonging. 居場所ibasho, a Japanese traditional concept of a space where you can be yourself, is used as a key notion. The findings showed the significance of culturally sustaining practice of both parents and teachers to support children's sense of belonging, and highlight ways teachers can intentionally engage in culturally sustaining practices.

Submitted by: Dr. Madoka Takemoto, Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 33
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Kerry Purdue
Open Polytechnic

Derek Hartley
Open Polytechnic

Fleur Hohaia-Rollinson
Te Rito Maioha

Jackie Solomon
Open Polytechnic

Donna Williamson-Garner, Open Polytechnic

Keywords: mental health, teacher identity, ECE workplace inclusion

Supporting kaiako' mental health in early childhood education: The importance of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and hauora

This presentation looks at the experiences of early childhood education (ECE) kaiako with mental health challenges in Aotearoa New Zealand and the factors that can hinder or facilitate their inclusion in ECE. Participants included ECE kaiako who self-identified as having mental health challenges (n=22). We collected data via an online open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews and analysed it using reflexive thematic and discourse analysis within a social constructivist and interpretivist framework. Our findings suggest that understanding of mental health conditions, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga was integral to whether kaiako found their workplaces supportive or non-supportive. Kaiako sense of security appeared to be an ongoing process influenced by workplace culture, leadership, and self-perceived risks to teacher identity. Whereas stigmatising environments, unsympathetic leadership and colleagues were likely contributing to self-concealment of mental health issues, stress, and low job satisfaction, inclusive leadership, supportive team cultures, and workplace accommodations appeared to facilitate teacher wellbeing and identity. To support the hauora of all ECE kaiako, we advocate for positive change including accessible mental-health provision. Appropriately supporting the mental health of ECE kaiako must be seen as essential to their wellbeing and efficacy as teachers and considered a core—not optional—condition of their work.

Submitted by: Kerry Purdue, Open Polytechnic

V1 12112026

Pepa 34
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Simon Taylor
University of Waikato

Keywords: Scientific play, Socio-constructivism, Qualitative case study

Imagining 2100: Dioramas as Multimodal STEAM Pedagogy for Sustainable Futures

This study investigates how creative, multimodal pedagogies support future-oriented thinking in junior secondary STEAM education, with a particular focus on how students imagine and articulate sustainable futures in ways that recognise diverse knowledge systems, including mātauranga Māori. The study foregrounds relational values such as whanaungatanga (connectedness and relationships) alongside critical consideration of whose knowledge is prioritised and whether schooling reproduces existing social conditions or empowers learners to envision alternative futures. The research was conducted as a qualitative case study in a secondary school, involving four teachers and 31 students engaged in an interdisciplinary inquiry spanning science, social studies, health, and technology. Over a 12-week period, students designed and constructed dioramas representing sustainable homes and communities in the year 2100. The learning approach intentionally created space for students to draw on multiple ways of knowing, including culturally grounded perspectives and relational understandings of people, place, and environment. Framed by a pragmatist socio-constructivist perspective, diorama construction is conceptualised as a form of multimodal scientific play in which creative reasoning emerges through the interplay of cognitive, cultural, and semiotic resources. The analysis draws on the metaphor of reading the visual (Schirato & Webb, 2004), positioning students as interpreters of physical and social realities through visual discourse. Here, discourse is understood as socially constructed meaning embedded in representations such as dioramas, which communicate ideas through spatial and symbolic arrangements (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Using reflexive thematic analysis alongside Jensen's (2002) dimensions of knowledge, the findings indicate growth in students' spatial reasoning, systems thinking, and engagement with socio-scientific issues, as well as increased attention to relationships between people, communities, and the environment. Dioramas functioned as both narrative and analytical tools, enabling students to articulate, critique, and negotiate preferred futures. Diorama construction functioned not simply as a representational activity but as a mediating practice through which students organised, tested, and communicated complex socio-scientific ideas. The findings suggest that the narrative and material affordances of dioramas enabled students to move beyond descriptive accounts toward making situated claims about future possibilities, thereby generating dialogue that was both critical and relational.

Submitted by: Simon Taylor, University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 35
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Manal El Mazbouh
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Keywords: development discourse, decolonial approaches, education management information systems (EMIS)

Rereading Development through Education Management Information Systems (EMIS): A Discourse of the West and the Rest

This paper examines the implementation of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in development context through a critical policy analysis that brings Skidmore's discourse of deviance into conversation with Hall's "The West and the Rest." Using reflexive thematic analysis and writing-as-inquiry, I analysed policy texts and interviews with EMIS experts to trace how development discourse remains rooted in a colonial binary and framed through deviance.

The analysis identifies three mechanisms underpinning this discourse: (1) the assumption of a hierarchical development model in which the "Rest" are positioned as "underdeveloped" in contrast to the "developed" West; (2) the belief that the West can and should guide the development of the Rest; and (3) a discourse of deviance that functions as both premise and proof, whereby 'failures' are read as confirmation of the Rest's deficiencies against externally defined norms. These framings reproduce colonial hierarchies and conflict with relational values such as whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga, limiting possibilities for context-responsive EMIS design grounded in local epistemologies and priorities.

Exposing the colonial assumptions underpinning development as they manifest in EMIS implementation opens a path toward dismantling these constructs by rejecting universal solutions and grounding EMIS in the lived realities of peoples and places. This also requires recognising that difference is not deviance but a condition to be honoured, calling for relational ethics and approaches that centre reciprocity, accountability, and respect for local knowledges.

Submitted by: Manal El Mazbouh,
University of Auckland | Waipapa Taumata Rau

V1 12112026

Pepa 36
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Dr Jay Allnutt
Māia Centre for Social Justice and Education

Keywords: Relational equality, educational equity, conceptual analysis

Beyond equity: Relational equality and the limits of liberal approaches in education

The terms 'equality' and 'equity' dominate New Zealand education policy, yet are rarely examined with precision and frequently treated as interchangeable. This paper draws on the presenters doctoral research at the University of Auckland to argue that the distinction matters, and that both concepts are subject to a deeper limitation that relational equality is better placed to address. The research used conceptual analysis to examine how equality applies in educational contexts, testing competing conceptions against cases to identify which best explains our considered judgements. A key finding is that distributional and equity-based approaches tend to assume the educational system is fundamentally sound, treating inequality as a failure of implementation rather than of structure. Social hierarchies, illuminated through Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and capital, are among the most significant drivers of educational inequality, yet remain largely invisible to such frameworks. Relational equality, developed through the work of Elizabeth Anderson, redirects attention from what students receive to how they are regarded and related to within educational systems. This reframing has particular resonance in Aotearoa New Zealand, where persistent disparities cannot be resolved through resource allocation or targeted correction alone, and where values of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga point towards a more adequate account of educational justice.

Submitted by: Jay Allnutt, Māia Centre for Social Justice and Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 37
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:35:00 AM to 12:05:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Gillian Parekh
York University

Sue Winton
York University

Keywords: parentocracy, policy, marketization

Parentocracy and the Reproduction of Social Inequalities in School Markets

Drawing from research that examined how parents choose secondary schools for their children in a marketized system, this paper explains how advantaged parents mobilize their economic and social capital to position their children favourably within hierarchical and/or competitive contexts. The paper is theoretically grounded in Brown's (1990) notion of parentocracy, wherein "a child's education is increasingly dependent upon the wealth and wishes of parents, rather than the ability and efforts of pupils" (p. 66, emphasis in original). Data collected through interviews with parents who had considered specialized programs (e.g., STEM, Fine Arts, or Montessori) for their children in Ontario, Canada, were analyzed thematically. The analysis identified five ways parentocratic logics operated in the participants' efforts to secure placements for their children: 1) actively managing their child's elementary and secondary school trajectory; 2) contacting peers and school staff; 3) activating social networks to ascertain 'insider' information about programs; 4) believing their child required a specialized, exclusive (i.e., exclusionary) environment, and 5) planning for and positioning their children for university admission. As many education systems around the world expand education markets (e.g., via charter schools), policymakers must recognize that families are differently positioned to take up opportunities offered by policies enabling parentocracy.

Submitted by: Sue Winton, York University

V1 12112026

Pepa 38
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Alexander Bacalja
The University of Melbourne

Hyejeong Ahn
The University of Melbourne

Keywords: Science of reading, literacy policy, network ethnography

Transnational knowledge brokers and the legitimisation of science of reading education policy reform

In late 2025, the New Zealand Education Minister led a national curriculum roadshow bringing together new policy actors (philanthropic organisations, consultancy firms, think tanks, and international edu-businesses) to advocate for science of reading and knowledge-rich approaches to the teaching of reading. This paper examines how transnational policy networks and knowledge brokers shape the globalisation of science of reading discourses. Drawing on network analysis and digital ethnography, it traces the policy assemblage work of four influential knowledge brokers, Erica Sanford (New Zealand Education Minister), Pamela Snow (Australian academic), Nick Gibbs (former UK Education Minister), and Natalie Wexler (a US book author), through their event participation and relational networks. These actors were selected because they occupy influential and highly visible positions that enable them to broker and legitimise science of reading discourses across policy, academic, and public domains. We explore the mechanisms through which particular literacy paradigms become naturalised as common sense and how authority for these approaches is established, focussing analysis on events attended by these brokers and the relationships maintained as a consequence. We demonstrate how transnational knowledge brokers within such policy networks produce self-reinforcing systems in which new policy actors, institutions, and knowledge forms circulate and validate one another, narrowing what is considered thinkable within literacy policy discourse.

Submitted by: Alexander Bacalja, The University of Melbourne

V1 12112026

Pepa 39
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Dr Michael Rabbidge
The University of Waikato - Division of Education

Dr Florence Lyons
The University of Waikato - Division of Education

Keywords: Policy, Language education, teacher identity

Being LOTE Teachers in Aotearoa: Navigating Language, Policy, and Identity

Teachers of Languages Other than English (LOTE) occupy a vital yet often under-recognized role within Aotearoa New Zealand's increasingly diverse educational landscape. Despite growing cultural and linguistic diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand schools, LOTE teachers work within institutional cultures and policy settings that continue to privilege English and position additional languages as peripheral. This study examines how LOTE teachers negotiate their evolving professional identities while working to maintain the relevance of other languages in a context that frequently undervalues their contribution to student learning and broader social cohesion. Drawing on narrative frames and semi-structured interviews with teachers of different languages and National Language Advisors across multiple regions of Aotearoa New Zealand, the study reveals ongoing challenges related to language status, ideology, and resource allocation. These include entrenched perceptions of LOTE subjects as "non-essential," parental prioritization of employment-oriented subjects, and curriculum structures that reinforce English literacy as the dominant focus. The findings highlight tensions between policy rhetoric, often referencing global citizenship and multilingual competence, and the institutional realities that constrain the sustainability of LOTE programmes. They also highlight the emotional labor required to sustain language programmes under conditions of precarity and limited recognition. The study argues that supporting equitable multilingual education requires more than symbolic inclusion of languages in policy documents; it demands systemic change that aligns institutional practices with the linguistic realities of Aotearoa New Zealand society and the globalized world beyond it. Implications for language policy, teacher education, and the future of LOTE provision in Aotearoa New Zealand are discussed, with recommendations to strengthen visibility, value, and investment in LOTE teaching as an essential component of multilingual education.

Submitted by: Dr Michael Rabbidge, The University of Waikato - Division of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 40
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Andrea Delaune
University of Canterbury

Dr. Vicki Hargraves
The Education Hub

Keywords: Manaakitanga; perception; values

Seeing With(out) Knowing: Valuing and the Ethical Gaze in Early Childhood

Manaakitanga is a deeply ethical practice which begins with respecting the inherent mana (status, power, and authority) and difference of each individual. This is crucial in early childhood, where responding to diversity is an increasingly complex issue involving kaiako in ethically complex decisions, and where perceptual practices, such as the image of the child, can enable or limit potential (Deleuze, 1983/1986). This paper presentation will draw on the philosophies of Murdoch, Levinas, and Deleuze to demonstrate the ways in which actions of care and empowerment are preceded by an ethical gaze and through it, the development of a moral vision to develop values related to Otherness and difference that can guide action. The 'inner life' of an individual is wholly opaque to us (Murdoch, 1998), and so inconceivably different from ourselves to be considered unknowable. And yet, rather than be immobilised by passivity caused by this lack of knowability, responsivity to the other becomes a question of moral imagination (Murdoch, 1998). Attention upon the Other presents us with a 'moral summons' (Levinas, 1961/1979, p. 196), a call which is valuable in focusing kaiako's awareness on the necessity of being open to the possibilities presented by an unknowable other. We present strategies to support kaiako to develop a moral vision as they interact with young children. References Deleuze, G. (1986). Cinema 1: The movement-image (H. Tomlinson, B. Habberjam Trans.). Continuum / Athlone Press. (Original work published 1983). Levinas, E. (1979). Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority (A. Lingis, Trans.). Martinus Nijhoff Philosophy Texts. (Original work published 1961). Murdoch, I. (1998). Existentialists and Mystics: Writings on Philosophy and Literature. Penguin.

Submitted by: Dr. Andrea Delaune,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 41
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Herbert Thomas
academyEX, Auckland, New Zealand

Keywords: theory of mind, artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence: winning hearts and minds in education

At the heart of understanding students' states of mind and knowledge gaps with a view to designing effective learning interventions, lies the human ability known as theory of mind. It is this ability that enables us to design personalised learning opportunities, geared towards achieving equitable outcomes for students - however, limited resources in education render full personalisation of learning an ideal rather than an achievable goal. Recently, researchers have suggested that artificial intelligence, particularly in the form of large language models, are gaining qualities associated with human theory of mind and some even suggest that AI might achieve the equivalent of human-level theory of mind in the near future. This paper argues that the almost universal assumption that AI achievement of human-level theory of mind is laudable, needs to be tempered by research in the field of AI safety, where rapid progress towards the achievement of artificial general intelligence (AGI), and the possibility of artificial super intelligence (ASI), raises concerns around the explainability, predictability and controllability of such systems. This paper proposes key risks and repercussions associated with the use of AGI and ASI systems, equipped with a sophisticated model of theory of mind, in educational contexts.

Submitted by: Herbert Thomas,
academyEX, Auckland, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 43
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Peter Roberts
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Death, Immortality, Beauvoir

Life, Death and Education: Reading Simone de Beauvoir

Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) was a distinctive voice in the emergence of French existentialism, an incisive commentator on social questions, and an accomplished novelist. Her theoretical concerns were shaped, in part, by the scholarly grounding she had in ancient and modern philosophy but also heavily influenced by the struggles and conflicts of her time. The reality of death, both intimately observed and on a mass scale, was never too far from Beauvoir's mind. Questions relating to death and immortality are particularly prominent in her novel, All Men are Mortal. This paper discusses some of the key features of this fictional work and explores its implications for education. It is argued that death can serve as a teacher, allowing us to better understand ourselves and others, through the concerns and commitments that form the basis of a finite existence. Death exerts a quiet, often unnoticed influence over the decisions we make and the actions we take in educational settings. It has a bearing on what, how and why we learn, working against a tendency toward indifference and prompting us to ask what matters most in the limited time available to us.

Submitted by: Peter Roberts, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 44
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Krystian McInnis

Keywords:

Decolonising Religious Education? Epistemic Justice and Anglican Schooling in Aotearoa New Zealand and England

Contemporary debates surrounding the decolonisation of education increasingly emphasise epistemic justice, Indigenous knowledge and institutional accountability. However, faith-based schooling, and Religious Education (RE) in particular, remains comparatively underexamined within these discussions. This paper presents an emerging comparative ethnographic study examining how Anglican secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand and England negotiate colonial theological and epistemic authority within RE curriculum and classroom practice. While Anglican schooling is historically entangled with missionary education, empire and colonial governance, the study argues that these institutions are not only shaped by colonial histories but continue to function as contemporary spaces where coloniality is reproduced, negotiated and contested through curriculum, pedagogy and institutional practice. Drawing on decolonial theory, critical pedagogy and theories of epistemic justice, the project employs a multi-sited critical ethnography involving classroom observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis across selected Anglican schools in both contexts. The paper argues that Anglican RE represents a significant yet understudied site for examining how colonial hierarchies of knowledge and theological authority continue to shape educational practice in contemporary postcolonial settings.

Submitted by: Krystian McInnis,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 45
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 9:45:00 AM to 10:15:00 AM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Angelina Moore
University of Canterbury

Keywords: AI, CHAT, primary

Understanding teacher AI Literacy through a sociocultural lens: preliminary findings from Aotearoa

This paper presents preliminary findings from a doctoral study investigating how teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand develop AI Literacy within school contexts, with attention to the leadership conditions that shape this learning. Drawing on Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), the research explores how teacher learning emerges through interactions among teachers, generative AI tools, and organisational (including leadership) practices.

Preliminary findings suggest that AI Literacy is not simply an individual technical competence, but a socially mediated, relational process influenced by leadership. Teachers describe learning through collaboration, inquiry, and shared experimentation, often enabled by leadership that supports professional dialogue and trust, highlighting the importance of whanaungatanga. Tensions related to ethical use and classroom integration foreground tiakitanga, with leadership shaping expectations for responsible use. Manaakitanga is evident in collegial support, student well-being, and equity-focused practices.

These insights position AI Literacy as a values-driven, organisational practice. The study contributes to educational leadership by highlighting leaders' role in fostering collaborative, ethical, and inclusive AI integration.

Submitted by: Angelina Moore,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 46
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Kris LaVenia
The University of Canterbury

Keywords: educational leadership; educator wellbeing; compassionate leadership

Leading with Manaakitanga: Autonomic Labour, Compassionate Leadership, and Collective Flourishing in Schools

Educational leaders are expected to remain calm under pressure, sustain trusting relationships, and care for the wellbeing of others while navigating increasingly complex demands. Research on emotional labour demonstrates that professional roles often require the regulation of feelings and emotional expressions to meet organisational and social expectations (Hochschild, 1983; Grandey, 2000). Within educational leadership, emotional labour has been associated with trust building, relational work, and ethical practice, yet offers comparatively limited insight into the embodied processes that enable leaders to remain present, attuned, and responsive during moments of stress, conflict, and uncertainty (Berkovich & Eyal, 2015; Oplatka, 2017). This conceptual paper proposes embodied relational practice as a framework for understanding how leaders sustain social engagement, support co-regulation, and enact manaakitanga in complex school settings.

Drawing on scholarship concerning autonomic regulation, social engagement, developmental co-regulation, and interpersonal neurobiology, embodied relational practice is conceptualised as the capacity to maintain or restore conditions that support connection, safety, reflection, and collaborative engagement (e.g., Porges, 2011; Schore, 2012; Thompson, 2008; Tronick, 1989, 2007). Somatic and contemplative traditions, including Hakomi, offer practical and philosophical resources for cultivating embodied awareness and responding skilfully to dysregulation through principles such as mindfulness, nonviolence, unity, organicity, and mind-body holism (Kurtz, 1990). Scholarship on compassionate leadership (Worline & Dutton, 2017) further highlights how leaders intentionally engage with suffering in ways that foster trust, psychological safety, and collective wellbeing. Indigenous and decolonial perspectives situate these processes within relational, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of practice through manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and tiakitanga (Durie, 1998). The paper argues that conceptualising educational leadership as embodied relational practice extends current understandings of leadership and offers a culturally responsive framework for supporting educator wellbeing, relational trust, and more humane schooling in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Submitted by: Kris LaVenia, The University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 48
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Aleta Chowfin
University of Canterbury, School of Social and Cultural Studies

Dr Randall Fowler
Abilene Christian University, Texas, USA
Director of Undergraduate Research

Kiki Nuriska Dunhas
University of Canterbury, School of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Keywords: Bridge, Helplessness, Hopefulness

Beauty for Ashes: Replacing Learned Helplessness with Learned Hopefulness

In the current geopolitical environment, where youth grapple with despair and disappointment, it is essential that the refreshed educational system, that learns from the past but embraces the future, allows students to flourish and aspire for a better quality of life. Given the relationship between education and society, the neo-Thomistic 'Beauty for Ashes' vignettes, recognise both the sophistic (theoretical) and phronetic (practical) wisdom of cognitive, intellectual and moral development of youth, and can help them lead blessed and beautiful lives. The rhetoric for 'a beautiful life' (Teschers, 2018) can be significantly impacted by academia and the industry for the philosophical and pedagogical journeys that teachers navigate to develop hopeful hermeneutics (interpretations) for youth during High School. The vocational implications for this are essential for curriculum leadership as it addresses the journey from the perspective of developing the 'inner soul' and providing aspirational stepping stones within the classrooms. Additionally, it can also provide a bridge for the Home Literacy Environment (HLE), including it in the rhetoric for hopeful hermeneutics to interconnect families, schools and academia to provide a framework for learned hopefulness.

Submitted by: Aleta Chowfin, University of Canterbury, Faculty of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 49
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Awhimai Reynolds
Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

Keywords: Educational Leadership, Kaupapa Māori, Organisational Learning

He Aho Tuitui: Weaving Governance, Leadership and Practice for Real Change

This presentation explores a persistent gap between governance intent and lived practice in organisational settings, where strategy is clear but delivery remains fragmented. Drawing on practice-based observations and insights gained through leadership coaching, strategic advisory, governance, and organisational development work across education, government, and Māori organisational contexts, it examines how leaders positioned at a strategic level can remain caught in operational doing, creating misalignment across governance, leadership, and practice. The purpose of this presentation is to offer a practice-informed perspective on leadership as a relational and collective learning process and to explore how greater alignment can be achieved across organisational layers. Grounded in a kaupapa Māori and strengths-based approach, it is framed through the concept of He Aho Tuitui — weaving the threads of governance, leadership, and practice together. This conceptual framing draws on Māori understandings of relationships, collective responsibility, and purposeful connection and aligns with the conference theme of whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga. Drawing on lived examples from leadership and organisational settings, the presentation identifies recurring patterns of role confusion, operational drift, and disconnection between governance intent and delivery. It offers practical insights into supporting leadership development and strengthening alignment across systems. The presentation concludes that meaningful organisational change requires not additional strategy, but intentional alignment across governance, leadership, and practice.

Submitted by: Awhimai Reynolds, Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 50
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Sanskriti Bhardwaj
Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland

Keywords: Politics of belonging, Indian women teachers, Migrant teachers

Politics of belonging for Indian women teachers in Aotearoa-New Zealand's primary schools: Sharpening analytic attention using creative and arts-based approaches to inquiry

Pressing theoretical, ethical, and political consequences abound for conceptualising belonging for migrants, particularly in the context of settler colonialism. In Aotearoa-New Zealand (henceforth, Aotearoa), as people of Indian ethnicity become the third-largest ethnic group in the country, after Pākehā and Māori, these concerns ignite heated debates across the scholarly and political spectrum. One of the many fields that tenses with the implications of this figure of 'migrant' is that of education.

Using intersectionality, Asian settler colonialism, and feminist new materialism as theoretical framings, I inquired into the experiences of belonging for six Indian women teachers in Aotearoa's primary schools, with varied migration histories. As an Indian woman teacher myself, I engaged with the teachers as colleagues, friends, or as elders from my community, embracing the ethics of research as an ethics of relationships. Drawing on narrative analysis of two interviews with each teacher, I present belonging not as a subjective feeling, but as a 'politics of belonging' for Indian women teachers, marking gendered and racialised borders within their multiple communities. I focus my discussion on how creative and arts-based approaches to inquiry sharpen theoretical and analytic attention to belonging within educational institutions.

Submitted by: Sanskriti Bhardwaj,
Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 51
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Judy Bruce
AUT

Hilary Dutton
University of Auckland

Rachel Maitland Mata'afa
University of Canterbury

Adrian Schoone
AUT

Keywords:

The Science of Relational Engagement

Learners previously disenfranchised within education systems are experiencing success through schools and places of learning that embed a science of relational engagement (SRE). Informed by neuroscience, social constructivism and youth development, we define SRE as the neurobiological and cultural knowledge that underpins how learners connect, learn and function (Berkett, et al, 2026). SRE places importance on trauma-informed approaches, as well as youth development and culturally responsive practices in education settings, to support the developmental needs of disengaged learners (Bishop, 2019; Perry, n.d; Romer & Hansen, 2021). Thus, rather than excluding learners from education, we argue that SRE practices in schools provide the conditions needed to help learners self-regulate, learn and thrive. In this presentation, we will share our theoretical model of SRE based on extant literature. Drawing on national and international research and practice, we will consider the varied ways in which SRE can be implemented as an approach to successfully engage learners in a range of education settings, including mainstream schools and alternative education (Bishop, 2019; Bruce & Martin, 2023; Knight, 2021; Schoone, 2016). We will consider the critical role of leaders and educators to bring about measured change. On this theoretical and empirical basis, we will argue that embedding SRE practices across the ecosystem of an education setting leads to increased attendance, engagement and achievement for learners previously disenfranchised.

Submitted by: Judy Bruce, AUT

V1 12112026

Pepa 52
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Tahera Afrin
Unitec

Keywords: disability, neurodiversity, inclusive practice

Inclusion and disability: The missing explicitness in the discourse

The Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand has recently published Inclusive Teaching Practice Guidance, an aspirational document that brings together a number of resources for teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand to improve their teaching practice to be more inclusive. Disability-inclusion is intended in this document along with cultural, linguistic, gender, sexual orientation and other aspects of diversity. This document prompted the author advocating for prioritising disability-inclusion based on her lived experiences of disability, and literature indicating exclusion occurring within the education systems in Aotearoa New Zealand (Afrin, 2026)). Building on this, the author conducted a non-systematic literature review (Kraus et al., 2022) with keywords such as disability, inclusion and neurodiversity. The review highlights ongoing contestation surrounding the term ‘disabled,’ observing that within an ableist context that prioritises ability, the label is at times regarded as pejorative. In response, the author employs an analytical frame, proposing three interrelated categories of lifestyle—abled, abled-disabled, and disabled. The author argues that organisations such as the Teaching Council should use the term ‘disabled learners’ more explicitly and strengthen their focus on disability-inclusion rather subsuming it within the broader context of inclusion. The kōrero adds value to existing discussions of inclusion, while advocating for stigma-free use of the term ‘disabled’.

Submitted by: Tahera Afrin, Senior Lecturer, Unitec

V1 12112026

Pepa 53
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Keywords: social media, public pedagogy, conscientisation

Social media as a public pedagogical space for young Chinese women's critical gender consciousness

Social media has become an important space in which gender discourses are circulated, contested, and reimagined outside of formal educational settings. This presentation draws on my doctoral research to examine how young Chinese women engage with gender discourses on the Chinese social media platform Weibo in relation to International Women's Day. This is a date that has become increasingly contested in China, where it is variously celebrated as Women's Day, Girls' Day, or Goddess Day. Drawing on the concept of public pedagogy, the study uses critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine gender discourses in Weibo posts collected from Women's Day-related hashtags. CDA provides a lens that links Weibo texts to wider relations of power, revealing how everyday language both naturalises and contests dominant gender ideologies. The findings show that Weibo functions not only as a platform for expressing gendered emotions and sharing everyday experiences, but also as a pedagogical space in which women negotiate identity, critique gender ideologies, and develop critical consciousness around womanhood. The paper argues that everyday digital discourse can itself cultivate critical gender consciousness, and that treating Weibo as a public pedagogical space extends understandings of learning, pedagogy, and gender beyond the classroom into digital public life.

Submitted by: Yadi Xu, University of Canterbury, Faculty of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 54
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Dr. Vicki Hargraves
The Education Hub

Keywords: Inclusion, participation, neurodiversity

Welcoming (neuro)diverse tamariki in school and ECE: Affect, participation, and manaakitanga

This paper presentation will explore the tensions and dilemmas associated with enacting manaakitanga in early childhood and school settings through a particular reading of affect influenced by the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1980 / 1987), and in the context of welcoming (neuro)diverse tamariki in educational settings. Understanding true hospitality as an unconditional space (Derrida, 1997 / 2000), in which tamariki and their whānau have rights to determine their mode of participation, this paper will offer tools for thinking about and for evaluating the somewhat striated spaces of education and their implications for teachers and kaiako who want to deeply manaaki (welcome, care for, respect, and empower) diverse ākonga. Drawing on published case studies, the paper will invite reflection on modes of welcome that are mana-enhancing and capable of growing participation and capacity for all. Exploration of the play of affect will be presented as a key tool to support teachers to create smoother and more expansive spaces for participation in which (neuro)diverse tamariki can be received, accepted, and valued.

Submitted by: Dr. Vicki Hargraves, The Education Hub

V1 12112026

Pepa 55
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Siyu Du
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Left-behind children; Educational mobility; Intergenerational relationships

Growing Up Left Behind, Leaving Parents Behind: Education, Mobility, and Intergenerational Relationships in Contemporary China

This paper explores how childhood experiences of being left behind are reconfigured across the life course through education-induced mobility. Research on left-behind children in China has largely focused on the immediate effects of parental migration on children's academic, emotional, and developmental outcomes, while studies of educational mobility and empty-nest ageing are often treated separately. This paper brings these bodies of literature together by asking how individuals who grew up as left-behind children narrate their educational and mobility trajectories, and how these trajectories reshape intergenerational relationships with ageing parents. Informed by Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and a life-course perspective, the study adopts a qualitative design based on semi-structured interviews with adult children, who experienced left-behind childhoods, and their parents. Rather than treating family separation as a single childhood condition, the paper conceptualises it as a relational process that unfolds across generations. Although situated in China, it offers broader insights into children and childhoods when educational mobility is at play. For audiences in Aotearoa New Zealand, the paper suggests that inclusive educational practice should attend not only to children's achievement and transitions, but also to the family and community relationships through which care, support, and belonging are sustained, stretched, or remade.

Submitted by: Siyu Du, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 56
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Raewyn Higginson	n/a	n/a
Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand	n/a	n/a
n/a		n/a
n/a		

Keywords: autism, transition, parents perspectives

Navigating the transition: Family perceptions of their autistic child's transition to Primary School

This presentation will explore two families' perceptions when transitioning their autistic children from early childhood education (ECE) settings to primary school. The data was collected prior to 2026 when there was no follow up with the Early Intervention teachers in Year One at the primary schools. Based on semi-structured interviews with two mothers of autistic children, the presentation identifies key themes including perceptions of the transition process, navigating the education system, social integration, emotional impact, as well as advocacy and empowerment. Both families experienced varying levels of support during the transition, with communication and involvement being crucial factors for success. The findings align with the mothers knowledge and expertise about their autistic children and highlighted the importance of transition meetings starting six months prior to the actual transition, the impact of teacher relationships, and the ongoing need for support post-transition. It also emphasised the importance of early intervention, clear communication, and continuous support to improve transitions for autistic children. However, challenges remained, including inconsistent support once enrolled in the new school and the need for ongoing communication with the autistic child's current school teacher. Recommendations include increased advocacy, consistent IEP meetings, and greater collaboration between families, ECE settings and primary schools.

Submitted by: Raewyn Higginson, Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 57
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Qing Liu
Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

Rohnii Tse
Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

Candice Chan
Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

Katy Lam

Keywords: Inclusive Education

Building Inclusive Early Childhood Systems: Evaluating a Multi-Level Intervention in Hong Kong Kindergartens

This study evaluates a whole-system intervention designed to strengthen inclusive practices in Hong Kong kindergartens. Grounded in ecological systems theory and inclusive pedagogy, the study conceptualises inclusion not merely as the placement of children with diverse needs in mainstream classrooms, but as the active redesign of classroom practices, environments, and professional support systems to enable all children to participate, regulate, and learn. Responding to the limited impact of one-off professional development and increasing classroom diversity, the intervention integrates teacher training, ongoing coaching, environmental enhancement, and a community of practice. Using a quasi-experimental design, data were collected from 21 intervention and 15 control schools, involving 202 children and 197 teachers. Hierarchical mixed-effects models examined effects on children's executive functioning, social skills, and classroom well-being, as well as teacher attitudes, efficacy, and inclusive practices. Mediation and moderation analyses further explored the role of environmental quality. Findings indicate significant improvements in teacher efficacy and inclusive practices, alongside gains in children's social skills and well-being. Environmental quality partially mediated and strengthened intervention effects. The study highlights the importance of coordinated, multi-level approaches and offers a scalable framework for advancing inclusive early childhood systems.

Submitted by: Qing Liu, Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 58
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Melanie Wong
Principal Lecturer, School of Social Work, Manukau Institute of Technology, Auckland

Kazutoshi Kuroda
Professor, Department of Liberal Arts, Kosen, National Institute of Technology, Tokyo, Japan

Keywords: Neurodiversity Tertiary transitions Employment support

Neurodiverse Student Transitions in Vocational Tertiary Education: Insights from New Zealand and Japan

This study explores how neurodiverse degree students are supported in their transition through vocational tertiary education and towards employment in New Zealand and Japan. It examines the structures, practices, and assumptions that shape the provision of support across educational, disciplinary, institutional, and cultural contexts. The study is significant because growing numbers of students identified with ADHD, autism, dyslexia, and related neurodivergence are entering tertiary education, while institutional responses to inclusion, accommodation, wellbeing, and employability remain uneven. Using a comparative qualitative design, the study gathers descriptive and experiential data from neurodiverse students in social work programmes at Manukau Institute of Technology/Unitec in Aotearoa New Zealand and engineering programmes within Japan's Kosen National Institute of Technology system. The cross-cultural analysis is framed as a contextual comparison that examines how terminology, assessment practices, institutional support arrangements, disciplinary pathways, and employment-transition expectations interact within each setting, rather than treating national culture as a single explanatory variable. Preliminary findings suggest differences in terminology, assessment, learning support, counselling access, and post-graduation follow-up. Both contexts show increasing recognition of neurodiverse students' needs, particularly around mental health, academic adjustment, and employment preparation. The study aims to inform targeted interventions that reduce barriers, strengthen inclusive practice, and support successful transitions into employment.

Submitted by: Melanie Wong, Principal Lecturer, School of Social Work, Manukau Institute of Technology, Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 59
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Chen Liu
Institute of Education, Massey University

Keywords: queer pedagogy; English language education; Gender and sexuality

Troubling the Norm: Queerness, Cisheteronormativity, and Pedagogy in Chinese Tertiary English Education

School environments play a crucial role in students' wellbeing, yet students who identify as queer, an umbrella term for LGBTQIA+, remain largely overlooked in Chinese higher education. Cisheteronormativity, the assumption that being cisgender and heterosexual is the default, normal and preferred way to be, operates as an invisible norm that shapes pedagogical practices. While scholarly attention has examined university experiences of queer students holistically, dynamics within specific classrooms, particularly college English (CE) classrooms in Chinese context, have received little scholarly attention.

This qualitative study investigates how queerness is conceptualized and lived in Chinese CE classrooms through semi-structured interviews with 20 queer students, analyzed using critical discourse analysis. The study examines how queer students narrate their classroom experiences, how queerness is discursively constructed in English language learning, and students' visions for locally-relevant, queer-friendly pedagogy.

Findings reveal that CE classrooms in China remain predominantly heteronormative, characterized by a male-dominated gender order. However, generational queer literacy presented by these students and the Westernization framework of queerness emerge as counter-discourses that challenge this structure, making queering the classroom possible.

By centering queer Asian voices, this research challenges the presumed universality of Western queer and language education models. It reconceptualizes CE as sites for negotiating identity and contributes to the conversations about imagining queer-friendly pedagogy not only in Chinese contexts, but also in other non-Western settings that share similar patriarchal and cisheteronormative educational cultures.

Submitted by: Chen Liu, Institute of Education, Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 62
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 529
SIG: Learning Environments

Jeannette Simpson

Keywords: home education; children's perspectives; competence

Learning beyond school: home-educated children's visual narratives of autonomy, competence and belonging

This paper examines how home-educated children describe and make sense of learning beyond school. It draws on a small-scale visual narrative study with twelve children aged 5–12, from six home-educating families in South-East England. Children created photo-journals of their learning over three weeks and then took part in narrative interviews about selected photographs. The method was designed to allow children to represent learning without beginning from an adult or school-based definition of the term. Children's accounts showed learning as broad, active and embedded in everyday life. They photographed and discussed formal academic work, play, creative activity, family routines, educational visits, structured classes, community settings and independent research. A central finding was that children often understood learning as becoming competent: getting better at something, testing themselves, managing challenge, developing confidence and imagining future participation. Their narratives also emphasised autonomy, enjoyment, novelty, shared activity and belonging. The paper challenges simplified accounts of home education as private or isolated. In relation to Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga and Manaakitanga, it argues that children's learning beyond school can be understood as relational, cared-for and connected to family, community and future life.

Submitted by: Jeannette Simpson, St Mary's University, London

V1 12112026

Pepa 63
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 102
SIG: Māori Caucus

Rhandell Tangaere
PhD Student The University of Canterbury

Jorian Tangaere
Pou- Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Ara Hou

Keywords: Te Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, Whakapapa as a transition journey

Whakapapa as a transition journey

Whakapapa as a Transition Journey is a theoretical framework grounded in the kaupapa of Te Kōhanga Reo, positioning it as a whānau-led movement dedicated to the intergenerational transmission of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and whakapapa (Pihama, Smith, Taki, & Lee, 2004; Reedy, 2015). This presentation reframes transition from Te Kōhanga Reo to Kura Kaupapa Māori as a continuation of kaupapa, rather than a point of disruption.

Guided by Kaupapa Māori methodology, the research privileges mātauranga Māori, whakapapa relationships, and the central role of whānau as decision-makers and knowledge holders. It introduces nine Pou (pillars) emerging from ongoing doctoral research, grounded in values such as whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and tino rangatiratanga. These Pou demonstrate how Te Kōhanga Reo actively 'moves whakapapa' through everyday practices, collective responsibility, and language immersion, supporting tamariki to transition with a strong sense of identity, belonging, and cultural continuity.

Within this framework, transition is understood as a whakapapa-informed process shaped within Te Kōhanga Reo well before tamariki enter kura. Rather than preparing tamariki for schooling in isolation, the movement sustains pathways where whānau, language, and identity are firmly embedded and carried forward.

Situated in the confirmation phase of this doctoral kaupapa, the presentation highlights implications for strengthening alignment between Te Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori, informing culturally grounded transition practices, and shaping policy that recognises Te Kōhanga Reo as the foundation of Māori-medium education. Future research will further refine the applicability of the nine Pou across diverse whānau and Kōhanga contexts.

Submitted by: Rhandell Tangaere, PhD student The University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 64
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Māori Caucus

Moerangi Potiki
Lecturer, School of Social Work

Dennis Sanga

Keywords: Wahine Māori Family Harm

Wahine Māori from an Education Perspective of Family harm

Family harm remains a significant and disproportionate issue for wāhine Māori, shaped by the historical, cultural, and systemic impacts of colonisation. This empirical qualitative study explores culturally grounded pathways to healing for wāhine Māori affected by family harm and contributes to the development of Māori-led interventions. Participants will include wāhine Māori with lived experience of family harm and Māori practitioners who support wāhine and whānau across mainstream family violence, health, social service, and community-based settings. The study will examine how gender, culture, colonisation, and systemic inequities intersect within experiences of seeking, receiving, or providing support. Particular attention will be given to disrupted whānau structures, the erosion of tikanga Māori, intergenerational trauma, and their continuing effects on whānau wellbeing. Guided by kaupapa Māori principles, data will be collected through culturally responsive, semi-structured interviews using a pūrākau-informed approach. This will enable participants to share experiences, knowledge, and understandings in ways that recognise relationality, cultural identity, and mana. Data will be analysed using kaupapa Māori thematic analysis to identify recurring experiences, systemic barriers, healing practices, and recommendations for service development. The research will investigate barriers within mainstream systems, including institutional racism, cultural unsafety, fragmented services, and victim-blaming narratives. It will also highlight the resilience, cultural knowledge, collective strengths, and healing strategies of wāhine Māori and their whānau. By privileging mātauranga Māori, tikanga, and mana-enhancing practice, the study seeks to generate evidence-based resources to inform professional education, policy, service delivery, and community initiatives. This presentation introduces the study at its early research-design stage. It will outline the rationale, methodology, participant groups, data collection and analysis, and intended Māori-led interventions. As findings are not yet available, the presentation invites discussion to strengthen the research design and support future systemic transformation in Aotearoa New Zealand, while upholding mana and strengthening whānau resilience across generations and communities.

Submitted by: Moerangi Potiki, Lecturer,
School of Social Work

V1 12112026

Pepa 66
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:55:00 PM to 3:25:00 PM - Rehua 009
SIG: Pasifika Caucus

Dr Lata Rana
Unitec

Yvonne Culbreath
Unitec

Keywords: Culturally responsive pedagogy; talanoa

Pacific research methods to enhance teacher pedagogy

Purpose This presentation builds on previous research exploring teachers' narratives of teaching and learning in tertiary and early childhood contexts with diverse learners, including Māori, Pasifika, Pākehā, Asian, and Indian students. Talanoa was used as a relational method to capture participants' stories and values, enabling rich analysis of diverse pedagogies. This study further examines how Indigenous methodologies such as talanoa can deepen understanding of complex, layered experiences and enhance teacher pedagogy. Contemporary Significance and Perspectives Talanoa involves informal, relational dialogue through which participants share stories and experiences. While similar to narrative interviews, talanoa emphasises cultural connectedness and the co-construction of knowledge between researcher and participants (Fa'avae, Jones & Manu'atu, 2016). It foregrounds authenticity and relationship-building as central to meaningful data generation. Conclusion This research highlights the potential of the talanoa method to strengthen teaching and learning in early childhood settings, where relationships are foundational. Building meaningful connections with ākonga, whānau, tamariki, and peers supports holistic development and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Submitted by: Dr Lata Rana, Unitec

V1 12112026

Pepa 67
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Science/Pūtaiao Education Research

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Keywords: Immigrant students; NZ school science; Access and Belonging

Science classrooms as spaces of access and belonging? Immigrant students' experiences in New Zealand secondary schools

Research around immigrant students' participation and success in school science has largely focused on individual and structural factors such as language proficiency and socioeconomic status, overlooking how everyday classroom interactions shape students' experiences of belonging and access to participation. This paper addresses this gap by using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore immigrant students' lived experiences of school science in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Data from in-depth interviews with six immigrant secondary school students were analysed using the idiographic and interpretative IPA process to examine how participants made sense of their experiences in science classrooms.

Students described experiences of inequity in science classrooms where marginalisation through racialised interactions, exclusionary group work practices, and language-related barriers produced unequal access to participation and undermined belonging. Participants also experienced teachers as gatekeepers of access, with limited support, disengagement, and inaccessibility further limiting students' belonging and their opportunities to engage in science learning.

The paper contributes to a more nuanced understanding of equity in school science by illustrating how immigrant students' science learning is shaped through social and relational environment in science classrooms. The findings highlight the importance of relational connectedness and inclusive practices to foster an equitable science learning spaces for all students.

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V1 12112026

Pepa 68
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 005
SIG: Science/Pūtaiao Education Research

Sara Tolbert
Monash University

Kari Moana Te Rongopatahi
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Pania Te Maro, Massey University:
Pauline Waiti

Keywords: transformative leadership; multiple knowledge systems; science education

Transformative Leadership as Optimal Conditions for Growth: Supporting Multiple Knowledge Systems in Science Education

In Aotearoa New Zealand schools, kaiako increasingly recognise the value of teaching mātauranga Māori alongside science, yet many continue to struggle with how to represent mātauranga Māori authentically within the science learning area (Glassey et al., 2023; McKinley & Stewart, 2012). A central challenge involves teaching about Te Ao Tūroa through the perspectives of both mātauranga Māori and science while maintaining the integrity of each knowledge system (McKinley & Stewart, 2012; Tolbert et al., 2024, Stewart et al., 2026). We thus sought to investigate how kaiako create optimal conditions for the sustainability of multiple knowledge systems (MKS) approaches in science education.

Our theoretical approach is informed by tangata whenua (Māori) and tangata tiriti (non-Māori) thought leaders in the space (Tweed & Te Maro, 2023; Waiti & Hipkins, 2002). We draw on participatory design-based research, positioning teachers as active partners rather than as subjects in the research (Tuhkala, 2021). Through wānanga, interviews, site visits, and thematic analysis, we co-developed an "optimal conditions for growth" model detailing the pedagogical, relational, and leadership factors required for enduring change. Our findings show that agentic positioning (intentional stance taken by educators to act as active, self-determined drivers of educational reform rather than passive implementers of top-down policy)., transformative leadership (changing the school culture and curriculum to challenge the status quo and create equitable outcomes)., and pedagogical knowledge allow MKS approaches to flourish, even during educational retrenchment.

Submitted by: Sriparna Saha, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 69
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 10:35:00 AM to 11:05:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Susan Sandretto
University of Otago

Pauline Waiti

Pania Te Maro
Massey University

Alana Cockburn, Sara Tolbert - Monash University,

Keywords: Critical literacy; English curriculum

English curriculum analysis: Critical thinking or empowering critical literacy practices?

Critical literacy is an indispensable lifelong literacy practice involving the interrogation of the power and consequences of texts. While critical literacy involves critical thinking, they are not synonyms. The distinction lies in attention to power and its effects, requisite in critical literacy practices, but not in critical thinking. It is not uncommon to see claims that teachers can empower students with critical literacy. However, in a view of power as constructed in relation, teachers do not 'gift' power to students but rather create spaces for students to become savvy and agentic text analysts using empowering critical literacy practices. Curriculum statements enable or constrain the conditions for critical literacy practices to grow and flourish, particularly in the English learning area. This study investigates: To what extent do the English curriculum Years 0-10 and the draft English curriculum Year 11 and Years 12-13 describe critical literacy knowledge and practices? Using an expanded understanding of critical literacy, I analysed the current and draft English Curriculum statements. I present the findings as a continuum from unaddressed to substantially addressed. I conclude by arguing that teachers can work the crevices of official curriculum to support student development of empowering critical literacy practices.

Submitted by: Susan Sandretto,
University of Otago

V1 12112026

Pepa 70
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Associate Professor Te Hurinui Karaka-Clarke
Te Wānanga Toi Tangata, University of Waikato

Sue Harker
Taniwharau/ Fraser High School

Associate Professor Elaine Khoo
Auckland university of Technology

Keywords: AI, AI criticality, Political rhetoric

Ordinary Kiwi's: Using political rhetoric to teach AI criticality

As generative artificial intelligence becomes embedded in secondary classrooms, cultivating students' critical engagement with these tools is increasingly urgent. This paper presents a case study from a Year 11 Digital Technology class in Aotearoa New Zealand that uses political rhetoric as a context for developing AI criticality. Focusing on discourse surrounding "ordinary Kiwis," students drew on campaign messaging to prompt generative AI to interpret and summarise these texts. Using a qualitative case study design, data were drawn from classroom observations, student-AI interactions, and a focus group interview with students. Analysis was guided by a braided framework integrating critical media literacy, kaupapa Māori perspectives, and emerging AI literacy models. Findings show that students initially accepted AI outputs at face value but, through structured interrogation, began to identify patterns of bias, omission, and rhetorical framing. Students increasingly questioned whose perspectives were privileged, how meaning was constructed, and how AI reshaped political narratives. The study demonstrates that political rhetoric provides a powerful and accessible entry point for teaching AI criticality. By situating AI use within familiar sociopolitical contexts, students moved from passive consumption to active critique. This paper offers practical and culturally responsive strategies for educators seeking to foster critical, informed, and ethically aware users of AI in contemporary classrooms.

Submitted by: Associate Professor Te Hurinui Karaka-Clarke, Te Wānanga Toi Tangata, University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 72
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

JAMEELA BUSHRA
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DR TRACEY MILLIN
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Keywords: mainstream teachers' preparedness, linguistically diverse learners, instructional practices

Exploring Mainstream Secondary Teachers' Readiness and Self-Efficacy in Supporting Linguistically Diverse Learners in Aotearoa New Zealand

New Zealand secondary classrooms are increasingly multilingual, yet many mainstream teachers feel underprepared to support learners of English as an additional language. This study explores teachers' preparedness, self-efficacy, and classroom practices in Years 9–13. Guided by Borg's language teacher cognition model and Bandura's self-efficacy theory, the study examines how teachers' beliefs, experiences, and confidence shape their responses to linguistically diverse learners. Using a descriptive phenomenological approach, the study explored teachers' lived experiences and their responses to hypothetical case scenarios. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both beginning and experienced teachers from Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. Preliminary data highlight teachers' strong commitment but reveal minimal ESOL-specific content in their initial teacher education and inconsistent school-wide support. In some lower equity index schools, teachers relied on bilingual community volunteers to translate and support students' learning. Teachers also viewed the curriculum refresh 2026 as potentially disadvantaging learners with language barriers. A key theme emerging from the data is the central role of relational pedagogy grounded in Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga. Teachers emphasised that knowing learners—their identities, languages, and cultures—supported meaningful engagement and learning. This study highlights the need to develop relational practices alongside targeted ESOL knowledge for more equitable and inclusive secondary classrooms in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Submitted by: Jameela Bushra,
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY,
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

V1 12112026

Pepa 73
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Alexander Bacalja
The University of Melbourne

Emily Frawley
The University of Melbourne

Scott Bulfin
Monash University

Simone Murray
Monash University

Michelle Smith, Monash University

Keywords: High-school reading, digital technologies, postdigital

Digitally-mediated school reading: An entanglement of practices

Contemporary concerns about young people's reading practices, particularly anxieties about digital technologies impacting literacy, have put pressure on how schools conceptualise and teach reading in subject-English classrooms. English teachers have historically borne responsibility for addressing social anxieties about communication, culture, and social cohesion; they now confront renewed pressure to respond to digital disruption and its purported threats to immersive, literary reading. However, existing scholarship relies on deterministic assumptions about technology's influence on reading and writing, disregarding what young people actually do when reading set-texts.

This paper reports findings from a project with recent school leavers about their school reading practices. Key themes for analysis were identified inductively and deductively, with initial findings refined through online focus groups.

Findings suggest, firstly, school reading is highly transmedial, involving diverse digital and non-digital platforms in strategic combination. Secondly, the use of GenAI to support reading is widespread and complex, with students demonstrating careful decision-making about when to deploy it and how. Third, students are reconceptualising close reading for a postdigital age.

These findings challenge essentialist discourses about digital technology's effects on reading. Rather than celebrating or lamenting technology's role, we need to acknowledge reading as inherently entangled, technologically mediated, and socially embedded.

Submitted by: Alexander Bacalja, The University of Melbourne

V1 12112026

Pepa 74
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:55:00 PM to 4:25:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Liangya Zhu
Faculty of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Keywords: History and Pedagogy of Mathematics; Cognitive Reconstruction; Mathematics Education

Supporting Cognitive Reconstruction through Key Historical Questions in Mathematics

This presentation examines how historically grounded questions can support cognitive reconstruction in senior secondary mathematics. Abstract topics such as complex numbers and sphere volume are often introduced through formal definitions or formulas, which may leave students unsure why new ideas are needed. Drawing on two of my published HPM classroom lesson studies, this presentation offers a practice-based qualitative analysis of students' conceptual reconstruction. Historically grounded questions are adapted from the historical development of mathematical ideas and recreate conceptual tensions that motivated new concepts or methods. Cognitive reconstruction examines how students move from existing conceptions to more powerful understandings. In the complex-numbers case, students first treated (x2=-1) as impossible within the real-number system. Through understanding and extending the geometric meanings of addition, subtraction, and multiplication, they then moved into the two-dimensional plane and found a solution to the equation: the imaginary unit (i). In the sphere-volume case, students reconstructed the formula through cross-sectional and subtractive reasoning. The discussion argues that HPM questions can support reasoning, conceptual meaning, and confidence with abstract mathematics. It also considers a future lesson series on women mathematicians, linked to research on gendered participation in advanced mathematics and STEM pathways

Submitted by: Liangya Zhu, Faculty of Education, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 75
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Hilary Kingston
University of Canterbury

Keywords: ITE, equity-oriented practice

From Aspiration to Action: Supporting equity-oriented practice in secondary pre-service teachers

Education in Aotearoa New Zealand is positioned as a key site for advancing equity, yet how this aspiration is understood and enacted by secondary pre-service teachers (PSTs) remains underexplored. Grounded in commitments to Te Tiriti and ongoing concerns about equitable outcomes for marginalised learners, this presentation draws on doctoral research examining how equity is conceptualised and translated into practice during initial teacher education (ITE). Using a qualitative case study design informed by social constructionism and sociocultural theory, the study follows five secondary social science PSTs across a one-year ITE programme. Data were generated through focus groups, individual interviews, think-aloud recordings during practicum, and a collaboratively constructed visual, and analysed thematically. Analysis is framed by Social Justice Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Dyches & Boyd, 2017) and the Facets of Practice for Equity (Grudnoff et al., 2017). Findings highlight PSTs' aspirations and commitment to equity, along with the processes they identify as important for enacting it. They also reveal tensions between equity aspirations and classroom realities, offering implications for teacher educators supporting PSTs to recognise and enact equity in practice.

Submitted by: Hilary Kingston, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 77
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 9:45:00 AM to 10:15:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Stewart Riddle
University of Southern Queensland

Martin Mills
Queensland University of Technology

Glenda McGregor
Griffith University

Keywords: curricular justice, curriculum making, teacher agency

'You have to show them you care': A beginning teacher's curriculum journey

This paper draws from data collected as part of an Australian Research Council Linkage project in partnership with the Queensland Department of Education. We collaborated with teachers in three public secondary schools, using a 'cycles of inquiry' approach to facilitate professional inquiry into socially just curriculum making. Data were collected over a period of two years during the schools' efforts to undertake curriculum innovation in particular subject areas, including science and English. In this paper, we present a detailed account of a beginning teacher's experiences during the curriculum project, with an emphasis on their journey as a new teacher and coming to understand the ways in which socially just curriculum making practices could support their professional growth and development in addition to providing students with opportunities for engagement in rich and meaningful learning experiences. The thick descriptive approach taken to present an ethnographic narrative of one teacher's experience as an emergent curriculum maker works to demonstrate how all teachers, no matter their level of experience, can effectively engage students in learning, develop activist pedagogical practices and engage in thoughtful reflection about their professional learning.

Submitted by: Stewart Riddle, University of Southern Queensland

V1 12112026

Pepa 78
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Amy Kaukau
Te Wānanga Aronui O Tāmaki Makau Rau | Auckland University of Technology

Dr Susannah Smith
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | The University of Canterbury

Dr Te Hurinui Renata Karaka-Clarke
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato } The Univeristy of Waikato

Keywords: Bicultural education, Indigenous knowledge systems, Participatory Action Research

Working Together Across Knowledge Systems: Lessons from Bicultural Education in Aotearoa New Zealand

This paper draws on a PhD study that examined how teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand began to enact bicultural education by working across Indigenous and Western knowledge systems in ways that protected the integrity of each knowledge tradition. While Physical Education provided the initial context, the findings extend across curriculum areas. Research and teacher accounts continue to highlight the need for more authentic bicultural practice to honour Indigenous knowledge systems and support equitable educational relationships, yet classroom enactment often remains at the level of symbolic inclusion.

This study explored how teachers worked across distinct knowledge systems without one dominating the other, and what patterns emerged as they navigated this space. The study was informed by Kaupapa Māori and Critical Theory and used Participatory Action Research with Indigenous knowledge leaders and teacher participants. Iterative cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection guided the research. Data were generated through wānanga, dialogic conversations, classroom and field observations, teaching artefacts, and reflective journals. Analysis followed a thematic approach with attention to relationships, local context, and teacher positionality, supported by relational ethics.

Findings suggest that meaningful bicultural practice emerged when teachers began with the environment, whakapapa, and local relationships rather than positioning Māori knowledge as an add on to existing curriculum structures. Place based learning, sustained reflection, and shifts in teacher ontology were central to this process. He Awa Whiria provided a framework for working across Indigenous and Western knowledge systems while maintaining the integrity of each. These findings offer insight for educators, researchers, and policy makers working across curriculum areas where Indigenous and Western knowledge meet. Practical examples will be shared to support teacher education and professional learning in diverse contexts.

Submitted by: Amy Kaukau, Te Wānanga Aronui O Tāmaki Makau Rau | Auckland University of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 79
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Holly Baynes
University of Canterbury

Kris LaVenia
University of Canterbury

John Everatt
University of Canterbury

Keywords: intervention; mental health; school-based

School-Based Interventions Impacting Children's Mental Health and Well-being in New Zealand Schools

This scoping review synthesises research published between 2015 and 2025 on school-based interventions that address mental health and well-being of school-aged children in Aotearoa New Zealand. Students in New Zealand face increasing concerns related to mental health, anxiety, depression and suicide, yet schools face shortfalls in staffing for mental health, leaving these growing needs inadequately addressed. This study was guided by the PRISMA-ScR protocol and Population, Concept, Context (PCC) methodology from the Joanna Briggs Institute. It maps evidence across five domains: mindfulness-based programmes, direct counselling, whole-school approaches, social work, and alternative therapies. Seventeen studies were identified for review. The findings indicate that school-based interventions can positively impact students' well-being, regardless of intervention type, when conditions include dedicated staffing, community and school buy-in, and cultural grounding. However, interventions in New Zealand aimed at mental health and well-being for students are often fragmented, short-term in nature, and unevenly distributed across age levels, with fewer interventions targeting primary-school-aged children. Most of the reviewed studies also neglected Māori and Pasifika frameworks that risks perpetuating existing inequities relevant to New Zealand cultural setting. Future investment in mental health interventions in schools should prioritise culturally responsive, longitudinal, and primary school-focused interventions.

Submitted by: Holly Baynes, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 80
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 4:25:00 PM to 4:55:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Wellbeing

Feng Jiang
University of Canterbury, Faculty of Education

Keywords: early childhood teacher stress, needs deprivation mechanism, structural stress

A Multidimensional Investigation of Stress and Coping Strategies Among Early Childhood Teachers

Against the backdrop of ongoing early childhood education policy reforms and rising societal expectations in Mainland China, teacher stress has become increasingly prominent. Drawing upon Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, this study systematically analyses the structural causes of early childhood teacher stress, revealing how unmet needs across different ecological systems contribute to it. Through semi-structured interviews with 15 teachers who varied in region, gender, age, teaching experience, educational background, and kindergarten type, the findings show that: stress at the macro- and exosystem levels primarily stems from low social recognition, heavy policy burdens, and insufficient compensation; stress at the mesosystem level arises from tensions related to leadership style, colleague relationships, and family-kindergarten dynamics; at the microsystem and chronosystem levels, stress evolves from novice anxiety to responsibility-driven stress, with its intensity moderated by individual abilities, personality traits, and coping strategies. The findings suggest that early childhood teacher stress is essentially a systemic expression of unmet needs within specific ecological contexts. This study provides a contextually grounded theoretical framework and practical pathways for developing targeted policy interventions and support strategies to alleviate teacher stress and enhance their well-being.

Submitted by: Feng Jiang, University of Canterbury, Faculty of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 81
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Central 2
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Rachael Dixon
UC

Keywords: health education, critical, research

Navigating Change in Health Education: Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga, Manaakitanga

We live in challenging and changing times, and our Aotearoa New Zealand educational landscape is no exception. In this presentation, I present insights from my research into theorising health education as a discipline and how the subject is experienced by secondary school learners (ākonga). My research indicates that although a moralistic approach to health education seems to permeate the junior secondary school experience, those ākonga who study the subject to higher levels of the curriculum experience a more critical approach. This notwithstanding, an argument can be made for the need to balance different approaches to health education in order to navigate up-coming curriculum changes. At my place of work, the University of Canterbury, our values correspond with the conference theme: whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga. These are also three values that as a health education teacher and researcher I strongly associate with my curriculum subject and my broader work as an academic. Therefore, my presentation will consider these values in relation to how people might develop relationships and work together to support and guide health education during times of change, and uplift the mana of those we work with, including our current and future ākonga. My hope for this presentation is to spark new thinking about the potential of health education to move with the (challenging and changing) times.

Submitted by: Rachael Dixon, UC

V1 12112026

Pepa 85
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Lakshmi Chellapan
Dr

Manleen Kaur
Ms

Keywords: Professional Identity, Bicultural Practice, Migrant Teachers

Between Assimilation and Authenticity: Reconstructing Professional Identity through Bicultural Practice.

As Aotearoa New Zealand's education sector becomes increasingly diverse, migrant teachers are expected to engage meaningfully with Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based bicultural practice. However, limited research has explored how migrant educators navigate these expectations while negotiating their professional identities, particularly within early childhood and primary education settings. This study asks: How do migrant teachers understand and adapt to bicultural practice in Aotearoa New Zealand, and how does this shape their professional identity?

Guided by qualitative narrative inquiry, the study drew on written reflections and collaborative online discussions with four purposively selected migrant teachers working in early childhood and primary education. A thematic narrative analysis identified four interconnected themes: cultural adjustment, language barriers, shifts in professional identity and teaching practice, and the role of mentorship and support.

Findings highlight an ongoing tension between adapting to local educational expectations and maintaining cultural and professional authenticity. Participants described uncertainty when engaging with te reo Māori and bicultural pedagogies, alongside challenges associated with belonging and professional recognition. However, critical reflection, collegial relationships, and mentorship supported confidence and pedagogical growth. The study suggests that bicultural adaptation is not a process of assimilation but an opportunity for professional identity reconstruction that values migrant teachers' existing cultural and pedagogical knowledge while fostering meaningful engagement with bicultural practice.

Submitted by: Lakshmi Chellapan, DR

V1 12112026

Pepa 86
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Yixin Liu
University of Canterbury

Keywords: relational participation; collaborative learning; higher education

What Holds a Group Together? Relational Coordination as an Interactional Accomplishment in Chinese Tertiary Group Work

Group-work research by Cohen (1994) and Johnson and Johnson (2009) examines how task design and social interdependence support collaboration. Hadwin et al. (2017) and Kahu and Nelson (2018) extend this focus by examining how participation develops through social interaction and relationships. This paper draws on a wider study of participation in tertiary group work and asks how students sustain collaboration moment by moment. Motivated by the researcher's decade of teaching at a multilingual university in Inner Mongolia, the study examined group work in Tourism Management and Linguistics, two courses from different disciplines where group work was routinely embedded. The dataset included eight recorded sessions with 30 undergraduates and 23 interviews with 14 students and two instructors. Data collection and transcription are complete, and analysis is ongoing. Recorded episodes are analysed sequentially for talk, embodied conduct and materials, while interviews are analysed thematically to compare patterns across episodes and understand participants' interpretations. Preliminary analysis suggests that speaking more did not necessarily bring greater authority. Recognition and uptake shifted across tasks, language demands and interactional moments. Collaboration was sustained through seeking confirmation, adjusting turns and inviting quieter members to contribute. These findings offer a context-specific account of how participation is negotiated in Inner Mongolia and invite reflection on how less visible contributions are recognised in culturally and linguistically diverse tertiary classrooms, including those in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Submitted by: Yixin Liu, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 87
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Dr Helen Mataiti
Te Kura Matatini ki Otago - Otago Polytechnic

Dr Amy Benians
Te Kura Matatini ki Otago - Otago Polytechnic

Rach McNamara
Te Kura Matatini ki Otago - Otago Polytechnic

Keywords: Professional Learning; Universal Design for Learning (UDL); Inclusive Education

Professional learning conversations about Universal Design for Learning as vocational tertiary educators: A preliminary discourse analysis

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework introduced in 2008 by the Center for Applied Special Technology, with claims it could increase agency of learners, improve accessibility and engagement, and guide learning design in educational settings. Despite widespread implementation in compulsory sector education globally, research reporting the applicability and impact of UDL in tertiary learning environments and workplaces has been limited, especially in Aotearoa New Zealand.

As part of a wider ethics-approved study, our aim as three female vocational tertiary educators was to see how UDL could help us uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and enhance our teaching practice in postgraduate work-based learning contexts. Thematic findings, reported elsewhere, showed how: UDL encouraged responsiveness to learners and their environments; enhanced our learning and teaching practices by supporting the development of understandings, application of, and reflection on the framework; and, enabled us to realise the value of collaboration in professional learning and research contexts. This presentation shares the findings of a second, planned, exploratory layer of data analysis informed by Foucault's theory and Gee's seven building tasks of discourse. Our aim was to discover more about UDL as a discourse, and what our conversations revealed about our situated identities as vocational tertiary educators.

Analysis was carried out on 7 Microsoft Teams-generated transcripts of professional learning conversations about UDL, collected over a 14-week period in 2025. Findings pertaining to the changing organisational context; the language of UDL, the nature of collaboration for purposes of professional learning and communication; and, the place of vulnerability in professional learning, will be shared. To close, implications will be discussed considering our unique position as insider-researchers to facilitate professional learning conversations, with peers in tertiary learning environments going forward. Central to this discussion will be how blind spots in our practice identified through UDL conversations led to learning and changes in teaching practice.

Submitted by: Dr Helen Mataiti, Te Kura Matatini ki Otago - Otago Polytechnic

V1 12112026

Pepa 89
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Xing Xu
Deakin University

Keywords: Education research collaboration; Social network analysis; Australia–China research collaboration.

Australia–China Educational Research Collaboration in an Era of Geopolitical Uncertainty

International research collaboration is increasingly shaped by geopolitical tensions, research security concerns, and changing national policy environments. While existing research has predominantly focused on STEM disciplines, comparatively little attention has been paid to educational research or to collaboration between specific country pairs. This study examines the development and structure of Australia–China research collaboration in education over the period 2015–2024. Drawing on 917 co-authored journal articles indexed in the Web of Science, the study applies social network analysis at country, institutional, and author levels. Beyond conventional network measures, the analysis incorporates the Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS), community detection, small-world analysis, and temporal comparison to examine patterns of collaboration and network evolution. The findings reveal sustained growth in Australia–China educational research collaboration over the past decade, particularly in recent years. While the country-level network is relatively well connected, institutional and author networks are considerably sparser but organised around identifiable hubs, cohesive communities, and key bridging actors. The author network exhibits strong small-world characteristics, and temporal analysis shows increasing integration as previously separate research groups become connected within a substantially larger giant component. The study demonstrates that Australia–China educational research collaboration has become increasingly interconnected despite a more challenging geopolitical environment. It contributes discipline-specific evidence to debates on international research collaboration and illustrates how multi-level social network analysis can deepen understanding of the evolution, organisation, and resilience of international educational knowledge communities.

Submitted by: Xing Xu, Deakin University

V1 12112026

Pepa 91
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Fiona O'Connell Jones
Te Rito Maioha

Keywords: Neurodivergence, higher education, online learning

Supporting Neurodivergent Students in Online Higher Education: Challenges, Supports, and Design Principles

This doctoral research investigates how students with autism and ADHD are currently supported in online higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Online accessibility research has largely addressed physical and sensory disability, leaving cognitive load and executive function, which are central challenges for neurodivergent learners, comparatively under-examined, particularly within Aotearoa, where little research explores how academic staff and disability services design courses and select resources and technologies for these students. The study investigates the barriers and enablers neurodivergent students experience, how courses are currently designed, and which resources and technologies are perceived as most effective.

The research draws together Cognitive Load Theory (Mayer, 2021, 2024), the neurodiversity paradigm (Botha et al., 2024), Universal Design for Learning, and critical platformisation theory (Decuypere et al., 2021) as a combined conceptual lens, applying the FEDIS+R framework (Le Cunff et al., 2025) to analyse cognitive load across course design, staff practice, and platform structures.

Using a four-phase mixed-methods design combining course audits, surveys, interviews, and iterative design testing, this research will produce practical, evidence-based design guidelines for course designers supporting neurodivergent learners in online higher education. As data collection is yet to begin, this presentation outlines the research design and welcomes audience feedback on the proposed methodology and framework.

Submitted by: Fiona O'Connell Jones, Te Rito Maioha

V1 12112026

Pepa 92
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:55:00 PM to 4:25:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Brittany Walker Smith
Waipapa Taumata Rau, The University of Auckland

Keywords: Transdisciplinary learning, studio pedagogy

From Lecture to Studio to Everywhere: Inventing Transdisciplinary Pedagogy

Transdisciplinary learning is not new in higher education, however, it is currently experiencing renewed attention through recognition that traditional, bounded disciplines are insufficient for addressing the complex challenges of the contemporary world. In Aotearoa New Zealand, universities are increasingly formalising transdisciplinary approaches within strategic plans and curricula. This presentation draws on experience with the Transdisciplinary Futures initiative at Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland. It examines the opportunities and challenges of transdisciplinary learning, reflecting on the design and delivery of a pilot undergraduate course 'AI and Society' offered in 2025 and 2026. This is reviewed across three dimensions to assess emerging outcomes: (1) conceptual principles underpinning TD learning, (2) course design and student feedback, (3) practical conditions - the realities of teaching cross-faculty courses. A resulting 'TD pedagogy' is proposed, centering on studio-based teaching and learning practices as key to fostering a transdisciplinary mindset. Results indicate increased student awareness of the situated and relative nature of their own perspectives, a deeper appreciation of multiple knowledge realities, and positive student and staff experiences, though sustaining systemic change within institutional structures remains a challenge.

Submitted by: Brittany Walker Smith,
Waipapa Taumata Rau, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 95
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Adrian Schoone
AUT

Frances Howard
Nottingham Trent University

Keywords: Poetic Inquiry, Alternative Education, Collaborative Writing

Knowing affectively: creating a lyric conversation across time and place

Frances Howard from England and Adrian Schoone from New Zealand, researching the lived experiences of marginalised young people in alternative education provision, were brought together by the editors of the forthcoming Bloomsbury Handbook of Arts-based Educational Research to collaborate on writing a chapter about their artistic inquiry methods. This opportunity resulted in a creative writing approach in which they brought their poetic datasets together to form a lyric conversation between their youth research participants. Separated by both time (when the datasets were collected) and place (New Zealand and England) the conversation explores the shared schooling experiences of young people and provides insight into some of the reasons that led to their ultimate disenfranchisement. The lyric conversation became a performative text; data in dialogue through stanzas, with a chorus of voices acting to express shared themes. The performative text was an opportunity to re-see the data in new ways. It aided an international research collaboration in which completed research projects were brought back to life to form a prescient conversation.

Submitted by: Adrian Schoone, AUT

V1 12112026

Pepa 96
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Julie Tabrum
NZSE

Sangeeta Prasad
NZSE

Keywords: Autoethnography, arts/craft-based research, teacher identity

Where is your ara?

In traditional Māori weaving the question of 'where is your ara?' is a common one, and working to find it often solves most weaving problems. Looking for and correcting the ara in your weaving helps to solve most problems with your vessel as its builds, ensures your weaving is even and consistent so it can connect or weave back into itself and ensures the balance of your vessel. But the ara is not visible when you first start weaving or looking for it. It seems illusive and lost in a tangle of unders and overs that speak a new language you are desperately trying to learn. However, over time, and by going back and forwards again examining your work, mistakes, trials and patterns the ara suddenly appears. In this presentation a connection is made in educators search for their own teacher identity and finding your ara in weaving – as a metaphor and as a methodology. In this autoethnographic, arts-based presentation we share stories about how we can take lessons from Indigenous weaving knowledges and use them to support educators to better know who they are, but importantly, use these knowledges as a pathway, as an ara into the self, building teacher identity.

Submitted by: Dr Julie Tabrum, NZSE - New Zealand Skills and Education College

V1 12112026

Pepa 97
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Mindy Catt
University of Auckland

Keywords: Whanaungatanga; post-qualitative; belonging

The delightfully messy world of research relationships

If it's the students that make me a teacher, why shouldn't they make me a researcher too? This presentation explores creative intra-actions between children, artmaking, place and pedagogy, where the relationship between researcher and participants has its own 'thing-power' (Bennet). I will share a workshop methodology where children and I experimented with how we can develop a sense of belonging through artmaking. A narrowing curriculum, generative AI, and contestable funding models often favour the general over the personal. I am curious how locally based, deeply embedded education programmes, supported by research might provide a countermeasure. Post-qualitative methodologies upend ethical assumptions about working with children, blurring the lines between us as collaborative artists, researchers and teachers. As in all teaching spaces, whanaungatanga is vital for arts education. Learning art can be a transformative and affective event, but only if strong relationships are formed between teacher and learner. I argue it is through a deep knowledge of our students that we can notice change, and I propose if this is true of a child and teacher relationship, it can be of a child and researcher one too.

Submitted by: Mindy Catt, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 98
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Kumi Nakamura
University of Auckland: Waipapa
Taumata Rau

Keywords: Arts based auotoethnography, A sense of intra-inter-connectedness, Japanese immigrant children

When Immigrant Children Draw Their Worlds. Developing a sense of self and intra- and inter-connectedness

In this paper, I reflect on my close observations and lived learning from child-led creative endeavours as a Japanese immigrant mother and educator. Through my arts-based autoethnographic study, I have explored Japanese ways of knowing, particularly the philosophical concepts: 場 (Ba), 間 (Ma), 和 (Wa), which led me to study the Māori and Pasifika concepts, Wā and Vā, drawing on Bhabha's Third Space Theory. I speculate that the in-between/relational space and time can provide a seed for empowering immigrant children and for enhancing their sense of self and intra- and inter-connectedness. To study my thinking, I used window spaces where I could interact with intentional visual arts and others (humans, nature, ancestors, spirit, community, and/or knowledge) and reflected on the constant, interactive transformation of the in-between, the outside, and the inside that my children and I have experienced through our Playcentre journey. My arts-based reflective and reflexive inquiry process revealed that, in Ba (a shared space where something emerges and interactions occur), when Ma (an in-between/space and time) is employed, Wa (coherence and harmony) may emerge within oneself. This may empower them to connect with others while retaining their sense of self. This leads me to further exploration.

Submitted by: Kumi Nakamura,
University of Auckland: Waipapa
Taumata Rau

V1 12112026

Pepa 99
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:30:00 PM to 3:00:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Graham McPhail

Keywords: arts, experience, disciplainry knowledge

Beyond experience in the arts: Dewey's 'unity and undergoing' as access to powerful knowledge.

This paper takes as its starting point the idea common in everyday thinking and in specialised scholarship that knowledge in the arts in Western culture is primarily experiential and subjective. This rather 'nebulous' conception may be a contributing factor in the continued side-lining of the arts in schooling world-wide. Moreover, the arts are frequently portrayed as offering limited pathways to future employment and thus of little value to national economies within a neo-liberal context. Without wanting to sideline the potential significant cultural and 'open' aspects of learning and 'ways of knowing' the arts provide, I propose that it may be useful to ask more specifically what learning we might expect students to take away from arts experiences in the school beyond the aspirational, subjective, therapeutic, or generic. To explore this question, I utilise Dewey's concept of 'unity and undergoing' beginning with his statement that "learning within experience is only the first step". I then draw on the concept of 'powerful knowledge' from Social Realism to consider the 'what' and 'so what' of learning in the arts using music as an example. I conclude by asking if learning in the arts might be most powerful if it can hold both experiential and disciplinary dimensions in a productive dialectic relationship.

Submitted by: Graham McPhail, FAculty of Arts and Education, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 100
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 3:00:00 PM to 3:30:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Joanna Pascoe
AUT

Keywords: Arts-based research, public pedagogy, poetics

The Sonic Labyrinth

The Sonic Labyrinth is an arts-based research project, with a focus on hau ora, inclusion, manaakitanga, care and speaks to public pedagogy. A transformative space, the labyrinth offers an invitation to slow down and turn inward, an embodied poiesis towards the Affirmative Ethics of Joy (Braidotti, 2018). People who walk the labyrinth may feel inspired, feel gratitude, consider a decision, shift a perspective. It is an open-hearted space that welcomes all. It offers an opportunity to walk with endings and beginnings within the ouroboros of a continuing cycle. Participants walking the labyrinthine path, follow strands of solar-powered lights beneath the night sky, experiencing place-based human–nonhuman connectedness, and leave traces of their experience in a journal, generating field notes. The words of labyrinth passengers join the ongoing poetics of the project. The poem resonates with four interrelated orbits: metamorphoses, inclusion, sustainability and beauty, through which the Solar-Hopepunk Labyrinth becomes visible. The sonic element is inspired by the key of B harmonic minor mixed with electromagnetic signals from wild whistlers and chorus waves in the outer plasmasphere. An ever-evolving sound pattern, the sonic aspect is labyrinthine itself, allowing for passengers to defamiliarize and open to other worlds and empowering possibilities.

Submitted by: Dr Joanna Pascoe, AUT

V1 12112026

Pepa 102
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Esther Fitzpatrick
The University of Auckland

Keywords: ancestor river; arts-based; pepeha

Crocheting an ancestor river: The art of re-membering our relationship to place.

How do we invite non-Māori to mihi to place? What is it to whakapapa to an ancestor river – te awa? This is a question I, settler Pākehā, have lived with through my teaching and academic career, in consultation with Māori colleagues, writing and sharing my story of relationship to the Waioeka River, Ōpōtiki, inviting students to write and share their own pepeha. Using arts-based methods through a Critical Family History project I am exploring and coming to know my ancestor rivers – the Fowey in Cornwall, The Don River in Yorkshire, Old Man Thames, in London, and the Danube in Eastern Europe. I have walked and talked with these rivers, dipped my feet into their currents, and located their source. I am engaging with my rivers through images, poetry and crocheting. This presentation is a scholarly conversation on the possibilities arts-based methods provide for re-membering our ancestor rivers. This presentation leans into the arts through the craft of crocheting. Not as an expert, but as a beginner – another re-membering through the body of paying attention to more than just words, but to the sound a river makes, the way it sparkles in conversation with the sun, it's liveliness.

Submitted by: Esther Fitzpatrick, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 103
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Kate Revell
The University of Canterbury

Keywords: Performing arts, student engagement, social constructionism

Co-constructing ākonga engagement in the performing arts classroom: A relational framework

Student engagement is central to meaningful arts learning, yet it is commonly conceptualised through affective, behavioural and cognitive dimensions. While influential, this dominant model privileges individual psychological processes, offering limited insight into how engagement is produced, negotiated, and sustained through the collaborative interactions that characterise performing arts classrooms. Drawing on two action research projects involving kaiako and ākonga, this presentation shares findings on how engagement was understood and experienced in Year 7-8 performing arts classrooms. Grounded in social constructionism, the studies employed iterative action research cycles incorporating focus groups, interviews, reflexive journals and creative collaborative methods. The findings informed the development of a framework that reconceptualises engagement as a relational phenomenon, emerging through interactions between kaiako and ākonga. Rather than residing within students, engagement was found to be continually negotiated through relationships characterised by shared control, co-construction of understandings, collaborative participation, and the valuing of diverse ways of participating. The framework highlights the need for responsive, relational and adaptable arts pedagogies that recognise engagement as dynamic and contextually situated. This presentation offers arts educators and researchers an alternative to individualistic models of engagement, supporting reconsideration of how engagement is conceptualised and enacted within performing arts learning.

Submitted by: Kate Revell, The University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 104
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Keywords: relationships curriculum assessment

Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga, Manaakitanga: A Subject Association's Response to Curriculum and Assessment change.

This paper explores the development of Whakaari Aotearoa Drama NZ, a national drama education subject association, as it responds to ongoing curriculum and assessment changes in Aotearoa New Zealand. This reflective paper draws on Wenger's (1998) theory of Communities of Practice to understand how a national subject association supports professional learning, collective identity, and teacher agency during periods of curriculum and assessment reform. This reflection is further informed by the values of whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga. As curriculum and assessment requirements evolve, subject associations play an important role in advocating for their subject, supporting teachers, navigating change, and, if necessary, challenging policy decisions. Through a reflective account of the association's recent work, this paper considers how values-based leadership and its own evolution as a Treaty partner has strengthened professional relationships, nurtured resources and expertise, and empowered educators. The paper argues that relational and community-centred approaches can enhance the resilience and collective agency of arts educators, offering insights and provoking scholarly conversation with educational researchers, practitioners, and professional organisations navigating reform.

Submitted by: Annette Thomson,
Whakaari Aotearoa Drama NZ,
University of Canterbury, Victoria University of Wellington,

V1 12112026

Pepa 105
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Rehua 529
SIG: Assessment

Amber Garrett
University of Auckland

Dr. Ofer Marmur
University of Auckland

Keywords: digitised mathematics assessment, digital equity, teacher and student perspectives

Perspectives of Digitised Summative Mathematics Assessment: Teacher and Student Experiences of New Zealand's Numeracy Common Assessment Activity

The growing use of digitised mathematics assessment raises important questions about validity, equity, and classroom practice. Aotearoa's first high-stakes, nationwide, digitised mathematics assessment, the Numeracy Common Assessment Activity (CAA), provides an opportunity to examine these issues during its initial implementation. This interpretivist qualitative case study explored teacher and student experiences of digitised mathematics assessment within a traditionally paper-based mathematics assessment culture. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with nine secondary mathematics teachers and nine Year 11 students from Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, and analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Teachers reported limited explicit preparation for the digital assessment environment and perceived constraints on students' communication of mathematical reasoning. Students reported that the digital assessment changed how they organised and expressed their mathematical thinking, while their confidence in the digital environment shaped how they experienced the assessment. Participants also identified equity implications, with differences in digital familiarity creating barriers for some learners and accessibility features benefiting some students with disabilities. Rather than a simple change in assessment delivery, digitising mathematics assessment may influence how mathematical understanding is communicated, highlighting the value of considering teacher and student perspectives in the design and implementation of valid, equitable, and educationally meaningful digital assessment.

Submitted by: Amber Garrett, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 106
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Rehua 529
SIG: Assessment

Kate Gainsford
Immediate past chairperson of Secondary Principals' Council; immediate past principal of Aotea College

Melissa Denzler
Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa (New Zealand Council for Educational Research)

Keywords: Qualification reform; equity; Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Tirotiro Anō: Re-examining Senior Secondary Qualification Reform in Aotearoa New Zealand

Tirotiro Anō, an independent inquiry commissioned by Te Wehengarua (NZPPTA), examines the replacement of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) and the implications of senior secondary qualification reform in Aotearoa New Zealand. The inquiry explores the significance of these reforms for learners, whānau, educators, communities, employers, and the wider education system. The inquiry is informed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, kaupapa Māori, critical perspectives on educational equity, and current scholarship on curriculum, assessment, and qualifications. Rather than focusing solely on the technical aspects of qualification design, it considers the broader social, cultural, and systemic impacts of reform for learner pathways, knowledge, participation, assessment and educational success. A mixed evidence approach draws on literature and policy analysis, surveys, interviews, case studies, wānanga, and engagement with educators, leaders, Māori-medium and English-medium settings, and sector organisations. Emerging Phase 1 findings suggest that the reforms may intensify existing educational inequities, particularly in relation to implementation, Te Tiriti obligations, workforce implications, the recognition of diverse aspirations, pathways, and knowledge systems, and the risk that more learners may be deemed unsuccessful through factors beyond their control.

Submitted by: Melissa Denzler, NZCER

V1 12112026

Pepa 107
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Roberta Carvalho
Otago University

Michael Gaffney
Otago University

Sonya Gaches
Otago University

Alex Gunn
Otago University

Keywords: intentional teaching, care-full moments, relationality

He tītī huatahi: Following the uniqueness of each tamaiti as intentional teaching

This presentation draws from a research project we set out to reveal the intentionality of kaiako within their observable practice of caring for young tamariki. The kaiako participating in this project, shared their intention to prioritise relational pedagogy and emotional learning with tamariki when talking about a moment of practice. The data for this project came from visiting lecturers noting caring moments when mentor kaiako of our student teachers were involved in care of/for/with tamariki. If mentor kaiako agreed for the resulting narrative to be used in the research, they were then interviewed about the contextual understandings that were important to their decision making. Analysis of the findings show that the kaiako are very intentional in their mahi, both by drawing on their knowledge of and aspirations for individual tamaiti, their whakaaro about what is important in that moment and how the environment affords learning opportunities when both knowledge, aspiration and whakaaro are brought together. In this presentation, we discuss how the findings value and nurture the uniqueness of the child, how the intentional decision making of kaiako empowers the child and how student kaiako can benefit from becoming aware of the 'hidden' intentionality of teaching. These findings respond directly to the conference theme for 2026, showing how the kaiako empowered and nurtured tamariki by their deliberate pedagogical choices.

Submitted by: Roberta Carvalho, Otago University

V1 12112026

Pepa 108
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:45:00 AM to 11:15:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Sue Cherrington
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Ali Glasgow
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Mele Taumoepeau
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Claire McLachlan
University of Waikato

Tara McLaughlin, Massey University;
Karyn Aspden, Massey University;
Namuali'i Tonumaipe'a-Sagote

Keywords: Early childhood teachers; children with Pacific heritages; oral language

Early childhood teacher practices for supporting oral language acquisition and competency for children from Pacific heritages.

Our TLRI-funded project used a multiple case-study design to investigate how EC teachers' practices and interactions can effectively support oral language acquisition and learning for children from Pacific heritages. Our project team involved researchers from three universities and teachers from four EC centres: two Pacific Language Nests and two kindergartens, and focused on the following research questions: • How can EC teachers' practices and interactions effectively support children's oral language acquisition and learning? • How might EC teachers and whānau draw on Pacific home languages, contexts, and cultural experiences to support mono-lingual, bi-lingual and multilingual children's oral language learning? • How might EC teachers' inquiries into their oral language interactions with mono- and multilingual children strengthen and support their practice? The project drew upon Pacific methodologies of teu le va and talanoa alongside Western research methodologies of teacher inquiry, focus group interviews, document analysis, teacher reflection tools and assessments of children's oral language development and use. In this paper, we present an overview of key findings from our project and identify implications for policy, teacher professional learning, and practice emerging from our results.

Submitted by: Sue Cherrington, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 109
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Diti Hill-Denee
University of Auckland

Andrew Gibbons
AUT

Sue Stover
AUT

Keywords: ECE ITE History

Navigating choppy seas in EC ITE: Publishing a history of a sector in continuous movement

This presentation explores the complex history of early childhood teacher education (EC ITE) in Aotearoa New Zealand. The presenters draw on their experiences both as teacher educators and as editors of a new book that draws together personal and professional reflections, dialogue, empirical studies, and philosophical provocations for the EC ITE sector. The presenters, three past and current EC ITE lecturers, started talking in 2019 about the changes they had seen across multiple institution and over 2-3 decades. What had been lived experiences of upheavals and restructurings, policy initiatives and retrenching, expanded budgets and cutbacks were behind us, yet more loomed. Could a book be produced that captured not just our own stories but those of our many and diverse colleagues and students? Could personal historic accounts – such as those of Māori kindergarten trainees of the 1950s and 1960s - help build a social history of the sector? Seven years later, there is now such a book. With more than two dozen contributing authors and a cross-section of historic and contemporary experiences, its title hints at the sector's pull-push of certainty and uncertainty: Kia tika ai te hoe i te waka nei: Steering the waka of early childhood teacher education through choppy seas. Buoyed by optimism and shaped by meaningful experiences within the EC sector, those who commit to EC teacher education have to run to keep up not only with social and cultural changes but also political upheavals that periodically rock the sector. At the same time, they are often working within institutional paradigms that can diminish the EC sector's identify amidst demands for efficiencies. This presentation builds on the metaphor of 'navigating choppy seas' in considering how the sector's history can help clarify principles (for example, a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi) and challenges (for example the influence of the private sector in both ECE and EC ITE) that both propel and constrain momentum.

Submitted by: Sue Stover, AUT

V1 12112026

Pepa 110
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Julie Houghton-Katipa
Massey University

Sonja Macfarlane
Adjunct Associate Professor - University of Canterbury - Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Waewae iwi

Keywords: Social and emotional learning (SEL); Bicultural Education; Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Exploring Bicultural Pathways to Social and Emotional Learning in Early Childhood Education

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is increasingly embedded within educational policy and practice, yet the frameworks most commonly used in Aotearoa New Zealand largely originate from Western traditions. This raises important questions for a sector guided by Te Whāriki, a curriculum founded on bicultural aspirations. Drawing on research exploring bicultural pathways to SEL in early childhood education, this presentation asks: When we talk about social and emotional learning, whose understanding are we teaching? Using He Awa Whiria (braided rivers) as a conceptual framework, findings are explored as an ongoing weaving of Māori and Western knowledge systems rather than as competing approaches. Participants described practices that emphasised relationships, identity, belonging, collective wellbeing, and culturally located understandings of SEL. At the same time, findings suggest that Western SEL discourses continue to shape practice in significant ways. Rather than viewing biculturality as a completed achievement, the research highlights teachers' efforts to create emerging bicultural pathways within everyday practice. The presentation discusses what these findings reveal about the bicultural promise of Te Whāriki and considers implications for the future of social and emotional learning in early childhood education.

Submitted by: Julie Houghton-Katipa,
Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 111
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:35:00 AM to 12:05:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Dr Emela Achu Fenmachi
WINTEC Hamilton

Kayla Charteris
WINTEC Hamilton

Keywords: Early Intervention, Transdisciplinary collaboration, Inclusive Early Childhood Education, Whānau Engagement.

Early Intervention for Tamariki (Children) with Additional Needs in ECE: Exploring how a Transdisciplinary Approach Enables Equity, Reduces Learning Barriers and Strengthens Whānau (Family) – Kaiako (Teachers) – Agency Partnerships.

Early intervention (EI) plays a critical role in enabling equitable outcomes and participation in early childhood education for tamariki with additional needs. This qualitative study investigates how a transdisciplinary approach to early intervention supports tamariki with additional learning needs across home, specialist, and early childhood education settings in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Guided by sociocultural and ecological concepts, semi-structured interviews were carried out with EI specialists, kaiako, education support workers and whānau. Preliminary thematic analysis highlights the importance of culturally grounded approaches, collaborative strategies, trusting relationships (whanaungatanga) and whanau engagement to effective early intervention. Participants describe the transdisciplinary approach as enabling shared decision-making, collaborative goal setting and implementation of strategies across the home and ECE settings. Whānau described their active participation and contribution, while EI teachers and specialists emphasised a strength-based, family-centred approach grounded in Te Whāriki and te ao Māori values. The findings identified challenges such as limited funding, inequitable access to services and varied levels of ECE centre Kaiako preparedness to support tamariki with additional needs. The study argues that strengthening transdisciplinary collaboration and embedding inclusive pedagogies within initial teacher education as well as ongoing professional learning opportunities for ECE Kaiako reduce learning barriers and enhance equitable outcomes for tamariki with additional needs.

Submitted by: Dr Emela Achu Fenmachi,
Centre for Education and Foundation Pathways, Waikato Institute of Technology (WINTEC), Hamilton.

V1 12112026

Pepa 112
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 11:45:00 AM to 12:15:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Prima Suci Rohmadheny
University of Auckland

Keywords: Faih-Based Education, Teacher Professional Identities, Comparative Analysis

Faith and Professional Identities: A Comparative Analysis of Faith-Based Education Teacher Identities in the Global North and South

Teacher professional identities (TPI) are crucial, especially for the sense of their professionalism. However, their negotiation in faith-based contexts remains underexplored from a comparative perspective. This scoping review synthesises 20 studies (2004 - 2025) that examine how teachers' professional identities are conceptualised, studied, and shaped in faith-based education. The reviewed studies were situated across countries in the Global North and South1. The included studies were situated across diverse national contexts, spanning Europe, North America, Australia, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. The analysis was informed by conceptualising TPI as dynamic, multifaceted, and deeply contextual, with attention to how it is shaped differently through faith, professional practice, institutional contexts, and policy regimes. Findings from the Global South literature show that faith frequently provides the foundation for identity, positioning teaching as vocation, amanah (moral trust), charity, or divine calling, thereby integrating spiritual and pedagogical roles. While studies from the Global North found that identity is negotiated under secular, performative, and securitised policy regimes that produce tension, concealment, or compartmentalisation of faith. In terms of methodology, qualitative approaches dominate, though emerging quantitative and mixed-methods studies are increasing. Key research gaps include limited cross-regional comparison, insufficient analysis of macro-level policy influences, and a need for greater methodological diversity. This study underscores that teacher professional identity is shaped not only by personal faith but also by broader institutional, cultural, and policy contexts.

Submitted by: Prima Suci Rohmadheny,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 113
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Amrita Kaur
Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords: Systemic barriers, racialized perceptions

Professional challenges of Indian immigrant teachers in the ECE settings of Aotearoa

This study explores the perceptions of Indian immigrant teachers about their professional experiences in the ECE sector in New Zealand. Adopting a qualitative case study approach, the research draws on data collected through individual interviews and focus group discussions with ten Indian immigrant teachers employed in the ECE sector of New Zealand. An additional focus group discussion with five other Indian immigrant teachers provided a way to triangulate the data and deepen the understanding of the professional experiences of Indian immigrant teachers. The data was analysed thematically, revealing a wide range of themes. In this presentation, I focus on the first research question 'How do Indian immigrant teachers experience their professional life in the ECE settings of New Zealand?' My presentation highlights three key themes: Systemic barriers, non-supportive environment and racialized perceptions. Systemic barriers reflect challenges arising from regulatory requirements, different teaching standards and curriculum. Non-supportive environment captures immigrant teachers limited relational engagement, exclusion and isolation. Racialized perceptions unveil subtle but consequential forms of bias, making them professionally vulnerable. Together these themes reveal how immigrant teachers' experiences are shaped by structural and interpersonal conditions offering important implications for workforce development in the ECE sector.

Submitted by: Amrita Kaur, Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 114
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:55:00 PM to 4:25:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Vikki Hanrahan

Keywords: Risk & Resilience, Infants & toddlers ECE, Initial Teacher Education

Risk and resilience for infants and toddlers in ECE: Exploring Initial Teacher Education provision in Aotearoa New Zealand

Initial teacher education (ITE) providers play a pivotal role in preparing early childhood student teachers to support infants' and toddlers' social and emotional wellbeing. As expectations within the sector evolve, through initiatives such as He Māpuna te Tamaiti and a strengthened focus on social and emotional competence, concepts of risk and resilience for children under three are becoming more visible, raising questions about how these ideas are embedded within ITE programmes. Kaupapa Māori and Western perspectives offer insights into how resilience and risk-taking behaviours are understood in early childhood contexts, highlighting relational and culturally grounded ways of interpreting infants' and toddlers' engagement with risk, while emphasising care, responsiveness and empowerment of tamariki. This PhD research, underpinned by constructivism and informed by kaupapa Māori principles, investigates how ITE programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand shape student teachers' understanding and practice related to risk and resilience for infants and toddlers. Designed in three phases, using surveys, collaborative module development and case study work, the research aims to build a picture of strengths and opportunities across ITE, with early phase 1 findings informing this presentation. The research aims to produce an evidence-informed module that supports ITE providers in preparing student teachers in this area.

Submitted by: Vikki Hanrahan, Te Rito Maioha ECNZ

V1 12112026

Pepa 115
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Ruowei (Winnie) Chen
University of Canterbury

Professor Kathryn MacCallum
University of Canterbury

Keywords: digital play, Cultural-Historical Activity Theory, Chinese early childhood education

Understanding Digital Play in Chinese Early Childhood Education: A Cultural-Historical Activity Theory Analysis

Digital play has emerged as a significant concept in early childhood education, yet how teachers understand it remains underexplored, particularly in non-Western contexts. This study draws on second-generation Cultural-Historical Activity Theory to examine how Chinese ECE teachers understand digital play and what tensions shape their perspectives. Data were generated through a pre-survey, a focus group interview, and document analysis with a group of teachers from a state-designated demonstration kindergarten in Beijing, recognised for its high standards in curriculum design and digital technology integration. Thematic analysis and CHAT activity system analysis were used to examine teachers' understandings of digital play and the contradictions within their activity system. Findings reveal five themes characterising how these teachers understood digital play, reflecting both device-oriented criteria and normative expectations about children's roles. These understandings are shaped by and sit in tension with broader educational expectations, producing contradictions that are historically rooted in China's layered curriculum traditions. The findings offer insights into how cultural and historical conditions shape teachers' understandings of digital play in non-Western ECE contexts.

Submitted by: Ruowei (Winnie) Chen,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 117
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Leesa Parker
Te Rito Maioha

Keywords: Beliefs, care routines, infants and toddlers

Exploring teachers' pedagogical beliefs of infant and toddler care routines and how these beliefs inform teaching practice

This research aimed to explore infant and toddler teacher beliefs of care routines and how these beliefs inform their teaching practice. Using an interpretative qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with seven infant and toddler teachers based in New Zealand, each with three + years teaching experience. The findings highlight an alignment between teacher beliefs of relational pedagogy and implementation of primary caregiving practices. At the same time, a clear tension emerged between these beliefs and the daily realities of ratios, group sizes, and time pressures that made them harder to enact. Care routines were identified as a deeply relational and embodied practice which has implications for teacher education, professional knowledge, and policy settings. This study contributes to the growing field of infant and toddler research highlighting infant and toddler curriculum practices in addition to the beliefs of the teachers enacting this curriculum.

Submitted by: Leesa Parker, Masters student with Te Rito Maioha

V1 12112026

Pepa 118
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Sue Cherrington
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Carmen Dalli
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Judith Loveridge
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Yuying Xiu
Te Herenga Waka

Keywords: Early childhood teachers; professionalism; professional issues

Professionalism in the early childhood sector: Early childhood teachers' views over twenty years.

Our cross-sectional study on early childhood (EC) teachers' perspectives of ethics and professionalism in EC practice has collected data at four separate data-points administered at 10-year intervals. Following our initial survey to support the development of the EC Code of Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1994, our follow-up surveys (2004, 2015 and 2025) have included questions about professionalism in EC. The 2004 survey was distributed by post while the two most recent surveys were distributed using a link to an anonymous online Qualtrics questionnaire. For each survey, a random stratified sample of EC services was developed and consent obtained from EC employer-organisations to approach services; services were requested to identify a respondent from amongst their qualified EC staff, using a random selection process. Survey questions included both fixed-response and open-ended questions. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic coding of open-ended text. This paper reports on participants' responses to an open-ended text entry question that enabled teachers to identify issues of professionalism within the EC sector, collected across the follow-up surveys. We trace shifts and similarities in teachers' views across these three data-points and examine the influence of shifts in government policies and sector demographics on teachers' perspectives.

Submitted by: Sue Cherrington, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 119
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Jo Le Fleming-Dean
Te Rito Maioha ECNZ

Keywords: Meaning-making, digital technologies

Young Children as Co-Researchers: Amplifying Agency, Voice, and Meaning Making Through Digital Technologies

This study explores how young children (2–5 years) can be valued as competent co-researchers as they create and respond to art installations within early learning environments in New Zealand. Grounded in social constructivist principles, the research foregrounds children's capabilities, diverse ways of knowing, and their right to actively participate. Through collaborative relationships with teachers and researcher, children engaged with visual arts practices, materials, and installation-making, contributing their perspectives and experiences to shared meaning-making processes. Central to the study was the use of digital technologies, including a video camera, digital camera, and micro-action cameras, which enabled children to document, revisit, and communicate their ideas in ways that reflected their individual strengths and preferences. A multimodal social semiotic lens (Chandler, 2017; Danesi, 2007) informed the analysis, illuminating how children's meaning-making is embodied, relational, and expressed through multiple modes of communication. The findings challenge age-based assumptions about young children's research capabilities and demonstrate how digital technologies can nurture children's participation, agency, and voice. Through the camera lens, children exercised choice, expressed perspectives, made aesthetic decisions, and contributed to the co-construction of knowledge. By positioning children as active contributors, the research illustrates how educators can foster more inclusive, responsive, and empowering learning environments.

Submitted by: Jo Le Fleming-Dean, Te Rito Maioha ECNZ

V1 12112026

Pepa 121
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:55:00 PM to 3:25:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Justine O'Hara-Gregan
University of Auckland

Keywords: Wellbeing, Mindfulness, Compassion

The Contributions of Being Mindfully Self-Compassionate to Teacher Well-Being and Teaching

Research across a range of groups and contexts has found that Mindful Self-Compassion, as a practice individuals can use during times of challenge, has positive implications for wellbeing. This presentation shares findings from my doctoral research, which used a methodology of mindful inquiry to explore the question 'What is it like for early childhood teachers to respond to teaching challenges with mindful self-compassion?'. Twelve qualified early childhood teachers who had completed an 8-week mindful self-compassion course participated in the research. Data was gathered through focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews, during which the teachers shared their experiences of early childhood teaching and practising mindful self-compassion. Being mindfully self-compassionate supported the teachers in responding to the complexity and challenges of teaching with equanimity and in engaging in intentional teaching practices that fostered relationships. The teachers also reported feeling empowered to advocate for themselves, their colleagues, and children. This research contributes to understanding the connections between early childhood teachers' well-being and teaching practice. Supporting teachers to learn about and practise mindful self-compassion has the potential to empower teachers to act as advocates and address systemic issues that impact their well-being, while simultaneously benefiting their personal well-being and teaching practice.

Submitted by: Justine O'Hara-Gregan,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 122
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Yuying Xiu
School of Education, Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords: toddlers, outdoor environments, relationships

Feeling, finding, remaking: toddlers' relational construction of outdoor experiences

What happens when teachers step back and let toddlers have free rein of the outdoor space? Drawing on selected findings from my doctoral study conducted in two New Zealand early childhood centres, this paper explores how the outdoor environment became a relational space where toddlers actively constructed experiences with peers and made their own meanings. Grounded in sensory ethnography (Pink, 2015), affordance theory (Gibson, 2014; Heft, 1988; Kyttä, 2002, 2004), and Lefebvre's (Lefebvre, 1991) spatial triad, I analyse how toddlers drew on materials and artefacts in the ECEC outdoor space to create shared moments of joy, negotiation, and connection with peers. Through their bodies and senses, toddlers transformed the adult-arranged space into places carrying meaning for their own relationships. These moments provide a vivid illustration of relations in toddlers' lived experiences, highlighting that even the youngest learners can build and sustain connection through their own initiatives and on their own terms. The paper invites the audience to reflect on toddler agency and the unique role the outdoor environment plays in the relational experiences.

Submitted by: Yuying Xiu, School of Education, Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 123
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Alexandra C. Gunn
Ōtakou Whakaihu Waka | University of Otago

Keywords: parent advocacy, genderqueer children, gender-expansive teaching

Caring for gender-diversity in the early years: Lessons from parents of genderqueer children.

The purpose of this paper is to report on survey and interview research into the advocacy efforts of parents who are raising children whose gender identities are flexible, non-conforming, diverse, and genderqueer. Why? By listening to and learning from parents, kaiako in early education settings can make gender expansive teaching in the early years part of their routine practice. In doing so, they deliberately care about gender and children's sense making, providing scope for learning that exceeds the gender binary while also recognising the function of binary gender in the range of possibilities for being a gendered person in the world. The study was informed by critically and culturally grounded developmental psychology and was phenomenological in design. Parents underscored the urgent need to listen to and respect children's views while curbing their own assumptions and confusion about the sense children were making of their gendered selves.

Submitted by: Alexandra C. Gunn,
Ōtakou Whakaihu Waka | University of Otago

V1 12112026

Pepa 125
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Nilufar Jahan
Educational Leader, CNPS OSHC,
Melbourne, Australia

Dr. Mahmuda Shila Banu
Lecturer, Southern Cross University,
Melbourne campus, Australia

Keywords: Risky play, Outdoor learning environment, Early childhood education

(Re)conceptualising safety in outdoor risky play: A systematic review of educator perspectives in early childhood education

Outdoor risky play (ORP) supports children's holistic development while requiring educators to balance meaningful challenge with institutional safety responsibilities. This systematic review examines how early childhood educators understand, support and manage ORP. This study is significant because educators must interpret risk within regulatory, organisational, spatial, and relational conditions that can enable or restrict children's participation. The review synthesised 11 peer-reviewed studies published during the past decade. Reflexive thematic analysis was informed by Sandseter's risky play framework. Findings show that educators generally view ORP as purposeful learning that supports confidence, agency, motor competence, problem-solving, resilience and social development. However, their decisions are shaped by regulatory expectations, service-level risk management, parental safety concerns, outdoor environments, staffing conditions, and professional confidence. Educators scaffold manageable challenges through observation, environmental planning, professional judgement, and communication with families, protecting children from serious harm without eliminating developmentally appropriate challenges. The review concludes that supportive staffing arrangements, intentional outdoor learning design guided by the 7cs framework, professional learning opportunities and parent education programs can strengthen balanced approaches to safety and risk-taking in ORP. It also proposes a conceptual pathway for reconceptualising safety in early childhood education by moving from a protection-oriented perspective towards a balanced model of risk.

Submitted by: Nilufar Jahan, Educational Leader, CNPS OSHC, Melbourne, Australia

V1 12112026

Pepa 126
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:35:00 AM to 12:05:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Nilufar Jahan
Educational Leader, CNPS OSHC, Melbourne, Australia

ABM Ahasan Raqib
PhD student, Monash University, Australia

Dr Fatema Taj Johora
Sessional Academic, Australian Catholic University

Keywords: Inclusion, Play based learning, Early childhood education

Visualising inclusion through play: Analysing website imagery in Australian early childhood education

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) services use website imagery to construct public representations of play, inclusion, and belonging. This paper examines how Australian ECEC organisations visually represent inclusion through play-based learning on their websites. This study is significant because website imagery can shape public understandings of quality, participation and whose experiences are recognised in ECEC. The analysis draws on the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0, Reggio Emilia principles and the visual semiotics lens. These perspectives focus on participation, agency, relationships, learning environments, and diversity. A qualitative visual analysis was conducted on 57 photographs from the public webpages of six Australian ECEC organisations. Data were analysed through iterative coding and semiotic interpretation. Findings show that inclusion is most often represented through shared activities, collaborative interactions, access to learning resources and aesthetically designed environments that invite exploration and play. Images strongly foreground children's agency, engagement and social participation. However, cultural and family diversity and the participation of children with disabilities are less visible and unevenly represented. The paper concludes that inclusive digital communication requires broader and more visual representations of children, families, educators, and community identities and disability to better reflect inclusion in contemporary ECEC settings.

Submitted by: Nilufar Jahan, Educational Leader, CNPS OSHC, Melbourne, Australia

V1 12112026

Pepa 127
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Mengran Liu
Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

Keywords: professional learning and development; early childhood education; post-intentional phenomenology

Teachers' professional learning and development experience in kindergartens: Opportunities and tensions

This post-intentional phenomenological study investigates how seven Chinese kindergarten teachers experience and navigate professional learning and development (PLD) within hierarchical early childhood settings. Drawing on semi-structured interviews, PLD meeting observations, implementation videos, policy documents, and researcher reflexivity, the study examines the educational beliefs and power differentials that emerge among teachers, leaders, and experts during formal PLD sessions. Framed by concepts of relational agency and in-between spaces, the analysis reveals that teachers encounter persistent tensions stemming from entrenched hierarchical values that constrain collective reflection and pedagogical action. However, findings also indicate that teachers actively respond by cultivating informal, peer-initiated spaces that afford greater flexibility for collaborative knowledge construction. Within these spaces, teachers enact relational agency: mobilising and aligning their expertise to participate in PLD decision-making, thereby mitigating tensions and generating opportunities for mutual learning. The study contends that sustainable professional growth in hierarchical educational systems depends on recognising and legitimising these informal, teacher-driven spaces as complements to expert-led provision. By repositioning teachers as adaptable co-constructors of professional knowledge, this research offers theoretical and practical insights into reforming PLD models to better support both teacher professional development and the quality of young children's learning environments.

Submitted by: Mengran Liu, Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 128
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 4:25:00 PM to 4:55:00 PM - Rehua 003
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Li Kan
Macquarie University

Keywords: early childhood teacher preparation; teacher workforce; student retention

Students enrolled in the first year of early childhood teaching degree programs in Australia: Considerations for building workforce supply

The global shortage of degree-qualified early childhood teachers (ECTs) in birth-five settings has been attributed to low student completion rates in early childhood initial teacher education (EC ITE) courses and subsequent transition into these settings. However, little evidence exists on which to base effective supports and retention strategies for EC ITE students. This paper addresses this gap by reporting on findings from a survey of 678 first year students enrolled in EC ITE courses across 41 Australian universities. The study identified key student characteristics, and differences in demographics, course enrolment, and work aspirations and intentions between students who expressed a desire to work with children aged birth-five from their peers who did not, as well as factors that predict intention to work with children birth-five, and workplace intentions. Results inform both ITE and workforce policy, with implications for addressing the shortage of ECTs in birth-five settings.

Submitted by: Li Kan, Macquarie University

V1 12112026

Pepa 130
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Tamralipta Patra
PhD Candidate, School of Education and Culture, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia

Dr Sylvia Christine Almeida
Senior Lecturer, School of Education and Culture, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia

Keywords: Early childhood Environmental and Sustainability Education (ECESE), Global South, Children's environmental experiences

Crayons and environment: Young children’s environmental concerns and perceptions through drawing in rural India

Objectives and purpose: The study explores young children’s daily experiences and interactions with their rapidly degrading environment in India. This study highlights children expressing values of caring for people, places, and the more-than-human world through their everyday interactions, aligning with the conference themes of valuing people, nurturing resources, and caring for all. Contemporary significance and scholarly relevance: The study fills a gap in research with children from the Global South and highlights these children’s voices, experiences, and meaning-making while contributing to the ECESE scholarship. Theory and Methodology: Rooted in the Indian philosophies of Rabindranath Tagore, which advocate experiential, expressive learning as meaning-making and connecting individuals with the natural and social world, this study provides an alternative to dominant Western perspectives. It uses a blended interpretivist-constructivist paradigm and a draw and tell visual method, enabling researchers to elicit and interpret children’s meaning-making by combining visual expression with verbal narration. Results and conclusions: Key findings showcase children having strong connections and sentimental values towards their environment and deep relationships with their place. They are concerned about adults' poor environmental decision-making that has negative impacts on humans as well as other than human entities in their community.

Submitted by: Tamralipta Patra, PhD Candidate, School of Education and Culture, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia

V1 12112026

Pepa 131
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Sylvia Almeida
Monash University

Kerry Power
Monash University

Tamralipta Patra
Monash University

Keywords: STEAM, Environmental and Sustainabilty Education, Teacher Education

Harnessing Diverse Lived Experiences: Transforming STEAM and Environmental & Sustainability Education for International Teacher Educators

Objectives: This study examines how higher education teacher educators incorporate international initial teacher education (ITE) students' diverse cultural backgrounds within a co-taught STEAM unit. Integrating STEAM with Environmental and Sustainability Education (ESE) creates holistic learning opportunities that value individual differences and foster cultural growth, aligning with conference themes of valuing diversity, nurturing resources, and caring for all. Significance of the Study: Educational programs frequently overlook international students' rich lived experiences. This study demonstrates how leveraging ITEs' diverse backgrounds adds depth to teaching while enhancing intercultural learning opportunities. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework: Synthesising Transformative Learning and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies (CSP), this research examines how STEAM learning deepens ITEs' understanding of ESE by connecting core concepts with cultural perspectives. A qualitative longitudinal case study explores how these diverse viewpoints shape learning outcomes. Results and Conclusions: Findings show that students successfully engaged with interdisciplinary STEAM and ESE processes when their cultural backgrounds and prior knowledge were integrated—a linkage vital to transforming their learning experiences.

Submitted by: Sylvia Almeida, Monash University

V1 12112026

Pepa 132
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Rachel Bolstad
NZCER

Keywords: climate change, sustainability, localised curriculum

Schools' responses to climate change – weathering the impacts and exploring innovative practices without systemic support

This paper shares insights about how schools in Aotearoa New Zealand are responding to climate change by integrating findings from six qualitative and quantitative studies conducted between 2019 and 2025. Findings from four cycles of NZCER national surveys of teachers and school leaders show that many schools are experiencing impacts from extreme weather events, with some providing support for their communities. Some schools are taking actions to reduce their own climate emissions, though high-emissions activities such as staff and student commutes can be challenging for schools to address on their own. In terms of climate education across the curriculum, our research shows evidence of innovative curriculum and pedagogies in some schools. However, this is often dependent on key "champions" – staff, students, and external facilitators with expertise in climate and sustainability. I will draw on my case studies across primary and secondary school contexts to discuss the opportunities and challenges schools are experiencing as they seek to provide high-quality climate education with relatively few systemic supports. Based on these findings I argue that the system levers and supports that are present are often fragmented and disjointed, signalling a lack of clear vision and guidance for education in a climate-changing Aotearoa.

Submitted by: Rachel Bolstad, New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)

V1 12112026

Pepa 133
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:35:00 AM to 12:05:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Bruna Dainezi
James Cook University, Cairns, Australia

Keywords: environmental meaning-making; experiential learning; international study tours

Learning with place: environmental meaning-making in short-term international study tours

Short-term international study tours can bring students into direct contact with unfamiliar ecosystems, wildlife and cultural interpretations of nature, yet there is limited understanding of how students make sense of these encounters within compressed international programmes. This presentation focuses on how Japanese international students interpreted two nature-based tourism experiences during a short-term study tour in Cairns, Australia: Green Island and Rainforestation Nature Park, both located within World Heritage-listed natural environments. Drawing on Kolb's (1984, 2015) Experiential Learning Theory and tourist experience literature (Moscardo, 2017b, 2019), the study examined 94 bilingual reflective journal entries from 63 students. The journals were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), with attention to students' experiences, reflections and perceived learning. Four cross-site themes captured how meaning developed through embodied and emotional encounters, environmental interpretation shaped by place and cultural comparison, prospective reflection and imagined re-engagement, and social and linguistic encounters. The two settings created different opportunities for these processes through marine immersion and independent exploration at Green Island, and guided rainforest, wildlife and cultural encounters at Rainforestation. The findings contribute to Education for Sustainability by showing how place, participation, interpretation and reflection shaped students' environmental meaning-making across distinct nature-based tourism settings.

Submitted by: Bruna Dainezi, James Cook University, Cairns, Australia

V1 12112026

Pepa 134
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Dr. Shweta Sharma
University of Canterbury

Associate Professor Billy Austine
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Education for Sustainable Development, sustainability consciousness, initial teacher education

eflective Pedagogies for Sustainability in Initial Teacher Education

Higher education has a critical responsibility to prepare teachers who can respond to interconnected environmental, social, and economic challenges. This paper examines how an intentionally designed Initial Teacher Education course strengthened pre-service teachers' sustainability consciousness and readiness to teach Education for Sustainable Development in primary classrooms. A case-study methodology drew on a pre-course Sustainability Consciousness Questionnaire completed by 58 students, critical-incident reflections, student-produced documentaries and podcasts, course evaluations, and a focus group with six participants. The analysis was informed by sustainability consciousness, transformative learning theory, and Schön's reflective-practitioner framework. Findings indicate that students' understandings shifted from predominantly environmental and abstract conceptions of sustainability towards more integrated, place-based, and professionally actionable knowingness. Participants also moved from feelings of overwhelm and uncertainty towards constructive agency, care, and emerging intentions to incorporate sustainability into their teaching. Structured reflection, experiential learning, engagement with community expertise, and creative multimodal assessments were central to these changes. The paper argues that relational and care-oriented pedagogies can enact whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga by connecting learners with people, place, collective responsibility, and hopeful educational action.

Submitted by: Dr. Maryam Sharifkhani,
Univeristy of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 135
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Zidi Xie
Auckland University of Technology

Keywords: Ecopedagogy, Sustainable Transformation, China's Higher Education

Beyond Green Universities: Ecopedagogy and the Sustainable Transformation of China's Higher Education

This presentation examines the current status of sustainable transformation of China's higher education and explores valuable insights that ecopedagogy can bring to this reform process. Against the backdrop of intensifying global ecological crises, higher education is increasingly expected to support the ecological transformation (Álvarez-Vanegas, 2025). In China, ecological civilization has been elevated to a national development strategy, which raises new requirements for universities to act as agents of economic, political, cultural, social and environmental changes. Despite extensive research on green university initiatives and education for sustainable development, existing approaches mainly focus on campus infrastructure, environmental courses and research (Zhao & Zou, 2015). The deeper underlying epistemological, pedagogical, ethical and political dimensions of institutional sustainability have been largely overlooked. Drawing on ecopedagogy as a theoretical perspective, this study adopts document analysis and narrative literature review to investigate the status and limitations of the dominant green university paradigm in China. It then explores how the core principles of ecopedagogy can address these gaps and inform transformative practice. This study concludes by proposing an ecopedagogy-informed whole-institution approach for Chinese universities to achieve systematic sustainable transformation. It also contributes to sustainable higher education in other national contexts.

Submitted by: Zidi Xie, Auckland University of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 139
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 8:35:00 AM to 9:05:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Scott Eacott
UNSW Sydney

Zih-Hong Lin
UNSW Sydney

Pushkal Garg
UNSW Sydney

Keywords: teacher workforce; labour markets; geospatial intelligence

Housing, commuting, and the teacher workforce: Emerging evidence from Australia

Having the right qualified teachers where they are most needed is an enduring policy challenge for school systems on a global scale. Understanding workforce distribution and predicting labour force commuting behaviours is a crucial geospatial intelligence for governments legislated to provide high-quality education to all children and young people regardless of where they live, the school they attend or their personal circumstances. Access to nuanced data and evidence has been a significant gap for policy makers, making targeted and tailored interventions next to impossible and leaving little option that reactive actions. Using predictive machine learning (graph neural networks) on a custom-built pipeline of large-scale administrative and proprietary data from across Australia, this paper provides a high-resolution spatial modelling of workforce distribution with capacity to identify variance and inefficiencies in systemic staffing. With teacher shortages a global problem, a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of teacher labour markets is a significant step forward in developing effective workforce policies.

Submitted by: Scott Eacott, UNSW Sydney

V1 12112026

Pepa 140
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Ada Huiling Chen
Deakin University

Keywords: Employability, Curriculum, Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Embedding employability in VET curriculum: Enhancing international students' pathways to careers in Australia and New Zealand

As Australia and New Zealand seek to address ongoing workforce needs through international education and skilled migration, international VET students face increasingly complex pathways from study to employment. While vocational education and training (VET) plays a critical role in developing a skilled workforce, questions remain about how employability can be more effectively embedded within curricula and supported through institutional practices. This presentation draws on doctoral research investigating international students' career support and employability in the VET sectors of Australia and New Zealand. Using a qualitative comparative case study design, the research explores similarities and differences across the two national contexts through policy analysis and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory and Bacchi's What's the problem represented to be? (WPR) approach, the study examines how interactions across national policies, institutional, community, and individual levels shape employability outcomes. Preliminary findings highlight the importance of embedding employability within VET curricula through holistic and collaborative approaches that foster meaningful connections (whanaungatanga), responsive support and stewardship (tiakitanga), and care-centred practices (manaakitanga). The study contributes insights for educators, managers, communities, and policymakers seeking to strengthen international students' transitions from learning to work and enhance employability across the VET ecosystem.

Submitted by: Ada Huiling Chen, Deakin University

V1 12112026

Pepa 141
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Jade Wrathall
University of Waikato

Pablo Del Monte
University of Waikato

Keywords: Policy reform; assessment; performativity

The trajectory of phonics testing in Aotearoa New Zealand

Mandatory phonics checks were introduced by the sixth National-led Government as part of its broader educational reforms to improve student achievement. While phonics is situated within ongoing debates about the best way to teach literacy, this paper focuses specifically on the trajectory of phonics checks as policy. The policy has travelled across the globe, being bought, sold, and gifted between countries, and promoted and sustained by private actors and global elites. As the policy has travelled, the inclusion of pseudo-words has remained one of its most controversial features, acting as a political lever to prescribe a particular pedagogical approach and hold teachers accountable. Drawing on the neoliberal policy technology of performativity, this paper considers how phonics check contributes to the ongoing deprofessionalisation of teachers by narrowing professional judgements and redefining what it means to be a “good” teacher. It traces the trajectory of the phonics policy within the wider development of a “knowledge-rich” curriculum and considers the implications of this policy within Aotearoa New Zealand’s bicultural education system.

Submitted by: Jade Wrathall, University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 142
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 9:45:00 AM to 10:15:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Eileen Te Aho Kennedy
University of Auckland

Keywords: Mental health policy; whole school; scoping review

Whole school mental health policies in New Zealand schools: A scoping review

Poor student mental health is a growing issue impacting Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) schools. UNICEF reports that NZ youth aged fifteen to nineteen have the highest suicide rate among forty-two high-income countries. Rates are highest for Māori, Pacific, LGBTQ, and low-income youth. The Ministry of Education currently recommends that NZ schools use whole school approaches to mental health (WSAMH). WSAMH involve staff collaboration to provide education, school-based services, and positive school environments. However, most research on WSAMH comes from overseas, leaving uncertainty about their use in an NZ context. This scoping review aims to encompass the entire existing body of research on WSAMH in NZ. It adheres to PRISMA-ScR, with a protocol registered on Open Science Framework for transparency. A search query has been developed and used across scholarly and grey literature databases, and a text screening process with inclusion and exclusion criteria has been conducted. A qualitative content analysis will set out recurring categories of content across included sources. The categories will be charted and discussed. Overall, the review will outline what is known and unknown about WSAMH in NZ. It aims to set the grounds for a future empirical study in NZ schools.

Submitted by: Eileen Te Aho Kennedy,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 144
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:30:00 PM to 3:00:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Luqmanul Hakim Muttaqin
Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords: early intervention; education policy implementation; Indonesia

Present on paper, absent in practice: early-intervention policy for young disabled children across Indonesia's governance tiers

National law obliges Indonesian districts to detect disability early and to intervene. Aceh Tamiang district, Indonesia, has no instrument that does either. This paper asks where, between the two, the obligation is lost. I analysed 39 policy instruments — 24 national, 10 provincial, 5 district — tracing each obligation through its implementation chain. Gallagher's six barriers categorise each break, while Wu, Ramesh, and Howlett's matrix identifies the resulting capacity deficits. Three types of barriers recur. Institutionally, the apex early-childhood instrument has not been amended since 2013, meaning the 2019 national target for early detection lacks an implementation mechanism. Economically, at least 30% of the district's education budget is earmarked for the dayah (Islamic schools) streams, where the earliest tier starts at age six. Politically, the national disability commission reports directly to the President but obliges no local government; the metrics used to assess districts focus only on five- and six-year-olds, overlooking the critical early years when intervention is most effective. These are design faults, not shortages, and each has a named remedy. This paper presents the completed policy analysis; the interview strand is underway. Implications for policy are offered.

Submitted by: Luqmanul Hakim Muttaqin, Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 146
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Taylor Hughson
Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords: curriculum; teachers; knowledge-rich

Emerging insights into the impact of Aotearoa's knowledge-rich curriculum: The experiences and views of secondary school English teachers

Aotearoa New Zealand has been in the midst of curriculum reform for some time. Since the election of the National-led government in 2023, reform has been explicitly focused on the development and rollout of a 'knowledge rich' curriculum. In secondary schools, Y9-10 English and mathematics curricula were mandated for the first time this year. This presentation shares emerging insights from a survey-based study of English teachers focused on their views of, and experiences enacting, a knowledge-rich curriculum. A survey has been distributed to all members of the NZ Association for the Teaching of English (NZARE) as well as being sent out via social media and other fora. Findings will be presented via descriptive statistics and key themes emerging from respondents' written responses, which will be surfaced via a process of reflexive thematic analysis. Initial analysis shows a sector quite divided over the reforms. Teachers appear to like some structural features of the new curriculum, but are split over whether there is too much content or not. Some teachers have changed their practice in response to the curriculum, either by adding texts to courses, changing the difficulty of texts or adding a more diverse range of authors, but many appear to have not.

Submitted by: Taylor Hughson, Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 147
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:15:00 AM to 10:45:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Jo MacDonald
NZCER

Keywords:

Are secondary teachers being supported to succeed? Findings from the NZCER 2025 national survey of secondary schools

NZCER has undertaken a 3-yearly National Survey of secondary schools since 2003. This presentation focuses on findings pertinent to one key research question, from the perspective of secondary teachers: "To what extent and in what ways are people supported to succeed?". This aligns with the conference theme of valuing people. Overall, we report a mixed picture of how well the system supports teachers. We explored school-level factors that contribute to job satisfaction and morale. Autonomy, confidence to try new practices, and access to non-contact time were reported by over 80% of teachers. A majority of teachers also reported a collaborative school culture, the school caring about the wellbeing of its staff, and opportunities to participate in decision making. Most teachers agreed their school had an effective school-wide approach for encouraging positive behaviours and rarely felt unsafe. However, 2025 data show a continuation of a trend for more teachers to be experiencing student behaviour that causes serious disruption to teaching. Teachers need more support to respond to students with additional learning and wellbeing needs, and have diverse desires for PLD. There is a clear need for ongoing efforts to support teachers, particularly in this period of significant change in the sector.

Submitted by: Jo MacDonald, NZCER

V1 12112026

Pepa 148
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Jo MacDonald
NZCER

Keywords:

Are secondary principals being supported to succeed? Findings from the NZCER 2025 national survey of secondary schools

NZCER has undertaken a 3-yearly National Survey of secondary schools since 2003, providing a national picture of what is happening in schools and how things have changed over time. This presentation focuses on findings pertinent to one key research question, from the perspective of secondary principals: "To what extent and in what ways are people in the system supported to succeed?". This aligns with the conference theme of valuing people and nurturing resources. Undertaken in late 2025, the findings provide a snapshot amidst a period of significant shifts within the sector, with uncertainty about where some proposed changes will settle. Principals reported variable experiences of advice and support from government agencies. The leading issues facing schools were “too much being asked of schools” and “keeping up with pace and volume of educational change”. Both issues were reported by more principals than in 2022. Most principals disagreed that curriculum changes were happening at an appropriate pace. Despite these challenges, principals were overall positive about their jobs. However, over one-third reported unmanageable workloads and levels of stress. The findings highlight sector priorities and provide valuable insights into how secondary schools are navigating current policy changes.

Submitted by: Jo MacDonald, NZCER

V1 12112026

Pepa 149
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 3:00:00 PM to 3:30:00 PM - Central 3
SIG:

Dr. Mahdis Azarmandi
University of Canterbury

Dr. Maryam Sharifkhani
Univeristy of Canterbury

Keywords: school peace; education policy; affective governance; racialized surveillance; Palestine solidarity

Interrogating the Limits of School Peace: Rethinking Care in the Politics of Dissent

Peace, care, and belonging are often treated as neutral values in education, conditions to be nurtured rather than examined for what they authorize. This paper argues that such values can themselves become mechanisms of discipline when institutionalized selectively. Examining the Berlin Senate's October 2023 directive, which prohibited keffiyehs, "Free Palestine" symbols, and maps showing Palestine on the grounds that they "could be interpreted as" supporting the attacks on Israel, we show that "school peace" (Schulfrieden) authorizes confiscation and disciplinary measures in advance of any actual disruption. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's affective economies and Zembylas's affective ideology, we trace how fear and symbolic association mark some student bodies as threats while leaving others unexamined, transforming political solidarity into a site of emotional correction rather than dialogue. Our central claim is that institutional peace and care are not neutral goods: they can operate as forms of exclusion that distribute whose relationships and wellbeing are protected, and whose are disciplined. In relation to Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga, and Manaakitanga, we ask what is lost when educational peace depends on silencing dissent, and argue that genuine relational care requires engagement with difference and injustice rather than its pre-emptive foreclosure.

Submitted by: Dr. Maryam Sharifkhani,
Univeristy of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 150
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

John O'Neill
Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University

Keywords: Teaching Council, ministerial overreach, manufactured crisis

'Gripping up' the Teaching Council: A hostile takeover?

The Education and Training (System Reform) Amendment Bill passed its third reading in Parliament on 23 June 2026. One of the now Act's objects of reform is the Teaching Council. The Act strengthens the Council's focus on child safety, requires the Council to give effect to government policy directions, reduces the Council's governance body from 13 elected and appointed members to between 7 and nine members, all appointed by the Minister; and gives the Minister sole discretion to remove Council members. The changes to this part of the Act were indirectly justified on the basis of reviews of the Council's discipline processes, the conduct of the Chief Executive, and its future strategic direction. The changes were criticized by opponents as ministerial over-reach. This paper analyses relevant documents released under the Official Information Act and concludes that they do not provide strong support for any of the changes proposed in the Bill. They do however raise the plausible possibilities of a 'manufactured crisis' of teacher and teacher education quality and a 'hostile takeover' and 'asset stripping' of the Council's governance and functions. The Act serves to reduce teachers' professional autonomy, and increase the powers and reach of the Minister and Secretary of Education, consistent with the Minister's stated claim to need the changes in the Bill as a lever to 'grip up' the work of teachers.

Submitted by: John O'Neill, Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 151
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Rachel Bolstad
NZCER

Sue McDowall
NZCER

Keywords: curriculum, teachers, policy

Changing curriculum: drivers of change and teachers' roles in curriculum reform

Aotearoa New Zealand is in a significant period of curriculum change. This paper presents key findings from a literature review and emerging themes from a qualitative study of primary teachers' curriculum sensemaking in the context of recent curriculum changes. The study began with a narrative literature review to understand the drivers of curriculum reform in Aotearoa New Zealand compared with a selection of other jurisdictions. We reviewed literature on teachers' and school leaders' curriculum making and curriculum sensemaking in contexts of high and low curriculum autonomy, and in relation to "knowledge-rich" and "carefully sequenced" curriculum. We also explored literature from jurisdictions with Indigenous curriculum, and the emerging role(s) of AI in curriculum making. We will present key findings from the literature, how these informed the design of our study, and emerging themes from our teacher and school leader interviews.

Submitted by: Rachel Bolstad, New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)

V1 12112026

Pepa 152
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Judith Loveridge
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Bronwyn Wood
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords: participatory research ethics, relational ethics, children

Mapping the field of participatory research and ethics with children and young people

In this presentation we trace four intellectual approaches or research 'turns', which have significantly shaped research and ethical policies with children and young people. We drew on Flick's (2014) approach to 'mapping the field', using five axes to analyse the field of relevant literature. Through our analysis we identified the: protectionist turn; human rights turn; decolonial and indigenous turn and finally, the critical participatory and co-research turn. We briefly examine each turn and ways of thinking and ethical questions raised. We then examine in greater depth the fourth co-research turn, where children and youth are considered equal partners in the research process, and consider the ethical implications of this turn. Through this process we aim to clarify and critically interrogate the field of children and young people's participatory research and highlight the deeply entangled and dynamic relationship between research and ethics in this field. The presentation makes three contributions. First, it identifies the lineage of ideas, values and principles prioritised in each of the four research turns. Second, it argues for understanding research ethics as dynamic and necessarily responsive to the attributes of the specific research turn. Third, it offers deeper insights into the latest critical participatory and co-research turn and some of the significant ethical challenges and opportunities for collaborative research.

Submitted by: Judith Loveridge, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 153
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:45:00 AM to 11:15:00 AM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Jo Veen
University of Canterbury, Faculty of Education, Doctor of Education

Keywords: TPACK, AI in education, AI literacy

TPACKing the Future: A Trans-Tasman Examination of AI in Education Policy

New Zealand's absence of formal AI in education policy leaves schools and educators navigating a guidance vacuum. This paper applies the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework as an analytical lens to examine New Zealand's current semi-official guidelines — from the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority — alongside Australia's Framework for Generative Artificial Intelligence in Schools, as a potential policy model for New Zealand. Analysis across the TPACK domains of technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge reveals distinct differences in approach. New Zealand's guidelines offer practical, teacher-focused advice but lack strategic vision, coherence, and explicit attention to digital equity. Australia's framework provides broader ethical principles and strategic direction but offers limited practical pedagogical guidance. Critically, neither policy adequately addresses AI literacy — the intersection of all three TPACK knowledge domains — which this analysis positions as central to effective and critical AI integration in education. Of particular concern in the New Zealand context is the absence of meaningful engagement with Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and mātauranga Māori in either the development or content of current guidelines. This paper argues that future New Zealand AI in education policy must combine practical specificity with strategic vision, diverse and indigenous voice, and an explicit AI literacy framework.

Submitted by: Jo Veen, University of Canterbury, Faculty of Education, Doctor of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 154
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Amelia Sweeney
University of Sydney, Ravenswood
School for Girls

Keywords: Streaming, mathematics, attitudes

Teacher attitudes towards streaming in mathematics education

The purpose of this study, completed in 2021, was to explore teacher attitudes towards streaming in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Given the recently published results from the United Kingdom from the UCL Institute of Education Student Grouping Study that found mathematics students taught in mixed-attainment groups were one month behind their peers in attainment groups, and the push from Tokona Te Raki with their Kōkirihia project that calls for the end to streaming in New Zealand due to inequitable and fixed groupings, this research is a valuable addition to the international conversation on streaming. This mixed methods exploratory study surveyed 30 secondary mathematics teachers. The qualitative data were coded, and the coding was inductive using an emergent design rather than relying on a specific theoretical framework, allowing for trends in the data to arise. The qualitative data were categorised and broken down into themes and then analysed alongside the survey item groupings. This synthesising of findings allowed the qualitative data to explain the patterns in the quantitative data. That is, following an explanatory design, the trends in quantitative data were first determined and then the qualitative data was used to help explain specific trends and findings further. Findings indicated that NSW teachers had experience teaching both mixed-attainment and streamed mathematics classes, however streaming was the prevalent practice. Teachers believed streaming was the ideal method of grouping students in mathematics, allowing for better management of workloads and resulting in less behavioural issues. Teachers also believed that streaming positively impacted the academic outcomes of perceived high-ability students. However, there were mixed findings in teachers' beliefs about the overall impacts of streaming on perceived low-ability students. While teachers felt that streaming was able to better meet the academic needs of perceived low-ability students, the negative impacts of streaming on the wellbeing of these students was also noted. Overall, we argue that findings indicate that further exploration is needed into ways in which streaming can be made more equitable as it appears to currently be an intractable practice in Australia and a widespread phenomenon internationally (OECD, 2020).

Submitted by: Amelia Sweeney,
University of Sydney

V1 12112026

Pepa 155
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Karen Finn
Auckland University of Technology

Keywords: educational change, educational policy

Supporting teachers during educational change

Recently teachers have been faced with numerous educational changes, from curriculum to assessment to educational law. My doctoral research focused on the intersection between NCEA geography changes and mana ōrite mō te mātauranga Māori and identified implications for those working with teachers during times of educational change. This presentation draws on one part of my doctoral research into Aotearoa New Zealand secondary school geography teachers' experiences of decolonising and indigenising their practice during educational change. During the research, I was honoured to spend time with six teachers who were engaging with changes to NCEA. The research bricolage used critical and decolonising methodologies in a sequential explanatory approach. Data was collected through interviews, classroom observations, teaching documents and a demographic questionnaire, and analysed using portraiture and poetic analysis techniques. The presentation will unpack challenges and supports for teachers engaging with educational changes, with a focus on the different scales at which teachers work: individual, local and national. The presentation offers suggestions for how educational policy, initial teacher education and school leadership can support teachers to engage with and critically reflect on change.

Submitted by: Karen Finn, Auckland University of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 157
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:55:00 PM to 4:25:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Mere Berryman
University of Waikato

Elizabeth Eley
University of Waikato

Keywords: Education Reform; Rangatiratanga; Bureaucracy

Supporting community rangatiratanga within the political status quo: Reflecting on the role of critical leadership and iwi self-determination in an educational reform initiative

Government-led education reform initiatives occur regularly in many countries, yet collective histories would forewarn that top-down, political initiatives, do not always serve Indigenous or other diverse learners, well. In 2020, the government of the day tasked the Ministry of Education with overseeing the trialling of a school reform initiative in six local communities. While the rhetoric for implementation promised community self-determination, this was often constrained through the project management by officials. Despite the clarity and guidance provided in a mandated blueprint for the reform, the aspirations of communities were often marginalised by the political imperatives of government officials. In this presentation we will explore a framework closely aligned to the Ka Hikitia Ka Hāpaitia strategy. This was developed through the reform initiative that supports participants' critical reflections: Know Self; Grow Self; Grow Community. We draw on internal and external reflexivity (Archer, 2012; Sayer, 2009) as the mode of inquiry to explore the role of bureaucracy in enabling or hindering the implementation of this reform initiative. In particular, we present an example from one implementation site, where the community agree that a more socially-just, transformative system had begun to emerge.

Submitted by: Elizabeth Eley, University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 158
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 4:25:00 PM to 4:55:00 PM - Central 3
SIG: Education Policy

Wangying Guo
The University of Auckland

Maree Davies
The University of Auckland

Camilla Highfield
The University of Auckland

Keywords: Critical thinking, curriculum reform, teacher responses

When critical thinking becomes "Bujiediqi": Policy–practice misalignment in Chinese curriculum reform

Critical thinking has become a prominent feature of curriculum reforms worldwide, reflecting growing expectations that schools prepare students for participation in increasingly complex and uncertain societies. However, policy aspirations often encounter challenges when translated into classroom practice. This study investigates how Chinese language teachers interpret critical thinking as articulated in the Chinese Language Curriculum Standards (2022) and examines the implications of these interpretations for curriculum reform implementation. Findings are drawn from three focus group discussions involving 18 Chinese language teachers from urban, semi-rural, and rural secondary schools in China. The findings reveal a substantial disconnect between policy intentions and teachers' understandings of critical thinking. Participants frequently described critical thinking policy discourse as detached from classroom realities and characterised by formalistic and highly abstract language, leading to surface-level interpretations rather than deeper pedagogical engagement. Teachers also reported limited support in translating policy expectations into everyday practice, generating professional uncertainty and tensions between reform demands and established teaching norms. The study argues that sustainable curriculum reform requires not only policy commitment to critical thinking but also greater attention to how policy language is interpreted and enacted by teachers. Implications for curriculum design and teacher professional learning are discussed.

Submitted by: Wangying Guo, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 159
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Kiki Zhou
School of Music, University of Auckland

Keywords: Primary music curriculum, Critical Discourse Analysis, Regulation

Making School Music Legible: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Legitimacy and Regulation in Aotearoa New Zealand's Draft Primary Music Curriculum

The 2025 Draft primary music curriculum represents a critical policy moment for Aotearoa New Zealand, as school music is being redefined within a crowded and increasingly regulated primary curriculum. This paper examines how the curriculum discourse reconstructs primary music education. Drawing on Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, informed by Foucauldian and Bernsteinian perspectives, the study analyses key discursive shifts within the new curriculum. It argues that the curriculum discourse constructs music's disciplinary legitimacy through explicit knowledge classification, year-by-year progression, and explicit bicultural representation. Yet this increased legitimacy is accompanied by intensified regulation. Musical learning is broken into atomised, recipe-like sequences of knowledge and skill, while curriculum expectations also extend into the micro-regulation of the musical body, including posture, breathing, and vocal conduct. These mechanisms risk constraining teacher agency and narrowing music's relational, embodied, and creative possibilities in primary classrooms. In dialogue with the conference themes of Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga, and Manaakitanga, the paper problematises the assumption that greater curricular legibility inherently supports deeper cultural connection, care, and empowerment. It highlights the contemporary importance of protecting music education as more than a legible and assessable curriculum object.

Submitted by: Kiki Zhou, School of Music, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 160
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:55:00 PM to 4:25:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Keywords: Storytelling Critical thinking Secondary education

Storytelling and Critical Thinking Across Contexts: Developing the Story–Critical Thinking Deductive Analysis Framework

This paper explains the purpose and development of the Story–Critical Thinking Framework, a six-theme deductive framework for examining how scholar-practitioners understand storytelling and critical thinking in secondary education. The study asks how storytelling can support students' critical thinking about controversial issues shaped by history, identity, knowledge traditions, and power. Findings show that critical thinking depends on questioning and pedagogical mediation, not storytelling alone. Built from the research questions and refined through four within-case analyses from an international study of eight scholar-practitioners across six countries, the framework distinguishes three levels: how storytelling and critical thinking are defined, how one may open the other, and what conditions shape that relationship. This allows comparison across contexts while keeping participants' different meanings visible.

Submitted by: Hughie, Te Puna
Wānanga, Faculty of Arts and Education,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 161
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Andrew Thompson

Keywords: 'science of learning', 'knowledge-rich', 'ethics in education'

Untangling 'the Science of Learning'

Like the term ‘knowledge-rich’, the ‘science of learning’ lacks definitional clarity, but is a cornerstone of our new curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand. This paper unpacks the use of the term ‘science of learning’ in our current educational discourse. It traces its thrust as a politically-driven term as well as its origins in historical educational debates about the science versus the art of education. This study discursively analyses the term, its relation to notions of ‘knowledge-rich’ curricula, and the possible dangers of conflating educational concepts that are invoked by potentially opposing educational philosophies. The Ministry of Education advances the ‘science of learning’ as though it were an uncontested concept. This paper explores what about the term is contested both pedagogically and politically in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand’s curriculum refresh. It attempts to show that the ‘science of learning’ has many interpretations. Gaining a deeper understanding of the Ministry’s interpretation of the term is important, because, to date, it has not been transparent. This study will show that the Ministry’s interpretation appears to sit within a conceptual field of educational philosophy that is both conservative and mistrusting of teachers. Without a clear definition of the ‘science of learning’, teachers may unwittingly advance a pedagogy and educational philosophy that undermines their professionalism, contradicts their ethics, and compromises their moral integrity.

Submitted by: Andrew Thompson,
Selwyn College

V1 12112026

Pepa 162
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Claudia Rozas
University of Auckland

Keywords: literacy justice democracy

Literacy, Schooling and Revolution?

In this presentation I trace three versions of literacy that have shaped my work and preoccupied my thinking in education. The aim is to use this history to examine how the relationship between literacy and social justice has been reconceptualised over time. I begin with the work of Paulo Freire and his view of literacy as a means to democratic participation through the development of a critical consciousness. I then discuss the rise of functional literacy in education and the economic rationalities that informed its dominance. Finally, I examine more contemporary notions of 'linguistic justice' advanced by Ian Cushing and how this is tied to a more encompassing notion of what it means to 'deficit theorise' in education, as well as what it means to be liberated and/or oppressed. The point is this: the longstanding, presumed relationship between access to literacy and the promotion of social justice has been challenged and the implications of this challenge require analysis and discussion.

Submitted by: Claudia Rozas, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 163
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Dr. Rosemary Hipkins
Retired

Prof. Bronwen Cowie
Retired

Keywords: Ontology, paradigm shifts, nature of learning

Ontological stacking: a process for exploring differing educational perspectives and debates

The idea of 'ontological stacking' originated in complexity economics. In that context, stacks have been created to explain why established economic perspectives are so hard to de-settle, even when evidence mounts up that they are no longer serving communities well (e.g. neoliberalism). We have been exploring the potential of creating similar ontological stacks as a means of capturing the essence of recent paradigm shifts in education, and for explaining why traditional thinking is so entrenched in both educational practice and popular opinion. We will introduce four stacks with robust theoretical underpinnings: traditional, constructivist, sociocultural and complexity stacks, and show how different ontological commitments underpin their values, practices and normative beliefs. We have informally introduced these stacks in three quite different teacher learning settings. They appear to be helpful but await more formal investigation, which we no longer have the resources to carry out ourselves.

Submitted by: Dr. Rosemary Hipkins,
Retired (Emeritus NZCER)

V1 12112026

Pepa 164
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Dr. Claire Coleman

Liam Rutherford
Aotearoa Educator Collective

Claire Amos

Keywords: curriculum; equity; Te Tiriti o Waitangi; teacher professionalism; community engagement.

A Vision for Education in Aotearoa New Zealand: Starting a Conversation About What Matters

A Vision for Education in Aotearoa New Zealand: Starting a Conversation About the Future The Aotearoa Educators' Collective (AEC) has developed A Vision for Education in Aotearoa New Zealand, a discussion paper intended for release in Term 3, 2026. The report brings together educational research, professional experience, and community aspirations to explore what an effective, equitable, and future-focused education system could look like for Aotearoa New Zealand. The report is organised around five interconnected ambitions: strengthening the bicultural foundations of education, increasing equity of outcomes, broadening the curriculum to support human flourishing, reprofessionalising teaching, and strengthening community engagement and understanding of education. Together, these ambitions provide a framework for thinking about how education can support learners to thrive in a rapidly changing world while remaining grounded in the unique context of Aotearoa New Zealand. This presentation will introduce the development of the report and the key ideas that underpin it. Discussion will focus on the opportunities for educators, researchers, communities, and organisations to contribute to ongoing conversations about the purposes of education, future research priorities, and the shared work of shaping education for future generations.

Submitted by: Claire Coleman, Aotearoa Educators Collective

V1 12112026

Pepa 165
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 4:25:00 PM to 4:55:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Educational Ideas

Andrew Gibbons
Auckland University of Technology

Philippa Isom
Massey University

Kirsten Locke
The University of Auckland

Keywords: Music as method; rebel songs; educational research

The Proposal: Experimentations in music as method

The Proposal is a three-piece experimental band of violin, vocals and bass. The band's members are teachers, teacher educators, educational researchers, educational philosophers, and musicians. Their music experiments with educational research as a sonic challenge to the contemporary possibilities of impactful research, a prickly resistance to the ordering of educational research to meekly submit to a positivistic governmentality, and a lamentation/celebration of songs to live with and learn with.

Each band members' publishing, presenting, and teaching draws on art and literature to engage creatively with wide-ranging educational questions and problems. The resonance of a musical coming together emerged in curiosity as to the potential of collegially competitive triangles and triptychs – drawing on the enduring educational impact of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus and the conditions through which the novel was born. Briefly, Shelley wrote the novel as her contribution to a competition proposed by Lord Byron. Shelley's husband, Percy, also contributed to the competition. We are captivated by those conditions as somehow essential to the impact of the novel and are keen to experiment with the conditions. We see the monster that runs amok is not the creature that Frankenstein failed to care for, but rather Shelley's novel. The novel continues to run amok, persisting in the questioning of science, and eluding those progressively minded scientists who wish its fire extinguished on account of the suspicion of science that the novel has famously unleashed. Can songs, produced through analogical conditions to the novel's competitive creation, produce the same effect?

In this presentation The Proposal will experiment with music as method in educational research of resistance and rebellion. The presentation is one of a series of rebel song performances on a rebel song conference tour that engages with the overarching question of producing that one enduring song. Each performance offers narratives of rebellion in both covers and original numbers, and pauses to consider music as method in educational research.

Submitted by: Andrew Gibbons,
Auckland University of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 166
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Ester Rodrigues
University of Waikato; MIT Auckland

Keywords: resourcing; educational leadership in rural schools; self-managing schools

Governance, resourcing, and leadership sustainability in rural New Zealand state schools: Findings from an extended literature review

Leadership sustainability, staffing stability, and equitable educational opportunity provision are ongoing issues for rural New Zealand school leaders. This paper reports on the findings of an extended literature review that investigated how governance structures, resourcing, and accountability systems impact these issues. It explored the extent to which schools are supported to meet their responsibilities and how this affected the long-term viability of rural school leadership. The review is informed by Foucault's concept of governability, Bourdieu's theory of capital and Ball's theory of performativity. These frameworks explored how power, accountability, and resources are organised within the education system. These arrangements influence leadership practice and educational opportunities. The review revealed that for rural schools, there is ongoing friction between devolved responsibilities and the capacity of school leaders to meet these. Systemic factors shape leadership workload, workforce instability, and persistent inequities. Sustainable improvement depends on better alignment between policy expectations, resources, accountability requirements, and local circumstances. Rather than attributing challenges solely to individual schools or leaders, it draws attention to broader systemic conditions in rural communities and provides insights into policy development and governance practices. The findings contribute to current discussions about rural education leadership sustainability and educational equity in New Zealand.

Submitted by: Ester Rodrigues,
University of Waikato; MIT Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 167
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:30:00 PM to 3:00:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Jackson Rowe-Williams
Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu, Pākehā; Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa | New Zealand Council for Educational Research

Kim Nikora
Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Kahungungu ki Te Wairoa, Ngāti Ruapani; Te Arahou o Aotearoa – the Māori Achievement Collaborative

Keywords: Kaupapa Māori; educational leadership; ākonga Māori

Changing hearts and minds: An evaluation of the Māori Achievement Collaborative's contribution to leadership, school, and system-level change

Te Arahou o Aotearoa – the Māori Achievement Collaborative (MAC) is a nationwide, grassroots kaupapa grounded in kaupapa Māori, critical theory, decolonising, and Tiriti-informed approaches to educational change. It supports tumuaki to transform leadership practice and create conditions in which ākonga Māori can thrive and achieve success as Māori. Drawing together evaluator and practitioner perspectives, this paper—co-presented by Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa | New Zealand Council for Educational Research and Te Arahou o Aotearoa—presents findings from a 2025 evaluation of the MAC kaupapa to examine how culturally grounded leadership development can contribute to school and system change. The Māori-centred, mixed-methods evaluation traced MAC's evolution, mechanisms, and outcomes, drawing on interviews, workshops, and wānanga with 34 participants, tumuaki survey data, and programme reporting. Findings show that relational trust, skilled facilitation, peer networks, and experiential learning enable leaders to critically examine identity, power, positionality, and deficit thinking. These shifts strengthen culturally grounded and courageous leadership and generate a 'ripple effect' across leadership teams, kaiako, school culture, pedagogy, whānau relationships, and communities. Outcomes for ākonga Māori included stronger identity, belonging, confidence, engagement, and wellbeing, alongside indications of improved attendance and learning progress. The evaluation demonstrates how whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga supports the development of leadership practice that embeds individual, collective, and system-level change.

Submitted by: Jackson Rowe-Williams,
Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu, Pākehā; Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa | New Zealand Council for Educational Research

V1 12112026

Pepa 168
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:15:00 AM to 10:45:00 AM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Qianyi Wang
University of Auckland

Keywords: timeline mapping, object elicitation, Chinese women in school leadership

Lifting the Veil: Combining Timeline Mapping and Object Elicitation to Explore Chinese Female Teachers' Leadership Aspirations

Conducting interviews on women's experiences in school leadership presents challenges, as participants may struggle to articulate tacit memories or complex emotions behind a narrative veil. This predicament is particularly pronounced in the Chinese context, where cultural and institutional defensiveness often masks participants' genuine thoughts (Heimer, 2006; Zhou & Baptista Nunes, 2013). Female teachers come from hierarchical organisational settings and are conservative in discussing their professional experience (Stening & Zhang, 2007). Therefore, this paper describes and evaluates the integration of timeline mapping and object elicitation as a sensory-driven, participatory method to lift this narrative veil.

Drawing on a study of 26 Chinese female teachers investigating their leadership aspirations, participants were invited to construct a career timeline and introduce personally meaningful objects associated with critical turning points. The evaluation demonstrates that this dual-elicitation approach yielded powerful methodological synergy. While the timeline allowed participants to visually reclaim fragmented experiences across domestic and professional spheres, the objects served as material anchors that unblock deep emotion and silenced ambitions. Crucially, this combination disrupted traditional research hierarchies, empowering participants to co-create knowledge. This study contributes to feminist methods by demonstrating how temporal-material tools effectively deconstruct contextual constraints, capturing women's experiences in educational contexts.

Submitted by: Qianyi Wang, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 169
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Ludwig Worrall-Bader
Riverhills School

Keywords: Wellbeing, Educational Leadership, Ecological Systems Theory

Leading a Systems-Based Approach for Developing Wellbeing Practices in Schools

Educational leaders have a key role in supporting student wellbeing in schools. Globally and nationally, mental illness rates are increasing, while wellbeing is declining (Ministry of Health, 2021b; OECD, 2021b). Leaders are tasked with responding, however research indicates they often have limited understanding of student hauora (wellbeing) and lack structure to approach the problem. This research explores understandings of student wellbeing and a systems-based approach to evaluate and develop school practices. Focusing on New Zealand intermediate schools, this qualitative study gathered questionnaire data from 17 school leaders, with five participants interviewed. Through thematic analysis, practices organically aligned with Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems: the Microsystem (wellbeing lessons), Mesosystem (counselling), Exosystem (assemblies and school values), and Macrosystem (policy and strategic plans). Implications are represented as three tenets to guide school leaders in taking a systems-based approach to developing wellbeing practices in schools: developing a shared evidence-based understanding of student wellbeing; using an ecological lens to ensure the spread of practices; and utilising school professional development and nga uara (school values) as levers to build school-wide systemic coherence-establishing a structured baseline of practice prior to evaluating isolated wellbeing outcomes.

Submitted by: Ludwig Worrall-Bader,
Riverhills School

V1 12112026

Pepa 170
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:45:00 AM to 11:15:00 AM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Tianze Gao
University of Auckland

Camilla Highfield
University of Auckland

Barbara Staniforth
University of Auckland

Keywords: Banzhuren, Prosocial behaviour, Teacher agency

Negotiating Role and Agency: Chinese Banzhuren's Perspectives on Promoting Prosocial Behaviour in Secondary Schools

This study examines Chinese secondary school Banzhurens' (homeroom teachers) perceptions of their role in promoting student's prosocial behaviour in order to reduce rates of bullying. Prosocial behaviour is understood as the actions that benefit others and as an effective initiative for reducing bullying (Mooij, 1997). Banzhurens play a crucial role in collaborating with parents, school leaders and staff to cultivate a cohesive support network to promote student wellbeing (Li et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2018; McNaughton & Li, 2022).

This qualitative study used semi-structured interviews with 12 Banzhurens employed in two Chinese secondary schools. Through reflexive thematic analysis, this study traced how Banzhurens narrate their role negotiation, compromise, and adaption between policy expectations and practice.

Findings revealed that there was a gap between policy and practice and that Banzhurens' limited awareness of policy created pressure and role uncertainty for them. Banzhurens desired policies that are specific enough to guide their practice of bullying reduction and prosocial cultivation for students, but flexible enough not to constrain their practice. These findings offer new insights regarding the specific policies and practices that could support positive interventions in China.

Submitted by: Tianze Gao, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 171
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Mikki (Manqi) Shi
University of Auckland

Keywords: middle leadership; TRG leadership practice; instructional leadership

Am I really a leader? Instructional Middle Leadership as Situated Practice in Chinese Teaching Research Groups

This study investigates how leaders of Teaching Research Groups (TRGs) enact their instructional-oriented middle leadership in Chinese secondary schools. Despite the valuable insights offered by existing middle leadership frameworks in Western contexts, within the context of China, leadership practices are fundamentally shaped and mediated by their surrounding socio-cultural education setting (Adams, 2023). Drawing on a qualitative multi-case study of three public secondary schools in China, and using the theory of practice architecture (Mahon et al., 2017), this study explored how cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements shape the understanding and enactment of TRG leaders and their conceptualisation of their own leadership. Findings showed that TRG leaders often resisted the identity of “middle leader”; rather, they preferred to position themselves as coordinators and service providers within their group. Yet their instructional leadership was particularly evident in their everyday practices, such as organising collective lesson preparation, facilitating lesson observation and reflection, analysing assessment data, and maintaining workable collegial relationships. This study shows that TRG leadership as situated practice shaped by hierarchy, examination-oriented accountability, and Confucian relational expectations, contributes to a more situated understanding of middle leadership as practice rather than positional authority.

Submitted by: Mikki (Manqi) Shi,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 172
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 3:00:00 PM to 3:30:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Educational Leadership

Camilla Highfield
University of Auckland

Keywords: Middle leaders, culturally responsive practice, student academic outcomes, university entrance

Culturally responsive leadership practices in secondary schools that lead to positive academic achievement for Māori and Pacific students

This study provides an analysis of the culturally responsive leadership practices in New Zealand secondary schools which have positive academic results for Māori and Pacific school leavers. An analysis of academic results in secondary schools identified 94 schools where Māori, and 23 schools where Pacific, students gained University Entrance (UE) at rates that were above national norms. Researchers developed a survey instrument based on established theories of culturally responsive practice to elicit quantitative and qualitative responses from middle leaders in those schools. This paper reports the results of the surveys from 31 middle leader participants in seven of these academically high-performing schools alongside the UE results for Māori / Pacific students to demonstrate the deliberate strategies leaders report as having an impact on these often-under-served groups of students. Middle leaders in these academically high performing schools reported supporting students with career planning alongside their parents, careful subject selection with no exclusions, delivering meaningful curriculum and assessment strategies as well as a focus on data and evidence to inform decisions. Middle leaders reported these strategies as enabling a positive, relational, inclusive and high expectations culture for academic success, therefore providing insights that are applicable to all New Zealand secondary schools.

Submitted by: Camilla Highfield,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 173
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Māori Caucus

Caitlin Soulsby
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha |
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Ethics, participant agency, student voice

Navigating the Discomfort of Assumed Anonymity Versus Participant Self-Determination

As an emerging scholar, I have encountered an ethical dilemma that challenges research norms. My study aims to capture the lived experiences of Māori and Pasifika female secondary school students, exploring what "thriving" means for them in Science and Mathematics. However, a critical tension exists: how do I, as Tangata Tiriti, uphold their mana and self-determination, if ethical protocols often deny them ownership of their own voices? Underpinned by Critical Race Feminism, feminist ethnography, and Kaupapa Māori principles, my research framework challenges the practice of anonymising participants, limiting opportunities to attribute stories to those who shared them. This stance sits in tension with traditional Western research practices. I question whether anonymity can perpetuate historical harms by gathering unique insights while restricting participant agency, even as it seeks to provide protection. How can both remain true, and how can we give mana to participant voice and experience? Drawing on Aotearoa and international literature, this presentation problematises the status quo. I share early doctoral reflections on navigating this dilemma and invite dialogue on how educational researchers might reframe anonymity not as an assumed standard, but as a collaborative decision that genuinely honours participants.

Submitted by: Caitlin Soulsby, Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 174
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Rehua 002
SIG: Early Childhood Education

Rebecca L. Hopkins
Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau
Rau AUT

Keywords: Early literacy – materiality– affect

Affective and material dimensions in early literacy learning

Literacy learning experiences in early childhood are often within embedded and everyday practices which are multimodal and relational. This presentation reports on cross-sector research looking at affective engagements with reading and writing in schools and early learning services, with a focus on case studies within the early learning context. Within this context the focus was on reading as a shared and independent activity, and mark making inclusive of writing and drawing. Data was gathered through observations, interviews, and child participant creation of rich pictures, with analysis resulting in five overlapping themes. The presentation will use the trinity of people, places, and things, as seen in Te Whāriki, to share findings centred on the themes of: Resources, reading materials, furniture and environments for reading, and Affective relationships between people. Challenges for teachers participating in the research showed perennial issues connected to resourcing, time, and ratios. Intentional practices to support literacy learning were enhanced by spontaneous and seemingly incidental dimensions of everyday experiences, with an emphasis on strong collegial communication.

Submitted by: Rebecca L. Hopkins, Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau AUT

V1 12112026

Pepa 175
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Rebecca L. Hopkins
Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau AUT

Andrew Gibbons
Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau AUT

Keywords: Makerspace – learning – complexity

Making space for paradox: multiplicities and materialities

Contemporary curriculum reform has raised concerns about the capacity of future university students to engage in and with critical thinking (see for example, Gerritsen, 2026). This paper takes up that concern through research of critical thinking that is observed in makerspaces and maker communities. In the TLRI Advanced Computational Thinking (ACT) Makerspace project researchers explored the ways in which students engaged critically with contingency and complexity (Snake-Beings et al., 2024). Themes from findings included: types of knowing which allow for multiple viewpoints, a sense of pluralism evident in complex social relationships, kinships which extend to the materials and technologies of the space, and resistance of a 'teacher as expert' pedagogy. Bringing together findings from the ACT Makerspace research with Biesta's (2020) notion of 'learnification', i.e., the "shift in educational discourse, policy, and practice toward learners and their learning" (p. 91), we consider how valuing complexity could enhance educational experiences. The presentation will explore a conception of learning which challenges the idea that "thinking is separate from the more physical activities of making and doing" (Snakes et al., 2024, p. 15). Proposing an ethics of engagement where people can hold difference and which is concerned with "our existence in, with and for the world" (Biesta, 2012, p. 94).

Submitted by: Rebecca L. Hopkins, Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau AUT

V1 12112026

Pepa 176
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:55:00 PM to 3:25:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Māori Caucus

Sarah Waterman
Otago University / PHANZ Professional Historians' Association of New Zealand/Aotearoa accredited member

Keywords: history arts pedagogy

Bringing our histories to life through our bicultural arts - presentation

Histories education became compulsory in 2023 for the first time, marking a historical moment in school education for Aotearoa New Zealand. However, suddenly schools, teachers and pupils were faced with mounting challenges, exacerbated through the many years of histories neglect. Neglect extended to limited histories educational research, pedagogical resources and practices, specifically of a bicultural mātauranga Māori nature. Tūhura Histories was a collaborative Doctor of Education Research Project that investigated the research question, how can drama methods and kapa haka act as a pedagogy for the teaching and learning of key historical literacy skills, in an Aotearoa context. Findings demonstrated key benefits were development of histories topic knowledge, critical thinking, holistic empathy, multiple perspectives and aroha. The bicultural pedagogy supports and fosters a teaching and learning environment that considers intellectual, cultural and emotional connections and understanding of international and domestic histories, allowing for a safe yet brave exploration space. The methodology and theoretical engagements throughout the research offer new approaches to bicultural histories education and arts-based research. I applied a He Awa Whiria (Braided Rivers) approach to underpin all bicultural aspects, and the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi guided the entire research process. I used a relational theory and self-designed Forum Theatre inspired ‘Role and Forum’ theoretical conceptual framework. The unique work addresses deficits in traditional drama in educational practice for history education, by offering a new bicultural performance arts pedagogical approach to contemporary bicultural histories studies.

Submitted by: Miss Sarah Waterman,
Otago University / PHANZ Professional Historians' Association of New Zealand/Aotearoa accredited member

V1 12112026

Pepa 177
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Kurt Cordice
Global Ambassadors / Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi

Nandini Saily
Global Ambassadors / University of Auckland

Keywords: Youth Protection, Diversity, Non-formal Education

Tension in Tiakitanga: Addressing specific vulnerabilities and resulting youth protection policies of the Global Ambassadors of Tauranga Moana.

Global Ambassadors (GA) is a co-led youth project based in Tauranga Moana, empowering ethnically diverse youth (aged 16–18) to support local impact with a focus on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Through experiential, service-learning approaches, ambassadors often carry youth perspectives into adult spaces where those perspectives are typically absent. This talk challenges current norms of youth protection as often insufficient to address the specific needs and vulnerabilities faced by ethnically diverse youth. GA project facilitators include both the project leads and former ambassadors who now serve as alumni facilitators. Using collaborative autoethnography via reflections of their recorded discussions, the authors present their experiences navigating the tension between protection vs exposure to real-world experience. Theories of Safetification, Critical Pedagogy and Transformative Learning are used to reflect on experiences and identified vulnerabilities (related to gender, race, culture, religion, etc.). The resulting bespoke protection policy of GA is discussed as a specific response to identified needs of the programme and its duty of care. Finally, reflecting on experiences in the local school system and working with other youth programmes, key gaps in protection specific to ethnically diverse youth are identified, along with suggestions to address those gaps.

Submitted by: Kurt Cordice, Global Ambassadors / Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi

V1 12112026

Pepa 178
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Maria Perreau
Aotearoa Social Studies Educators' Network

Tom Roa
University of Waikato

Bronwyn Wood
Victoria University of Wellington

Joanne Waitoa
Community Research

Keywords: youth participation, intergenerational relationships, transformative citizenship

He Whatu Rangatahi: Nurturing youth participatory spaces through mana enhancing transformative relationships

Inspired by the three equivalents in English for Whatu which include a weave, a vision, and a consolidation, He Whatu Rangatahi is a community resource designed to support youth participation in communities and various sectors. In this paper we will explore how mahingātahi and agency, manaaki and empathy, and mātauranga and knowledge are central to the power-sharing relationships between rangatahi (young people) and pākeke (their mentors, allies, teachers) when fostering participatory space for rangatahi. We introduce our Takarangi Model of Youth Participation to explain the properties and processes of intergenerational relationships which nurture young people's ability to participate in transformative citizenship in their communities. The New Zealand-based qualitative research we draw upon for the resource has been carried out with young people in their communities, and explores their self-understandings of participating in their communities. We will share aspects from case studies to illustrate how the Takarangi Model can be applied in both formal and informal educational and community settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. The authors came together to write He Whatu Rangatahi in recognition that while there is a growing awareness of the importance of youth participation in democracy, there are very few resources that provide support, skills and inspiration to equip young people and their communities. He Whatu Rangatahi deepens understandings of concepts from mātauranga Māori and Western research. He Whatu Rangatahi will be published by NZCER in August 2026.

Submitted by: Maria Perreau, Aotearoa Social Studies Educators' Network

V1 12112026

Pepa 181
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Dr Nanako Sato
Te Puna Wai o Waipapa - Hagley College, graduate of UC

Keywords: Music, Dyslexia, Intervention

Improving Music Literacy for Students with Dyslexia: Insights from Music Teachers in New Zealand and a Dyslexia-Focused Intervention

Dyslexia affects at least one in twenty people in New Zealand and is present in music classrooms nationwide. While dyslexia is commonly associated with reading difficulties, it may also create barriers to music literacy. Despite its prevalence, Nicholson et al. (2015) found that only 1% of New Zealand classroom teachers felt adequately prepared to support students with dyslexia, highlighting a need for research-informed and inclusive approaches within music education. This study investigated how music educators support students with dyslexia and examined the effectiveness of multisensory activities with guided discovery instructions for developing music literacy. Data were gathered through a national survey of 120 New Zealand music educators, follow-up interviews with approximately one-third of participants, and an intervention study involving secondary school students with dyslexia. Quantitative and qualitative analyses were used to explore current teaching practices, educators' perceptions, and student learning outcomes. Findings revealed a strong commitment among music educators to supporting students with dyslexia, but also identified a lack of music-specific professional development and dyslexia-specific resources. Students who participated in the intervention demonstrated substantial improvements in music-reading ability, with many doubling their initial scores and some achieving gains of up to five times their pre-intervention results. Improvements in keyboard proficiency were also observed, while progress in aural skills was more limited. These findings suggest that multisensory activities with guided discovery instructions can effectively support music literacy development among students with dyslexia. The study underscores the importance of equipping music educators with inclusive, research-informed strategies so that diverse learners can participate confidently and successfully in music education.

Submitted by: Dr Nanako Sato (PhD), Te Puna Wai o Waipapa - Hagley College, graduate of UC

V1 12112026

Pepa 183
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Kay-Lee Jones
Te Whānau a Kai, Te Aitanga a Māhaki,
Ngāti Porou

Keywords: Strengths-based, te reo Māori, culture

He Oranga Ngākau, He Pikinga Waiora: Ngā Tāngata Marae, Ngā Ngākau Māhaki Pūrākau of Puna Reo Māori teachers

Within the educational landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand, Puna Reo (language learning springs) are unique Māori-medium teaching and learning settings where more than 50 percent of instruction is delivered in te reo Māori. The culturally sustaining practices that underpin these programmes remain largely unexplored by educationalists, policy makers, and others beyond the sector. Drawing on the perspectives of kaiako, this research highlights the culturally empowering pedagogies that shape Puna Reo and support tamariki to thrive as Māori. Central to these practices is manaakitanga, expressed through nurturing te reo Māori me ōna tikanga, affirming identity, strengthening relationships with whānau, and creating learning environments where learners are valued and empowered. Adopting a strengths-based approach, the study explores how kaiako perceive their role in fostering Māori success and wellbeing through culturally responsive teaching. The findings demonstrate that manaakitanga is not simply an educational value but a pedagogical practice that enhances learner flourishing and provides a transformative framework for culturally empowering approaches across the wider education sector.

Submitted by: Kay-Lee Jones, Te
Whānau a Kai, Te Aitanga a Māhaki,
Ngāti Porou

V1 12112026

Pepa 184
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Teresa Salter
Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Keywords: transition, stigma, connection

Young single mothers and their navigation of the New Zealand primary school system

Based on EdD research, this paper explores the experiences of young single mothers' navigation of the New Zealand primary school system. While young single mothers are a growing group in society, there is currently little research on their experiences of navigating the transition between Early childhood and Primary school sectors. This paper discusses data which were collected from twelve young single mother participants, through four research methods: semi-structured interviews (preliminary and concluding), reflexive diary entries and photovoice. I conducted a reflexive thematic analysis in order to making meaning of the experiences of young single mothers' as well as examining the social structures that support or hinder them. The paper focuses on four themes; the transition process to school, financial constraints, stigma and making connections with other parents. Drawing on Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Reproduction (1973), I consider the significance of their economic, social and cultural capital on their navigation of the schooling system. The study aims to both contribute to the academic literature whilst also providing some practical and policy contributions.

Submitted by: Teresa Salter, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 185
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Mohamed Abdelhady
AUT

Keywords: Flexible learning spaces; neurodiversity; teacher agency

Supporting Neurodiverse Students in Flexible Learning Spaces: Teachers' Strategies, Adaptations, and Challenges

Flexible Learning Spaces (FLSs) are a defining feature of contemporary schooling in Aotearoa New Zealand, promoted as environments fostering collaboration, learner agency, and inclusive practice (Benade, 2019). Yet for neurodiverse students, including those with autism, ADHD, and dyslexia, open, shared spatial arrangements can intensify sensory and organisational demands as readily as they enable participation (Kanakri et al., 2016; Cardellino et al., 2020). This presentation draws on a qualitative case study of three Auckland primary and intermediate schools, examining how teachers adapt pedagogy to support neurodiverse learners within FLSs. Using an interpretive phenomenological approach (Smith et al., 2012) and a sociomaterial perspective (Fenwick et al., 2011), the study positions teacher agency, not spatial design alone, as the central mechanism through which inclusion is enacted. Data from interviews, classroom observations, and pedagogical artefacts reveal both planned strategies and real-time adaptations teachers make in response to students, materials, and shifting classroom demands. Findings highlight the entanglement of teachers, learners, spatial configurations, and institutional structures, showing that inclusive practice emerges through professional judgement rather than architecture or policy intent. This addresses a persistent empirical gap around how educators navigate spatial flexibility and inclusive pedagogy (Sewell, 2022), with implications for teachers, leaders, and policymakers.

Submitted by: Mohamed Abdelhady,
Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

V1 12112026

Pepa 186
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Jude MacArthur
University of Auckland

Lisa Darragh
University of Auckland

Jules Coup
Rutherford Primary School

Keywords: disability mathematics transformation

Inclusive mathematics teaching as an act of resistance and transformation

Our research on inclusive mathematics teaching, funded by the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI), takes place in a political and educational context dominated by multiple, narrowly focused curriculum and assessment reforms. Arguably, the values of Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga, and Manaakitanga, and an emphasis on valuing people and difference on our classrooms and schools have received little attention, with little if anything said about how the reforms will support learning for the one in four disabled and neurodivergent children in our school communities. This presentation reports on a two-year collaborative research project with teachers in two urban and two rural schools. It offers an alternative vision of teaching to the present reforms, where student diversity is in the forefront of teacher's planning, and mathematics lessons are intentionally designed to include disabled children as valued, capable learners who belong and learn well. We illustrate how Disability Studies in Education and Universal Design for Learning can provide a framework for teachers to resist ableist thinking and transform mathematics teaching so that all students are valued, challenged and supported.

Submitted by: Jude MacArthur,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 187
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Hemanthi Bogoda Gedara
University of Auckland

Keywords: Disability, Inclusive education, Interactions

Seeing the Child Beyond the Disability: Uncovering the Capability, Perspectives, and Voice of a Disabled Child through Interactions

This presentation explores how, as a researcher, I uncovered the capabilities, perspectives, and voices of a disabled child placed in a regular primary classroom in Sri Lanka, challenging the deficit-based assumptions commonly held about the disabled child. In a context where inclusive education is governed by general education policy frameworks, the education of disabled children in regular classrooms remains largely unresponsive to their needs. Using an ethnographic case study approach, I employed participant observation and informal discussions to explore the disabled child's perspectives on the world around him. The data were analysed using thematic analysis (Taylor et al., 2015), and the findings were interpreted through Skidmore's (2002) theoretical model of pedagogical discourse. This presentation explains how my relational engagement with the disabled child enabled me to uncover his capabilities, perspectives, and voice through meaningful interactions. I found that the child's learning, as reflected in his work and perspectives, aligned with the discourse of inclusion rather than the deficit-based assumptions held by others. The findings provide a robust foundation for developing a pedagogical framework that supports all children in the classroom, including the disabled child, through collaboration between the class teacher and the researcher.

Submitted by: Hemanthi Bogoda Gedara, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 192
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Rehua 009
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Franz Carrillo-Higueras
Universidad de los Andes, Chile

Keywords: rural youth; higher education; educational aspirations

Understanding University Aspirations and Educational Mobility Among Rural Youth in Chile: An Integrated Model of Higher Education Intentions

Young people from rural territories continue to face significant inequalities in access to higher education despite sustained efforts to promote educational inclusion. While economic and geographical barriers have received considerable attention, less is known about how social, informational, educational and psychosocial factors jointly shape university aspirations among rural students. Understanding these factors is particularly important in contexts where higher education often requires geographical mobility and the transition away from family and community environments. This study aims to identify the factors associated with university enrolment intentions among rural secondary school students in southern Chile. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior and the literature on rural educational transitions, the research proposes an integrated model incorporating attitudes towards university education, perceived self-efficacy, social influences, school educational climate, perceived university fit, access to information, vocational knowledge, perceived barriers, and family and community attachment. Data will be collected through a survey administered to students attending rural secondary schools. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) will be employed to examine the relationships between these factors and students' intentions to pursue university studies. Expected results include the identification of key drivers and barriers influencing educational aspirations and prospective educational mobility among rural youth. The study contributes to ongoing debates on rural inclusion, educational equity, and territorial development by providing evidence that may inform policies and interventions designed to support more equitable transitions to higher education for young people living in rural areas.

Submitted by: Franz Carrillo-Higueras,
Universidad de los Andes, Chile

V1 12112026

Pepa 194
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:55:00 PM to 3:25:00 PM - Rehua 103
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Sarah Hinchey
University of Canterbury

Jayne Newbury (co-author, not presenting)
University of Canterbury

Donald Derrick (co-author, not presenting)
University of Canterbury=

Catherine Theys (co-author, not presenting)
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Autism, Reading Comprehension, Multisensory Reading

Neurophysiological responses and qualitative perspectives of multisensory reading in autistic children

Abstract:

Background: Many autistic children (62–72%) experience reading comprehension difficulties. Despite well-documented neurological, sensory, and multisensory processing differences in autism, reading instruction often relies on multisensory strategies developed for non-autistic learners. Electroencephalography (EEG) provides millisecond-level temporal resolution for measuring neural processes involved in comprehension.

Aims: (1) Determine differences across autistic and non-autistic groups in comprehension-related neural responses (EEG amplitudes) across silent, aloud, and picture-supported reading conditions; and (2) explore reading condition preferences among autistic children.

Methods: EEG was recorded from 42 children (22 autistic), aged 8–12 years, while reading sentences silently, aloud, and silently with picture supports. Follow-up questionnaires were completed by autistic children (n = 15) and caregivers (n = 16).

Results: A mixed-measures ANOVA of mean EEG amplitudes revealed significant group differences across conditions (p = .04). Post-hoc ANOVAs and Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons showed diminished EEG responses during picture-supported reading relative to reading aloud in the autistic group (p = .02), while no differences in EEG responses across conditions were identified in the non-autistic group. Questionnaire responses indicated variability in autistic children's preferences. Some participants found pictures helpful, whereas others found them distracting. Others preferred reading aloud or reported difficulty transitioning from aloud to silent reading.

Conclusions: Our EEG and qualitative findings highlight the need for individualised reading approaches that accommodate sensory differences.

Submitted by: Sarah Hinchey, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 195
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Kerry Vincnent
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Learning assistant; valued status; inclusion

“I wanted to raise their status in the school”: Valuing and including learning assistants

Inclusion is often conceptualised as involving developing school communities within which everyone, both students and staff, feels valued and experiences a sense of belonging yet research reveals that this is often not the case for teacher-aides. This study investigated how this situation was addressed in one school. It contributes to the paucity of research that foregrounds the experiences of teacher-aides, and in particular, their experiences of feeling valued and included within their school communities. Drawing on data from qualitative semi-structured interviews with six teacher-aides and four teachers, the research identified key factors that contributed to teacher-aides feeling valued. These included being listened to, opportunities for professional development, being based in a class working collaboratively with teachers, and having clearly defined roles. The impact on TAs day-to-day work is highlighted.

The paper argues that if inclusion is understood as referring to all and not just some, then this means TAs as well as the students they support. This requires recognising them as valued members of the school community and treating them as such. Doing so brings potential benefits, not just for TAs, but also for those they support.

Submitted by: Kerry Vincent, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 197
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 529
SIG: Learning Environments

Kwabena Kurankye
Massey University

Brian Tweed
Massey University

Keywords: Learning resources, Actor Network Theory, Cultural Historical Activity Theory

Reframing Learning Resources: Leveraging school's built environment for Mathematics pedagogy.

Reframing Learning Resources: Leveraging on a school built environment for Mathematics pedagogy. This ethnographic study investigates how material and historical artefacts mediate teaching and learning in a secondary school context. Guided by Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), the research explores the non-human agency of physical surroundings in pedagogical practices. Findings reveal that mathematics teachers actively incorporate cultural-historical artefacts and edifices as teaching resources to unpack complex mathematical concepts. Consequently, this study positions the built environment not merely as static backdrops, but as active actors within the educational network. The findings suggest that educators and school administrators should look beyond traditional pre-packaged models and tools, leveraging the rich, local environment surrounding their schools to enhance teaching and learning.

Submitted by: Kwabena Kurankye,
Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 199
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 529
SIG: Learning Environments

Lorraine Sands

Keywords: cross sector, learning in nature, ako

The emergence of ako in a heterogeneous community of learners in Te Taiao: A narrative, ethnographic, and culturally responsive inquiry

In this paper, I draw on my PhD research examining what learning emerged for a heterogeneous community immersed in Te Taiao and what contributed to the emergence of this learning. The research community included mokopuna, whānau, and kaiako in an early childhood setting and tamariki, whānau, and kaiako from a Whakatō te Kākano kura. The study builds a picture of ako comfortable with ambiguity and multiple storylines. It emphasises dialogic storytelling to align the particularity of learning experiences within a sense of community. Repeated encounters in Te Taiao opened possibilities for engagement in relational, multidimensional, holistic, and collaborative learning. This research was framed by an amalgam of narrative, ethnographic, and culturally responsive methodologies. The field notes, used to gather and interpret participant voices, were an innovative reconceptualisation of learning stories. Learning story field texts, written to track learner progress in dynamic, contextually situated ways, enabled mokopuna, whānau, and kaiako to revisit, review, and reinterpret learning in light of living through those experiences. These field texts supported children in re-engaging with the dispositionally focused, working theory investigations that emerged as children explored possibility thinking in a heterogeneous community that privileged agentic, mana-infused learning (Rameka et al., 2022). The ako in this community offers a resistance story (Moss, 2018) to dominant neoliberal concepts of learning and teaching. The study found that situated experiences, centred in Te Taiao, generated possibilities for this heterogeneous community to engage in culturally nourishing, relational connections; stretch experimental, play-rich, agentic learning; and embrace kaitiakitanga. Building on social constructivist views, these findings strengthen perspectives that children actively co-construct and interpret meaning through social engagement. Contributing factors underpinning the emergence of ako included the community's heterogeneous composition, mana ōrite engagements, and participants' inquiry-focused exploration in Te Taiao spaces.

Submitted by: Lorraine Sands, University of Waikato

V1 12112026

Pepa 200
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 529
SIG: Learning Environments

Paula King
Teacher (Primary)

Keywords: Transition, play-based learning

An Investigation into Play-based Learning to Support Children Transitioning to Primary School

Starting school is a crucial milestone for families. In Aotearoa New Zealand, where societal expectations drive most children to enter school on their fifth birthday, many young children struggle with the demands of formal schooling. While a body of research advocates for play-based learning, supporting transitions that embrace children's identities, cultures, and interests, is increasingly marginalised by systemic demands and recent policy shifts toward structured learning approaches aimed at hitting targets and lifting academic achievement. This master's research highlights how teachers successfully balance academic demands with child-centred practices to maintain a developmentally appropriate learning environment. Using a qualitative paradigm and thematic analysis, it focuses on four teachers across Auckland navigating these systemic challenges. Data gathered from face-to-face semi-structured interviews and familiarisation visits reveal that teachers' knowledge of play-based learning nurtures children's diversity and well-being, is contextual, and responsive, rather than a 'one way' approach. Their professional journeys were empowered by supportive leadership and collaboration. Teachers adapted skilled play-observation practices from early childhood education. This presentation offers insights for teachers interested in play-based environments, encourages leadership, and promotes educators building connections and future research across sectors to weave a rich whāriki for all to stand on, ready for children.

Submitted by: Paula King, Teacher (Primary)

V1 12112026

Pepa 203
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Māori Caucus

Kay-Lee Jones
Te Whānau a Kai, Te Aitanga a Māhaki,
Ngāti Porou

Keywords: Karanga, relationality, continuity

Karanga as Pedagogy: Cultivating Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga and Manaakitanga Through Wāhine Knowledge

Karanga, the ceremonial call of welcome performed by wāhine Māori (Indigenous Māori women), is a traditional oral literacy and ancestral artform that embodies spiritual, cultural, and genealogical knowledge. This presentation explores karanga as an Indigenous pedagogy and taonga tuku iho (ancestral treasure), examining how it teaches, sustains, reclaims, and transmits knowledge through the interconnected values of whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga. Drawing on Kaupapa Māori research methodologies and the narratives of kaikaranga practitioners, the study positions karanga as a relational practice that strengthens connections to whakapapa, wairua, and te taiao while fostering belonging, hauora, and mana wāhine. Through whanaungatanga, karanga affirms and renews relationships between people, ancestors, and place. As an expression of tiakitanga, it safeguards and transmits language, tikanga, histories, and cultural responsibilities across generations. Through manaakitanga, it extends care, welcome, and empowerment to those gathered. The findings demonstrate that karanga is far more than a ceremonial performance; it is a living pedagogy through which wāhine enact cultural continuity, healing, and knowledge stewardship. By sharing insights from kaikaranga practitioners, this presentation highlights the ways karanga is sustained, reclaimed, and passed between generations, offering important understandings of Indigenous teaching and learning grounded in relationship, care, and collective responsibility.

Submitted by: Kay-Lee Jones, Te Whānau a Kai, Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Ngāti Porou

V1 12112026

Pepa 204
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Māori Caucus

Hiria McRae
Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords: Kaiako Māori Leadership

Ko te Kaiako, Ko te Rangatira: Growing Māori Teacher Leadership for a Sustainable Future

This presentation examines how kaiako Māori leadership potential can be identified and nurtured in ways that uphold the whanaungatanga, tiakitanga, and manaakitanga. Teacher supply pressures in Aotearoa have intensified, with kaiako Māori disproportionately affected due to the additional cultural, pastoral, and community responsibilities they carry. As noted in research, “kaiako Māori possess significant leadership capabilities grounded in cultural knowledge, relational practices, community engagement, and commitments to Māori learner success,” yet these strengths often remain under-recognised within conventional leadership pathways. Drawing on kaupapa Māori and strengths-based approaches, this study explores how culturally grounded leadership qualities can be more intentionally valued and developed within school systems. The research highlights the importance of relational leadership practices (whanaungatanga), nurture and grow existing strengths (tiakitanga), and extend care, support, and empowerment to others (manaakitanga). Preliminary findings from working with kaiako Māori in 3 primary schools, emphasise the need for culturally responsive leadership development processes that enable kaiako Māori to showcase their expertise, exercise autonomy, and transition confidently into both formal and informal leadership roles. This presentation contributes to educational transformation and workforce sustainability, offering insights for schools and organisations seeking to strengthen Māori educator leadership and improve outcomes for ākonga Māori.

Submitted by: Hiria McRae, Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 205
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Māori Caucus

Camilla Highfield
University of Auckland

Keywords: Māori student academic achievement, subject choice, secondary schools

Indigenous Māori students' subject choice and academic achievement in their final year of secondary school

This study reports current achievement rates of Indigenous Māori students in their final year of secondary school in New Zealand. An in-depth analysis of academic results of New Zealand school leavers in 2023 was undertaken by identifying top-performing schools for Māori students in achieving University Entrance (UE) and analysing the curriculum areas in which these students are achieving. Māori students' enrolment and achievement in mathematics and science subjects in their final year of secondary school was compared to the average enrolment and achievement of Māori students in other schools and all other students in their school. The findings show that Māori students in the top-performing schools for Māori were significantly more likely to be enrolled in and achieve UE in mathematics and science subjects compared to Māori students in other schools. However, Māori students' enrolled rates in science and achieved rates in both mathematics and science were statistically significantly lower than the overall average rates of all other students in their school. The study also highlights non-STEM subjects where Māori students are enrolling and achieving success. The potential reasons for subject selection and relative rates of achievement as contextualised within the larger school and socio-political context are also discussed.

Submitted by: Camilla Highfield,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 206
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Robyn Caygill
Ministry of Education

Keywords: Mathematics, gender, teaching

Clarity of instruction: Using evidence from TIMSS to inform maths teaching and learning

Every four years the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) gathers a large range of information, both through the assessments and through questionnaires to students, their teachers and their principals. While TIMSS is a useful health check at the system level, the focus of publications has been on what the study tells us about mathematics and statistics teaching and learning rather than on informing that teaching and learning. This paper will attempt to redress the balance by making meaning from the data that can be used by teachers and leaders. Comparative analyses of the achievement of Year 9 students in mathematics in 2023 show some growth on individual questions since 2018. Strengths among Year 9 students include algebraic questions, an area of overall relative weakness. Alongside achievement information, an examination of students' perceptions of the clarity of instruction given by their teachers and their relation to achievement will be presented. Gender differences in students' perceptions of clarity of instruction, many differences in favour of boys, are revealed. In an era of change, this paper focuses on what we should retain and celebrate and hopes to empower others by providing a sense of hope as well as opportunities for growth.

Submitted by: Robyn Caygill, Ministry of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 207
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 4:25:00 PM to 4:55:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Jodie Hunter
Massey University

Generosa Leach
Massey University

Aehee Ahn
Massey University

Keywords: Social justice, mathematical modelling

Connecting mathematics education and social justice through modelling related to complex systems

Issues related to social justice and ecological crises significantly and unevenly impact indigenous, marginalised, and minoritised communities. For young people to make informed decisions within their communities and develop understanding and action plans for social justice and environmental sustainability requires an appreciation of the world as comprising of interrelated complex systems (English, 2007). The overall aim of the study reported in this paper presentation was to examine how middle years Pacific and Māori students learn to model complex systems connected to mathematics and social justice. The study coupled youth participatory action research (YPAR) with modelling cycles to engage students as active partners in all aspects of the research process including identifying issues, developing solutions, and taking action. Our findings focus on a modelling cycle related to issues of representation. We present and analyse different models developed by students related to social justice issues including political party donations, gender and ethnicity in sports, and gender and pay equity. We highlight the need for students to have a personal connection to issues of social justice to develop deeper insight into these. We interrogate the opportunities for mathematical understanding when developing models of complex systems. Finally, we present reflections from students of their learning in relation to both social justice and mathematics.

Submitted by: Jodie Hunter, Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 208
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Generosa Leach
Massey University

Jodie Hunter
Massey University

Tracy Helliwell
Bristol University, United Kingdom

Keywords: equity, speculativce fiction, mathematics teachers

Examining mathematics teachers' conceptions of equity through speculative fiction

Equity in mathematics education has become an increasingly urgent concern both internationally and in Aotearoa New Zealand. Teachers play a significant part in creating equitable learning contexts through their pedagogical actions. Prior research has focused on pre-service teachers' understanding of equity, however, there are fewer studies examining how in-service teachers conceptualise equity, a concept that is by nature difficult to define. This raises the question: how do in-service teachers frame equity in mathematics teaching and learning?

This presentation draws on data from four in-service teachers' ideas of equity, gathered through speculative fiction-stories that imagine worlds beyond current reality, interrogating taken-for-granted norms. Guided by a prompt, teachers wrote narratives imagining a future mathematics classroom where equity flourishes. It is these stories that form the basis of our analysis.

Findings highlight how this methodology drew out rich dimensions of equity, moving teachers from gap-gazing toward imagined futures where all children hold powerful mathematical identities. We argue that speculative fiction as method allowed teachers to articulate visions of equity beyond dominant discourses in distinct yet overlapping articulations of a future where equity flourishes.

Submitted by: Generosa Leach, Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 210
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Kay-Lee Jones

Keywords: Streaming, rangatahi.

Ko ngā rangatahi, ngā rangatira: Privileging Youth Perspectives of Streaming in Aotearoa New Zealand

Streaming: the grouping of students by perceived ability through separate classes, in-class groups, or prerequisite pathways—remains common in Aotearoa New Zealand despite evidence of its harmful effects. Māori and Pacific learners are disproportionately represented in lower streams, reflecting enduring colonial and deficit-based assumptions about capability. This study foregrounds rangatahi (youth) perspectives on streaming in mathematics, drawing on a collaborative hui with Māori and Pacific secondary students. Guided by Kaupapa Māori principles, youth voice is positioned not only as data but as a central lens for framing, analysing, and interpreting the research. Student narratives are interwoven throughout the study to challenge conventional Western research approaches that often marginalise participant voice. Rangatahi described streaming as limiting opportunities, shaping negative self-perceptions, and restricting educational and career pathways. They highlighted the absence of student and whānau involvement in decision-making and identified the disproportionate impact of streaming on Māori and Pacific learners. At the same time, they demonstrated insight, leadership, and a commitment to collective success. By privileging rangatahi perspectives, this study challenges the status quo and argues for de-streaming as part of a broader anti-racist, culturally sustaining agenda for educational equity.

Submitted by: Kay-Lee Jones, Te Whānau a Kai, Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Ngāti Porou

V1 12112026

Pepa 211
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Shweta Sharma
University of Canterbury

Sashi Sharma
University of Canterbury

Danyal Farsani
The University of South Pacific

Keywords: multilingualism, translanguaging, probability

Beyond Resource: Languages as Sources of Meaning in Mathematics Classrooms

In multilingual mathematics classrooms, language is often conceptualised as a resource, a supportive tool that teachers may deploy to assist learners in accessing mathematical content. While this perspective has contributed significantly to equity-oriented practice, it risks treating students' linguistic repertoires instrumentally and fails to recognise the epistemic functions of language in constructing mathematical meaning. Drawing on empirical classroom illustrations from Year 7–10 probability lessons across multiple studies conducted by the second author, this presentation advances a theoretical and practice-oriented shift from understanding language as a resource to understanding languages as sources of meaning. The language as a source of meaning perspective suggests that using multiple languages does not merely involve code-switching; rather, multiple languages contribute to how learners think, reason, and make sense of, in this case, probability ideas. We draw some implications for teaching and research. For teaching, it calls for pedagogies that treat students' languages as sources of multiple meanings that offer potential for conceptual understanding of mathematics, rather than merely focusing on supporting English fluency. It also asks us to consider a broader conception of language for meaning-making in mathematics classrooms, one that includes the metaphors, gestures, narratives, and cultural framings through which students reason about probability concepts. For research, it calls for closer attention to translanguaging as a practice to examine the epistemic potential of multiple languages in probability classrooms. The sources-of-meaning perspective shows that languages do not merely carry mathematical knowledge; they help create it.

Submitted by: Shweta Sharma,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 212
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Sigrun Holmedal
Oslo Metropolitan University, Oslo,
Norway

Keywords: Inclusive teaching, streaming, care

Streaming as an act of care for students: perspectives of Norwegian mathematics teachers

In Norway, the education system has a long tradition of inclusive teaching for all students, and teaching has normally been organised in mixed attainment groups. However, in recent years,

attainment grouping (streaming) has been more common, especially in mathematics. This change is closely connected to a growing focus on measurement of students' results and a general

movement toward New Public Management and performativity. Although streaming can be argued to conflict with inclusive teaching and lead to restricted access to the mathematics,

teachers do not necessarily see this as a conflict. Building on data from a wider study on inclusion in school mathematics, this presentation focuses on three teachers teaching

mathematics at the same grade in one Norwegian lower secondary school. The teachers

themselves had taken initiative to teach mathematics in streams to support inclusive teaching for all students. Drawing on J.P. Gee's theory of big D Discourses, analyses of teacher interviews and classroom observations found that the teachers justified streaming grounded in a strong care for students while also drawing on a fixed view of students' learning at different levels. However, despite good intentions, I argue that teachers' care for students glosses over students' restricted access to mathematics in streams.

Submitted by: Sigrun Holmedal, Oslo Metropolitan University, Oslo, Norway

V1 12112026

Pepa 213
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:30:00 PM to 3:00:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Lisa Darragh
University of Auckland

Jude MacArthur
University of Auckland

Jules Coup
Rutherford Primary School

Keywords: Inclusive mathematics teaching, lesson study, mentor teachers

Re-professionalising mathematics teaching in a time of de-professionalism

Inclusive teaching of mathematics is an important priority area in Aotearoa New Zealand; however, research suggests that many teachers find it challenging, with few 'recipes' for how to deliver mathematics lessons in a way that includes all learners. Our TLRI project aimed to support teachers in developing a lesson study approach to build their own, and others', capacity for developing inclusive mathematics lessons using the framework of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Interviews and focus groups with five mentor teachers and their six mentees provide us with evidence that a lesson study and UDL approach equip teachers with a method for critical reflection on their own and others' practice. We argue that while current reforms in mathematics education appear to de-professionalise teaching, including ministerial provided resources that offer teaching scripts, teachers respond well to alternative strategies that build their professionalism instead.

Submitted by: Lisa Darragh, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 214
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Mathematics & Statistics/Pāngarau Education

Sarah Cobb
EdD student, University of Canterbury

Keywords: Representations, Algebra

An investigation into how year 7 and 8 students use representations during algebra lessons

My doctoral thesis researches the use of representations by a class of year 7 and 8 students. Representing situations is one of the five Mathematics and Statistics Processes in the 2025 Curriculum. Representing is important for student learning and understanding because it makes visible abstract mathematical concepts. Using design-based methodology, I co-designed and planned, with the classroom teacher, a series of lessons over a six-week period on algebraic patterning using the context of well-known stick patterns. This presentation reports on the data analysis from video recordings, recorded conversations, and document analysis of one student's interactions with the tasks and representations. One theme is the student's changing thinking over time, including the connections between their made, drawn and written and verbal representations and descriptions. Another is their developing conceptual understanding of the relationship between the ways they saw the patterns growing and how they expressed these mathematically and in response to teacher and class interactions. The ecology of classroom learning is discussed, particularly the interconnectedness of individual and shared activity and sense-making as a way of understanding mathematics learning over time.

Submitted by: Sarah Cobb, EdD student,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 215
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 9:45:00 AM to 10:15:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Pasifika Caucus

Dr Tanya Samu

Keywords: cultural competencies, Pacific learner success, teacher education

Teacher education and 'tricky' Tapasā cultural competence indicators: Turu 1.14, and Pacific peoples in relation to Tangata Whenua and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

A key structure of the MOE's Tapasā: Cultural competencies for teachers of Pacific learners (2018), are the indicators of teacher behaviours. These identify the knowledge, skills and dispositions considered by the Tapasā framework to be what teachers need to enhance efforts to support Pacific learners' success within the formal education system. This presentation focuses on one potentially challenging indicator within the Tapasā framework- Turu 1.14, for the experienced teacher. It states that the teacher 'Ensures teaching colleagues, Pacific learners and their parents understand the position of Pacific peoples in the context of Te Tiriti o Waitangi with tangata whenua'. This is 'tricky' or potentially challenging because it requires a specific articulation of the relationship Pacific peoples have with Maori as tangata whenua. This is not necessarily shared knowledge by many Pacific peoples either. What (and how) could teacher education programmes support teachers? This presentation shares findings of a study that traces and analyses conceptions of this relationship over time. Discourse analysis from a post-structuralist perspective was applied to these conceptions to surface ways of understanding that could be of use in teacher education programmes in relation to this specific professional cultural competency.

Submitted by: Tanya Samu, School of Education & Social Practice, University of Auckland | Waipapa Taumata Rau

V1 12112026

Pepa 216
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 009
SIG: Pasifika Caucus

Daniel Tupua
Massey University

Keywords: Knowing without Knowing

Knowing Without Knowing: Whanaungatanga, Tiakitanga, and Manaakitanga as a Living Curriculum before Schooling

Knowing without knowing A guess, I guess, my guess Why guess, whose guess, not my guess Let the programme bequest Don't think too hard Once I stopped trying To write, to read, to calculate I will hear what I am ready to hear I will remember when I am ready I will share when time lets me The theatrics of this game are drawn out Not-knowing Knowing without knowing Indigenous epistemologies know nothing of curriculum. No lesson has a start time. Learning does not begin, and the apprenticeship of childhood is very short — yet schooling insists otherwise, demanding the child guess, calculate, and perform on cue from day one. This presentation posits an alternative: what if nothing needs to be "learned" until the child has first knows self, knows others, and knows the land? Our old ones used to sit and watch the young ones play, noticing their gifts and deciding which child went where — a pedagogy of observation, not instruction. This presentation unpacks "knowing without knowing" as that mode of understanding, discussed through three relational values: whanaungatanga, as the knowing of self through others; tiakitanga, as guardianship of connection to nature and culture as knowledge in itself; and manaakitanga, as the reciprocal care through which knowledge is shared only when the time is right. Held against schooling's homogenising pull toward early, extractive, and shallow exhibits of 'intelligence' , this presentation sits with not-learning — and not-yet-knowing — as a valid, necessary, foundation to knowing your gifts and understanding others.

Submitted by: Daniel Tupua, Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 217
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:45:00 AM to 11:15:00 AM - Rehua 329
SIG: Quantitative Studies in Education

Ken Maher
Ministry of Education

Ministry of Education

Keywords: subject choice; post-school outcome; NCEA

School leaver trajectories: linking post-school outcome to NCEA subject choice

International research has consistently reported a wage premium on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. However, most studies focus on tertiary-level qualifications and do not examine how subject choices made in secondary school relate to later educational and labour market outcomes. This study investigates the relationship between New Zealand students' subject choice within the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) system and their post-school trajectories. In the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI), we linked school leavers to their annual earnings, benefit receipt, and post-school qualification attainment. Cluster analysis was used to identify groups of students with similar NCEA subject-taking patterns. We then estimated a series of regression models to examine the association between subject choice and post-school outcomes. Regression results indicate that students with particular NCEA subject profiles e.g. STEM were significantly more likely to attain a bachelor's degree and had higher annual earnings after leaving school. The findings suggest that secondary school subject choices are associated with long-term educational and labour market outcomes. The study highlights the importance of understanding subject choice as an early determinant of students' post-school trajectories

Submitted by: Ken Maher, Ministry of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 218
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Rehua 226
SIG: Arts & Education

Sophie Jing
University of Auckland

Keywords: Matrilineal dialogic inquiry; epistemic authority; decolonising methodology

Rethinking Learner Voice: Matrilineal Dialogic Inquiry as a Decolonising Methodology for Educational Research

As educational research increasingly seeks to centre learner voice and decolonise knowledge production, questions remain about how research methodologies can move beyond treating participants as sources of data towards recognising them as epistemic contributors. This paper introduces Matrilineal Dialogic Inquiry (MDI), an emerging qualitative methodology developed through a doctoral study with Chinese Heritage Language Learners in Aotearoa New Zealand. Rather than positioning knowledge as something extracted from participants, MDI conceptualises meaning as relationally co-constructed through dialogue across generations, memories, texts, and lived experiences. Through engagement with maternal archives, creative writing, collaborative dialogue, and digital storytelling, the methodology creates relational spaces in which inherited narratives are encountered, questioned, and re-imagined in relation to participants' own educational lives. Theoretically, MDI brings together narrative inquiry, poststructural perspectives of becoming, Chinese relational epistemologies, and decolonising methodologies to rethink researcher–participant relationships and challenge deficit-oriented accounts of culturally diverse learners. This paper argues that methodological innovation is essential if educational research is to genuinely redistribute epistemic authority rather than merely amplify participant voice. MDI offers a methodological framework for relational knowledge-making and contributes to ongoing conversations about culturally responsive, ethically grounded, and decolonising educational research in increasingly diverse educational contexts.

Submitted by: Sophie Jing, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 219
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Quantitative Studies in Education

Xiaoxu Yang
University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Keywords: Cultural adaptation, Longitudinal design, International students

Understanding Cultural Adaptation through Coping, Social Support, and Cultural Intelligence: A Two-Wave Longitudinal Study of Chinese Degree Students in New Zealand

As international student numbers grow, universities must understand not only whether Chinese degree students adapt to life in New Zealand, but also when and how to best support them. Although cultural adaptation is widely recognised as a dynamic process, most existing studies rely on cross-sectional designs that cannot capture how adaptation changes over time. This study examines how psychological and sociocultural adaptation changes during Chinese degree students' first six months in New Zealand, and the extent to which coping strategies, cultural intelligence, and perceived social support relate to these patterns of change in adaptation. Guided by Ward's model of cultural adaptation, the study employs a two-wave longitudinal quantitative design within New Zealand's bicultural higher education context. Wave 1 data collection has been completed, and Wave 2 is currently underway. Following the same students over time enables examination of how adaptation develops and whether personal and social resources influence this process differently across the settlement period. The findings are expected to extend understanding of cultural adaptation as a dynamic process and inform more timely, targeted, and culturally responsive support for Chinese degree students in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Submitted by: Xiaoxu Yang, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 220
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Quantitative Studies in Education

Meixi Chen
Faculty of Education, University of Canterbury

Keywords: Teacher-Student Relationships; Academic achievement; Immigrant Status

Predicting Teacher-Student Relationships from Demographic and Contextual Factors: The Moderating Role of Immigrant Status in PISA 2022

Teacher-student relationships are an important aspect of secondary students' educational experiences and are associated with their academic, social, and emotional outcomes. Most studies have examined student characteristics associated with teacher-student relationships, while fewer have considered school-level factors; however, limited studies have examined predictors across multiple levels within a multilevel framework. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, this study adopts a multilevel perspective on the factors shaping teacher-student relationships. Using cross-national data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, three-level multilevel modelling is employed to examine the predictive effects of student demographic characteristics, school demographic characteristics, and country-level socioeconomic and cultural factors on teacher-student relationships. It further investigates interaction effects between immigrant status and student-level demographic characteristics in predicting teacher-student relationships. We hypothesise that gender, socioeconomic status, language match, and immigrant status will significantly predict teacher-student relationships at the student level. At the school level, school demographic characteristics and average student socioeconomic status within the school are expected to predict teacher-student relationships. Country-level predictors include GDP per capita, the Human Development Index, and individualism-collectivism, all of which are expected to predict teacher-student relationships. Additionally, immigrant status is expected to moderate the effects of gender, socioeconomic status, and language match.

Submitted by: Meixi Chen, Faculty of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 221
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:15:00 AM to 10:45:00 AM - Rehua 329
SIG: Quantitative Studies in Education

Valerie Sotardi
University of Canterbury

Robert Rudolf
Korea University

Keywords: school climate; social-emotional skills; belonging

School Belonging as Co-Constructed: Affective Experiences and Social-Emotional Skills with Individual, Peer, and Cross-Level Determinants Across 14 Countries

Objectives/Purpose: This study examines individual- and peer-level affect and social-emotional competencies (SECs) as predictors of school belonging, and tests whether peer socio-emotional climates amplify or buffer the effects of individual dispositions on belonging. Contemporary Significance/Scholarly Relevance: Adolescent belonging has declined globally over two decades despite its centrality to OECD and UNESCO education priorities. Prior research has largely examined individual and contextual factors in isolation and relied on single-country samples, leaving collective peer processes and their cross-national generalisability underexplored. Theoretical Framework: Grounded in socio-ecological systems theory, the study extends Allen et al.'s (2022) framework by positioning peer climate as an emergent microsystem property—operationalised via school-mean aggregates—rather than a proxy derived solely from individual reports, using multilevel modelling of 2023 OECD Survey on Social and Emotional Skills data (N = 43,686 students; 1,453 schools; 14 sites). Results/Conclusions: Affect balance, sociability, and trust were the strongest individual-level predictors of belonging; peer-aggregated affect balance and sociability explained most between-school variance. Cross-level interactions revealed amplification effects: emotional control, empathy, and trust predicted belonging most strongly when mirrored in peer norms, and self-control's association with belonging reversed direction depending on the prevailing peer climate. Findings support whole-school, universal social-emotional learning approaches that target peer norms alongside individual skills to strengthen belonging internationally.

Submitted by: Valerie Sotardi, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 222
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Quantitative Studies in Education

Valerie Sotardi
valerie.sotardi@canterbury.ac.nz

Keywords: schoo climate; achievement; equity

Unequal Returns: School Climate, Academic Achievement, and the Distribution of Educational Advantage in Aotearoa New Zealand

Objectives/Purpose: This study examined whether individual and peer-level dimensions of school climate predict mathematics, reading, and science achievement among New Zealand secondary students, and whether these associations are equitably distributed across socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender, and student work obligations. Theoretical Framework: Drawing on ecological systems theories (Allen et al., 2022; Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the study distinguishes individual climate perceptions from collective peer-level climate as a mesosystem-level contextual condition, using multilevel modelling of PISA 2022 data linked with Ministry of Education records (4,347 students; 167 schools). Contemporary Significance/Scholarly Relevance: Despite robust evidence that school climate matters for achievement, less is known about for whom it matters. If climate benefits accrue disproportionately to already-advantaged students, climate-focused interventions risk widening rather than narrowing achievement gaps. This is a pressing concern in demographically diverse, inequity-affected systems like New Zealand's. Results/Conclusions: Teacher–student relationships were the strongest, most consistent predictor across domains and groups. Collective peer bullying independently predicted lower achievement across all subjects. Higher socioeconomic status amplified climate benefits; Māori students benefited primarily from relationships, while Pasifika students' outcomes were less affected by safety risks. Climate did not offset work-obligation penalties, indicating structural inequities require policy attention beyond climate improvement alone.

Submitted by: Valerie Sotardi, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 223
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:30:00 PM to 3:00:00 PM - Rehua 329
SIG: Quantitative Studies in Education

Tanya Evans
University of Auckland

Huayu Gao
University of Auckland

Gavin T. G. Brown
University of Auckland

Kane Meisel
University of Auckland

J. Geoffrey Chase, University of Canterbury

Keywords: STEM, gender equity, mathematics

Gender-segregated secondary schooling and girls' STEM trajectories: examining patterns of achievement, motivation, and progression using University of Auckland enrolments and TIMSS data

Gender disparities in STEM participation and achievement persist internationally, with girls still underrepresented in many STEM fields despite gradual improvements over time. In New Zealand, the relatively high prevalence of state-funded single-sex secondary schools provides a distinctive context for examining how school structures may shape girls' mathematics outcomes and STEM pathways. This study investigates the role of single-sex schooling in girls' mathematics achievement and STEM participation through two studies. Study 1 analyses University of Auckland enrolment data (2016–2020) to examine whether girls from single-sex schools are overrepresented in male-dominated STEM programmes. Study 2 uses NZ TIMSS 2019 data to explore relationships between school type, mathematics achievement, confidence, and valuing mathematics, using hierarchical linear modelling informed by Situated Expectancy-Value Theory. Results indicate that girls from single-sex schools are disproportionately represented in engineering and computer science compared with less male-dominated fields, while male students' programme choices are largely unaffected by school type. TIMSS analyses suggest that school type moderates the relationship between valuing mathematics and achievement for girls, with contrasting patterns across contexts. Overall, findings suggest that single-sex schooling may support girls' participation in mathematics-intensive pathways through contextual influences on motivation and achievement, highlighting school environments in shaping gendered STEM trajectories.

Submitted by: Tanya Evans, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 224
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Science/Pūtaiao Education Research

Richard Edwards
Te Rito Maioha

Keywords: science education research, publications

Where is our science education research going? A review of recent science education research in New Zealand.

New Zealand research in science education has for many years made a significant contribution to the field internationally. Recently however, the enthusiasm and support for curriculum-oriented research has diminished in spite of a growing need for research into science education to help guide policy in the current context of curriculum change, technological change, and social change. The research reported here surveyed New Zealand science education research that has been published in six key Q1 science education research journals in the past 10 years and that has been collected in thesis repositories in New Zealand in the same timeframe. An initial search identified research that was located in New Zealand. Titles and abstracts were then used to identify specific focus areas, methodologies, and key findings. This paper presents a summary of the data to highlight patterns and trends and to identify areas in need of further research.

Submitted by: Richard Edwards, Te Rito Maioha

V1 12112026

Pepa 225
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Rehua 005
SIG: Science/Pūtaiao Education Research

Saadia Yousouf Qureshi
Otago university, Dunedin, New Zealand

Keywords: fsQCA, Lower performance, Secondary science

Qualitative Comparative Analysis of the Factors Responsible for Lower Performance in New Zealand Secondary School Science

There has been a long-held debate about which factors are responsible for the lower performance of students in secondary science in New Zealand. A worrying trend is that Māori and Pasifika students are overrepresented within the disadvantaged and lower-performing group. This study explored factors such as teaching, family background, and socioeconomic status associated with lower performance in secondary science, particularly for Māori and Pasifika students in the Southland region of New Zealand. Drawing on Engeström's Activity Theory, science achievement was conceptualized as arising from interactions among students, teachers, families, and school contexts. Understanding these factors is important for informing efforts to improve equitable science outcomes. To answer this question, fsQCA (Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis) was undertaken using theoretically derived constructs from a published doctoral study. A mixed-methods approach collected data through validated questionnaires, interviews, observations, and a PISA-based science test across New Zealand schools. Data from 360 participants (8 schools) informed rubric-based measures (reliability = 0.87), while 130 cases (4 schools) were recoded and calibrated for fsQCA.

The analysis showed that, although teaching and support from home were necessary conditions for higher performance, being Māori or Pasifika was not a necessary condition for lower performance. Teaching played a more pronounced role in raising performance in lower-decile schools, although reduced self-efficacy remained a challenge. Lower-performing students, including Māori and Pasifika students, were not necessarily from disadvantaged households. Rather, lower value attached to science, reduced support from home, and the absence of high-quality teaching were associated with lower performance in secondary science.

Submitted by: Saadia Yousouf Qureshi,
Otago university, Dunedin, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 228
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:45:00 AM to 11:15:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Pasifika Caucus

Maurice M.W. Cheng
University of Auckland

Tanya Wendt Samu
University of Auckland

Keywords: funds of knowledge; senior science; multiple knowledges

Pasifika science teachers' learning ecologies – cultural knowledge and values-informed practice in science classes

The concept of learning ecologies acknowledges the values of teachers' cultural knowledge and informal knowledge in their teaching. When teachers bring their informal selves to science teaching, therefore their whole selves, it contributes to their students' engagement and achievement as well as to teachers' satisfaction. This paper reports how five experienced science teachers of Pasifika descent used their learning ecologies in teaching senior secondary science. We had individual face-to-face talanoa with them twice, and analysed the audio-recordings through 'culture' and 'values' as two major components of learning ecologies. We found that these teachers drew on their and their students' cultural contexts to make science relevant and engaging. All of them referred to how their family upbringing and/or family life enculturated them in values that contribute to building unique connections with students. While acknowledging we had a small number of teachers, in this qualitative study, (1) we demonstrate ways that senior secondary science teaching is contextualised in Pasifika cultures. These examples would be useful for teachers of other cultures who aspire to engage their own Pasifika students. (2) We demonstrate unique ways that Pasifika science teachers teach. They would be invaluable for all science teachers who aspire to support students' development in science classes.

Submitted by: Maurice M.W. Cheng;
Tanya Wendt Samu, University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 230
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:00:00 PM to 2:30:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Richard Edwards
Te Rito Maioha

Dr Anoop Kumar
Te Rito Maioha

Clark McPhillips
Te Rito Maioha

Ira Seitzer
Te Rito Maioha

Emma Rekareka (Te Rito Maioha),
Bernard Butler (Te Rito Maioha)

Keywords: teacher planning, primary education, initial teacher education

How do experienced primary teachers plan for student learning?

Developing the ability to plan effectively for teaching and learning is an important expectation for ITE students and is clearly identified in the 2026 New Zealand Standards for the teaching profession. However, the pathway from novice to expert planner is not straightforward, This small-scale research project investigated how experienced teachers in New Zealand plan with a view to identifying ways to better support ITE students in learning to plan. The research involved semi-structured interviews with a group of six experienced primary teachers. As part of the interview, participants were asked to bring examples of their planning as a basis for discussion. Interviews were transcribed and coded in order to identify common thinking and practice in experienced teacher planning. The data is currently being analysed. Lave and Wenger's situated learning theory is used to make sense of the findings and identify strategies and approaches to better support student teachers in their growth from novice to expert planners.

Submitted by: Richard Edwards, Te Rito Maioha

V1 12112026

Pepa 231
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Dr Philippa Isom
Massey University

Associate Professor Pania Te Maro
Massey University

Dr Karyn Aspden
Massey University

Dr Timu-o-te-rangi Niwa
Massey University

(We may not all be presenting at NZARE but we are the co-writers of this piece of work)

Keywords: initial teacher education, te ao Māori, mātauranga Māori

Beyond Western narratives of progress: Te ao Māori approaches to teacher education

Te ao Māori (the Indigenous worldview of Aotearoa New Zealand) and mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge systems) provide perspectives on education, including teacher education, that resist and disrupt dominant Western constructions of 'progress' (Braidotti, 2013). Additionally, te ao Māori is embedded in notions of the common good through foregrounding collective aims, not at the expense of individual achievement but alongside it, enacting the "and, and, and…" (Braidotti, 2013). As a research rōpū (group), we are diverse in our world views and philosophies; Māori, posthuman, theological, critical, feminist… Our diversity extends to the scope of our practice ranging from Early Childhood Education (ECE) through to tertiary education, including kaupapa Māori kura (Māori centered schools), state education, state integrated (special character educational settings), and private education. It is through our diversity and embodiment of inter-relationality that we safely interrogate taken-for-granted assumptions evident in education and more specifically, in the Initial Teacher Education programme in which we work. Tacit understandings are revealed through difference. In our rōpū, this is not taken as a threat to any one way of being in the world but as a celebration of a diverse and interwoven world where collectively we become together (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 2016; Mika, 2017). This article reveals the te ao Māori philosophy that guided and continues to guide the development of one teacher education course at Te Kunenga Ki Pūrehuroa, Massey University. We will interrogate the notion of the common good, ask "what what we do does" (Foucault & Faubion, 2002), reveal and challenge the Western design of education in Aotearoa as a mechanism of colonisation, and describe the deliberate invitation to conscientization (Freire, 1974) of pre-service teachers. Our programme tūāpapa (foundational statement), "he waka eka noa, he whānau aroha noa, he kaupapa puta noa e!" provides a call and challenge for us to remain steadfast in our collective endeavour. We are committed to this journey with our ancestors and mokopuna (grandchildren, descendants) alongside.

Submitted by: Dr Timu-o-te-rangi Niwa,
Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 232
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:05:00 AM to 11:35:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Lynne Connor
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Curriculum policy; Teacher professionalism; Initial Teacher Education

The English teacher imagined by curriculum reform: Policy, professional judgement and initial teacher education in Aotearoa New Zealand

Aotearoa New Zealand's recent curriculum reforms have generated significant debate about the shift towards a more knowledge-rich curriculum and its implications for student learning. However, less attention has been given to the ways in which curriculum policy constructs particular conceptions of teachers, and the subsequent implications of this for initial teacher education (ITE). Drawing on Stephen Ball's conception of policy as discourse (1993, 2015), this paper undertakes a critical policy analysis of the 2025 English curriculum to examine the conception of the secondary English teacher constructed within the curriculum text. The analysis examines how the curriculum constructs the role and identity of the English teacher and the forms of knowledge, expertise and practice it positions as legitimate. It argues that curriculum reform is not simply a matter of changing what students learn, but also of shaping particular conceptions of teacher professionalism and professional authority. Rather than accepting this conception as an inevitable consequence of curriculum reform, the paper examines the implications of this policy construction for ITE. It argues that ITE has an important role in preparing teachers who can navigate the demands of curriculum policy while maintaining the professional judgement required to interpret, question and respond to its underlying assumptions.

Submitted by: Lynne Connor, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 233
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:15:00 AM to 10:45:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Carol Mutch
The University of Auckland

Keywords: teachers, disasters, first responders

Coming to a school near you: Teachers as first responders – the hidden expectation

Drawing on research conducted over the last 15 years, this presentation aims to draw attention to the extra burden placed on teachers as they become first – and on-going – responders in times of disaster. Take 2026, by mid-February, there were more emergency declarations in Aotearoa New Zealand than in the whole of 2025. In these events, not only were lives and livelihoods lost, but communities faced major disruption and lengthy clean-ups. Since the 2010-2011 Canterbury earthquakes, I have been researching the role of schools in disasters, both here and the Asia-Pacific region. I have documented teachers putting their lives at risk to save the children in their care, waiting until children were collected without knowing whether their own families were safe, returning to school day after day even though they were victims themselves, supporting their school's students, families and communities, and working themselves to exhaustion with little acknowledgement, recognition or thanks. From my findings, I will present a conceptual framework to discuss different ways in which teachers act as first responders. My hope is that the framework can be used in in-service and pre-service education to prepare teachers for a role that they never expect to play.

Submitted by: Carol Mutch, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 237
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:25:00 PM to 1:55:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Zeba Ali
Manukau Institute of Technology

Kriya Patel
Manukau Institute of Technology

Keywords: Culturally-responsive, Field based, ITE

Teacher Readiness for Local Communities: School Partner Insights in a Field-Based Initial Teacher Education Programme

Ensuring graduate teacher readiness for local and culturally diverse school communities remains a priority for initial teacher education (ITE) and a shared responsibility between providers and schools. Addressing this challenge, Manukau Institute of Technology's Bachelor of Education (Primary, Pasifika) field-based programme, was developed in partnership with schools across Tāmaki Makaurau, and is grounded by a cultural conceptual framework, Fatugātiti. The programme responds to local workforce needs by weaving together theory, practice, culture and community to support teacher identity, professional confidence, capability, values-based practice, and pedagogical expertise. This presentation shares findings from ongoing research exploring Associate Teacher (AT) and School Leader (SL) perspectives on graduate teacher readiness. As key partners in teacher education, ATs and SLs provide valuable insights into the qualities, capabilities and professional practices graduates need to successfully transition into beginning teaching. The research examines how authentic school-ITE partnerships and opportunities for agentic praxis support the development of adaptable, reflective, and responsive beginning teachers. Findings highlight the value of relational and place-based approaches to teacher preparation, underscoring the importance of partnership in preparing graduates to thrive in the complex realities of local classrooms and diverse school communities.

Submitted by: Zeba Ali and Kriya Patel,
Manukau Institute of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 238
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:05:00 AM to 9:35:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Zhiqiu Chen
Victoria University of Wellington, Faculty of Education

Keywords: Teacher professional development;Digital competence;Action research

Action Research as Professional Development: Developing Digital Competence among Rural K–12 Teachers

In under-resourced rural schools in China, opportunities for teachers to develop digital competence remain scarce and largely top-down. Action research (AR), known for fostering reflective practice, may offer a feasible pathway for rural teachers. This study examines (1) whether AR can support rural English teachers' digital competence development and (2) how teachers perceive the effectiveness of AR. Guided by the DigCompEdu framework and an ecological perspective on teacher learning, we followed ten rural English teachers across Chinese primary and secondary schools through a semester-long AR process. Data from pre- and post-interviews, classroom observations, and teachers' AR reports were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Findings show uneven development across DigCompEdu domains, with greater gains in digital resources and technology-enhanced pedagogy than in differentiated instruction and collaborative engagement. Teachers valued AR as a mechanism of accountability that countered professional inertia and heightened attention to student learning. However, limited hardware, weak peer collaboration, and exam-oriented pressures constrained its effectiveness. The study highlights whanaungatanga through AR's potential to foster teacher collaboration, tiakitanga through supporting professional growth in under-resourced contexts, and manaakitanga through responsiveness to students' learning needs. Findings suggest that AR has potential to support teachers' digital development when enabling structural conditions are addressed.

Submitted by: Zhiqiu Chen, Victoria University of Wellington, Faculty of Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 239
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:25:00 PM to 2:55:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Sangeeta Prasad
New Zealand Skills Education

Julie Tabrum
New Zealand Skills Education

Keywords: International student teachers; Early pedagogical settlement; Initial Teacher Education

Early Pedagogical Settlement: International Student Teachers Learning to Teach in Aotearoa New Zealand

International student teachers bring diverse cultural, linguistic, disciplinary and educational experiences to Initial Teacher Education, yet their early transition into Aotearoa New Zealand schooling remains under-examined. This paper explores how international student teachers experience early pedagogical settlement in a one-year Graduate Diploma in Teaching programme for primary and secondary education. The programme uses a school-based industry attachment model, where student teachers engage in sustained school-based learning alongside coursework, culturally responsive preparation and ongoing te reo Māori learning. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with five primary and five secondary international student teachers, the study uses purposive sampling to capture variation in context, prior experience and educational background. Data will be analysed using reflexive thematic analysis to examine how students begin to navigate cultural expectations, curriculum demands, professional responsibilities, school relationships and personal settlement in a new country. The paper uses whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and tiakitanga to examine how relational belonging, institutional care and guided professional responsibility support or constrain international student teachers' early transition into teaching. It argues that international student teachers' early experiences are not only matters of academic or practicum readiness, but relational, cultural, professional and personal processes of learning to teach and belong in a new education system.

Submitted by: Sangeeta Prasad, New Zealand Skills Education

V1 12112026

Pepa 240
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:55:00 PM to 4:25:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Bo Su
Auckland University of Technology

Keywords: School-family partnerships; Chinese immigrant parents, Primary education

Home, school, and in between: Negotiating school-family partnerships in Auckland primary schools

Chinese families form an increasingly significant part of Auckland's school communities. Roughly one in eight Auckland residents is Chinese (Stats NZ, 2023), and Asian learners are projected to comprise 43 per cent of the city's school population by 2043 (Education Review Office, 2023). Contemporary Chinese immigrant parents are often well-educated professionals with transnational connections, a profile unlike earlier migration waves (Ip, 2024). Yet little is known about how school-family partnerships are understood and enacted between Chinese immigrant parents and teachers in New Zealand primary schools. This presentation introduces a doctoral study exploring how Chinese immigrant parents and teachers understand, negotiate, and enact school-family partnerships, including how parents understand their roles in supporting their children's learning. The study adopts an interpretivist design, using semi-structured interviews with 10 to 12 parents and 10 to 12 teachers, with data analysed through reflexive thematic analysis. It is informed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1997) parental role construction model and Epstein's (2010) overlapping spheres of influence. Interculturalism provides an analytical lens while allowing space for meanings beyond these frameworks. The presentation outlines the study's rationale and approach, and invites discussion on a tension at its heart: how research and practice can attend to culture in school-family partnerships without essentialising, stereotyping, or prescribing it.

Submitted by: Bo Su, Auckland University of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 241
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 2:30:00 PM to 3:00:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Huijie Hu
The Faculty of Arts and Education, The University of Auckland.

Keywords: Recontextualisation; Professional Development; Chinese Educational Context

Exploring the factors influencing chemistry teachers' recontextualisation of knowledge in classrooms in the Chinese educational system: a case study.

This research examines how high school chemistry teachers recontextualise disciplinary and official knowledge in their lessons within the Chinese educational system. Recontextualisation refers to the process through which teachers select, interpret, tranfrom, and reorganise knowledge for students. Eight high school chemistry teachers participated in the qualitative research, which included pre- and post-observation interviews and two observed lessons for each participant. Samples of their teaching materials were used to triangulate teachers accounts of curriculum design and teaching. Data were transcripted, translated, coded, and developed into individual narrative stories before being analysed using Bernstein's concept of recontextualisation to explore the influences on teachers' curriculum-making, pedagogical approaches, and recontextualisation processes. The findings suggest that features of the Official Recontextualising Field (e.g., the National College Entrance Exam (Gaokao), Curriculum Standards, and textbooks) and Pedagogic Recontextualising Field (e.g., academic teaching papers and demonstration public lessons) impact teachers' curriculum making, pedagogical approaches and professional development. The study connects with the concept of tiakitanga (in this case guardianship of knowledge) by showing how teachers align both official requirements and disciplinary knowledge towards students' learning needs. It provides comparative perspectives for the New Zealand education and the international literature about teachers' curriculum-making processes in various countries.

Submitted by: Huijie Hu, The Faculty of Arts and Education, The University of Auckland.

V1 12112026

Pepa 243
Session: Session 9 - Wed3 - 3:00:00 PM to 3:30:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Karen Farmer
University of Canterbury

Jae Major
University of Canterbury

Keywords: literacy teaching

“I don’t want to be feeling like a robot in my classroom.”

Teachers in Aotearoa are under pressure from ongoing education reforms. Changes to the national curriculum, the increased focus on explicit teaching, structured literacy, and other directives from the government directly impact teachers and their students, not just in what is taught but how it is taught. These reforms are framed as necessary to improve teaching and learning particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Examining teachers’ day-to-day experiences can highlight areas where educational policy or expectations do not align with the realities of teaching.

This research combined case studies of four teachers gathering data from interviews and classroom observations, with a nation-wide survey examining teachers’ reports of changing literacy teaching practices in Years 7 and 8. Bishop’s Relational Pedagogy (2019) and Freebody and Luke’s Four Resources Model (1999) provided analytic tools to understand data in relation to teaching relationships and classroom literacy practices.

Preliminary findings reveal teachers’ concerns about the impacts of more regimented ways of teaching. Relationships are considered critically important to students’ success, yet many teachers suggest that the current changes to how they teach risk undermining their ability to build quality relationships. This presentation provides a glimpse into the realities of teaching at this turbulent time.

Submitted by: Karen Farmer, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 244
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Katie Fitzpatrick
The University of Auckland

Esther Fitzpatrick
The University of Auckland

Jiayuan Deng
The University of Auckland

Mohamed Alansari,
Massey University

Keywords: teacher wellbeing; resilience; flourishing

“Let’s go for a BIG walk”: Teachers’ stories of resilience and wellbeing in practice

Recent research in Aotearoa New Zealand (ANZ) suggests that the current teacher population (about 74,000) are experiencing greater mental health problems including burnout and high stress loads. Pressure on teachers has increased, in part, due to rapid curriculum change, greater student mental health need and overall increases in workload. A great deal of recent research on mental health, including in ANZ, has focused on the mental health of young people but few studies focus specifically on teacher mental health, wellbeing or resilience. This presentation draws on a qualitative study with teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Rather than focusing on prevalence and risk, this project asks what is working for teachers, drawing on concepts such as resilience, thriving, health-enhancing and mana-enhancing environments. Through a critical decolonial lens, rich qualitative stories from teachers’ experiences are generated, narrating participants’ definitions of resilience and wellbeing and how they are actualised in practice. Drawing on Māori concepts of mana whānau and mana ūkaipo, participants’ narratives demonstrate the multilayered, personal ‘familia’, and/or cultural ways teachers enhance the potential for flourishing. Disrupting neoliberal concepts of individualised responsibility, participants describe the importance of relationships, with people and place, and about finding ways to breathe.

Submitted by: Esther Fitzpatrick, The University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 246
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Andrew Gibbons
Auckland University of Technology

Katrin Macha
International Academy Berlin gGmbH
and Catholic University for Applied
Social Sciences Berlin

Keywords: Wildness, Methodology, Road Trips, Teaching

Writing on the road: Reflections on a road trip as a method for wild research of wild teaching

In 2025 we experimented with a road trip method for researching early childhood teacher education. The road trip emerged as an approach that resonated with our research aim to explore 'Where the wild teachers are'. In that research we explore regulation as experienced by early childhood teachers, sharing a concern for the ways in which teaching is intensely regulated, and the impact of regulations for the ways in which early childhood teachers study and practice their teaching. In our roles working with teacher professional learning and development in Germany and Aotearoa New Zealand, we have recognised that there is little acknowledgement of 'wildness' as a dimension of a teacher's work. Thinking of wildness can take many different forms and directions - wildness can suggest moments of unleashed emotion, wildness can suggest getting off the grid, and so much more. This presentation focuses on the research design through a dialogue on postqualitative research, on the traditions of walking as method, on the uncanny moments made possible through experimenting with the road trip in search of wild teachers, and on the roadtrip as a wild approach to research that ignites a spark in our work.

Submitted by: Andrew Gibbons,
Auckland University of Technology

V1 12112026

Pepa 247
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:10:00 AM to 11:40:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Christopher Burns
Auckland University of Technology | Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau

Karen Finn
Auckland University of Technology | Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau

Keywords: initial teacher education, curriculum, educational change

Responsibilities for educators during politicised education reform

In this presentation, Karen and Chris explore the ethical responsibilities (and response-ability) of classroom teachers and initial teacher educators during volatile and politicised cycles of education reform. Their research draws on teachers' orientations and expressions that were encountered during the introduction and replacement of Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum, a curriculum refresh and an NCEA review. Post-qualitative notions of "response-ability" and "re-turning" provide a theoretical framework for this presentation. Our ethical commitments are seen through a lens of "response-ability" that attends to our ongoing relational accountability. The presentation returns to interview-discussions and focus groups from an earlier research project. Extracts are reflexively "re-turned" with attention to how they speak to, and speak back to, the current political context and the authors' positions as initial teacher educators. This presentation connects the ethical responsibilities for classroom teachers and initial teacher educators with a politicised context whereby these groups' ability to respond is constrained. In doing so Karen and Chris interrogate the tensions between our legislative requirements and aims for education in Aotearoa to honour tangata whenua and this place, and respond to the needs of young people.

Submitted by: Christopher Burns,
Auckland University of Technology | Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau

V1 12112026

Pepa 248
Session: Session 2 - Mon2 - 1:55:00 PM to 2:25:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Fleur Hohaia-Rollinson
Te Rito Maioha ECNZ

Fiona O'Connell-Jones
Te Rito Maioha ECNZ

Jo Ward
Te Rito Maioha ECNZ

Keywords: Gen-AI; teachers; professional practice;

Generative-AI in education: Cross-sector perspectives from teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The growing availability of Generative-AI (Gen AI) tools in education highlights a gap in the literature on how teachers and student teachers across sectors in Aotearoa New Zealand are engaging with, and making sense of, these technologies. This mixed methods study investigates how teachers and student teachers in early childhood, primary, secondary, and tertiary settings are using Gen AI within their professional practice and studies. Drawing on phase one survey data from a national sample, this presentation offers a cross sector comparison of emerging practices, highlighting perceived benefits (e.g., efficiency, creativity, and support for teaching tasks), alongside challenges and concerns, including issues of accuracy and academic integrity. The findings also foreground cultural, ethical, and pedagogical considerations and concerns. They highlight varying levels of preparedness, identifying a need for clearer guidance, targeted professional learning, and practical guidelines to support confident and ethical use, with implications for policy and decision making across sectors.

Submitted by: Fleur Hohaia-Rollinson, Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand (ECNZ)

V1 12112026

Pepa 249
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:55:00 PM to 3:25:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Philippa Nicoll Antipas
Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington

Keywords: International students, ako, decolonisation

China has beaches?! The affectivities of ako

I am the Pouakorangi (Programme Director) for a new cohort of international kaiako tauira, who have come to Aotearoa to study their Masters of Teaching and Learning (Primary) at Te Whānau o Ako Pai | The School of Education, Te Herenga Waka. Given that this is a first for our School, I thought it wise to conduct research alongside my teaching and directorship. However, this presents an ethical dilemma – one must not research those who one is assessing – which I 'solved' by focusing solely on my teaching. I wanted to tune into what my pedagogies produced: noticing what and how my students learned about teaching in, what is for them, a starkly different context of Aotearoa under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. And I wanted to record what I was noticing in a diffractive journal: reading through my lessons, my students' responses, what I was reading, viewing, listening to... and, and, and. Instead, I have learned more about myself and my white mind. Using a feminist, new materialist orientation, in this presentation I explore the affectivities of ako that can lead us, in the words of Simone Fullagar and Vivienne Bozalek (2021, p. 26), to "unlearn, reconnect, wonder differently".

Submitted by: Philippa Nicoll Antipas, Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 250
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:45:00 AM to 11:15:00 AM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Jae Major
University of Canterbury

Anna Johnstone
University of Canterbury

Tanya Snowden
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Teacher Aides, initial teacher education, innovation

Innovating Initial Teacher Education: The story of a Teacher Aide to Teacher pathway project

In 2024, we began a small-scale pilot project to explore the possibility of developing a pathway into teaching for experienced teacher aides. From the beginning we had big ideas about the kinds of innovations that might be possible to leverage the experience and skills of teacher aides within the framework of an existing ITE degree programme. Over the past three years we have tracked our own and participants' responses to the benefits and challenges of designing this pathway.

This case study used a narrative inquiry approach, recording conversations and discussions with teacher aide participants, as well as our own reflections. Using thematic analysis, we identified salient elements that are influencing the ongoing development of this pathway. In this presentation, we discuss the way the pathway developed and how our thinking has changed over three years, as we respond to the factors that facilitate and hinder innovation. We connect with empirical studies and reflect on what it takes to achieve change and innovation in teacher education to develop a 'hiding in plain sight' source of new teachers.

Submitted by: Jae Major, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 251
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:35:00 AM to 12:05:00 PM - Rehua 101
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Jane Abbiss
University of Canterbury

Keywords: teacher agency, curriculum change, teacher voice

Voices of dissent: Teacher agency in responses to proposed curriculum changes

Teachers are currently grappling with what it means to teach for a new, more prescriptive and 'knowledge rich' New Zealand Curriculum. There are voices of agreement and dissent in public responses to proposed curriculum changes. The purpose of this paper is to examine the voices of teachers in open letters, to identify the nature of teachers' responses and, more significantly, to explain these in relation to teacher agency. An ecological model of teacher agency is adopted, with agency described in relation to iterative/historical, practical-evaluative/contemporary and projective/future-oriented dimensions (Biesta, Priestley & Robinson, 2015) and understood as something that is negotiated in context. Agency may be expressed through compliance, adaption and resistance to reform agendas. Initial results of content analysis of open letters indicate focus on development processes, commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, subject-specific concerns, contradictions within curriculum documents, overseas evidence, and teaching implications. At one level, these macro-political responses can be made sense of in relation to acceptance and practicalities of managing change. At a deeper level, they suggest resistance through claims to professional and disciplinary knowledge and sense of moral purpose. They provide signals about what might be expected as teachers engage with curriculum changes as they are rolled out.

Submitted by: Jane Abbiss, University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 253
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:25:00 PM to 3:55:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Komathi Ramiah
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Social media influencers, adolescents' wellbeing, digital media literacy

A Cross-Cultural Study of Social Media Influencers' Role in Adolescents' Wellbeing in New Zealand and Malaysia.

Social media influencers (SMIs) play an increasingly prominent role in adolescents' digital lives, shaping their views and aspirations. Grounded in social influence and social cognitive theories within a social constructivist perspective, this study explored how adolescents engage with and perceive SMIs' influence on their wellbeing. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with 28 adolescents (aged 13 to 19) from Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) and Malaysia (MY). Findings reveal that developmental needs, culture, and digital media literacy shape this engagement. Cross-culturally, NZ adolescents engage more confidently and intentionally, whereas MY adolescents exhibit higher scepticism. Importantly, an uneven awareness of platform algorithms and fact-checking behaviours across both cohorts raise concerns about echo chambers and misinformation. Among others, this study highlights a need for digital media literacy education focusing on algorithm awareness and resilience. The findings can assist parents, policymakers, and wellbeing advocates in collaborating with SMIs to promote ethical and empowering digital environments.

Submitted by: Komathi Ramiah,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 254
Session: Session 6 - Tue3 - 2:55:00 PM to 3:25:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Kun Wu

Keywords: Teacher–student relationships; Student wellbeing; School transition

Understanding Teacher-Student Relationships and Well-Being in China: Perspectives from Students, Teachers, and Parents in Grades 5 and 7

Informed by sociocultural and ecological perspectives, this study views teacher–student relationships and student wellbeing as shaped by personal meanings, everyday interactions, school transition, and social contexts. Despite growing recognition of their importance, limited qualitative research has examined how students, parents, and teachers in Western China understand these constructs. This study examines these perspectives and their role in students' transition to secondary school. Data were generated through focus groups and interviews with 44 students, 29 teachers and 20 parents and classroom observations involving 30 teachers and 401 students. Phase 1 findings suggest that students emphasised teachers' academic support, fairness, and strictness as responsible care. They associated wellbeing with supportive relationships, academic achievement, and personal accomplishment. Most reported few transition concerns, though some anticipated or experienced challenges involving friendships, academic demands, and teacher relationships. Phase 2 findings suggest urban–rural variation in classroom interaction. Urban classrooms more often included interactive activities and consistent participation, whereas some rural classrooms were more teacher-led, emphasising listening and note-taking, with participation more limited or uneven. Overall, the findings suggest that relational beliefs, teacher practices, student participation, and classroom context shape students' relationships, wellbeing, and transition experiences.

Submitted by: Kun Wu, Institute of Education, Massey University, New Zealand

V1 12112026

Pepa 255
Session: Session 3 - Mon3 - 3:55:00 PM to 4:25:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Katie Fitzpatrick
University of Auckland

Esther Fitzpatrick
University of Auckland

Jean M Uasike Allen
University of Auckland

Jiayuan Deng
University of Auckland

Mohamed Alansari, Massey University;
Melinda Webber, University of Auckland

Keywords: teacher wellbeing, mental health

Teachers and mental health: what keeps teachers in the profession?

Mental health is widely recognised as one of the most pressing health challenges of the twenty-first century (WHO, 2022). While research has paid considerable attention to youth mental health, teachers' mental health and wellbeing have received limited consideration (Corrente et al, 2022). International evidence points to increasing levels of teacher stress and burnout, accompanied by ongoing challenges in teacher recruitment and retention (Agyapong et al., 2022). In Aotearoa New Zealand, large-scale surveys similarly reveal declining retention rates and concerns about unmanageable workloads (PPTA, 2024; Alansari et al., 2022). Yet despite these trends, teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand, who stay in teaching, consistently report high levels of job satisfaction (Li et al., 2025). This presentation reports preliminary findings from an ongoing qualitative study, examining the conditions that support teacher wellbeing and professional flourishing. Drawing on teacher interviews, the study explores how teachers sustain their commitment to the profession while navigating significant workplace pressures. Early findings suggest the need for an ecological approach with multiple interconnected layers of support shaping teachers' wellbeing and mental health. The presentation will highlight accounts of resilience in practice, demonstrating how individual, relational, organisational, and systemic factors collectively influence their capacity to respond positively to professional challenges.

Submitted by: Mohamed Alansari,
Massey University

V1 12112026

Pepa 256
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 11:40:00 AM to 12:10:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Suskya Goodall
Te Herenga Waka

Keywords: Wellbeing, Leadership, Whanaungatanga

From Educator Voice to Collective Flourishing: Cultivating Wellbeing in Aotearoa's Educational Systems

Rather than a response to crisis, wellbeing has become a defining focus across global education systems, with international bodies increasingly positioning flourishing as central to future-focused education (OECD, 2019a) and workplace wellbeing as a driver of engagement and performance (Gallup, 2025). Within Aotearoa, wellbeing has long been understood through concepts such as hauora, waiora, and mauri ora — holistic, relational understandings of flourishing that predate and extend beyond western wellbeing discourse (Durie, 2001; Pohatu, 2011). This paper shares doctoral research illuminating how individual and collective wellbeing can be actively enhanced for early childhood, primary, and secondary educators across Aotearoa. Drawing from explanatory mixed-methods research, the paper is theoretically anchored in indigenous, strengths-oriented, and complexity thinking perspectives. Learning from the voices of 735 kaiako, rangatira, and tumuaki, findings included Aotearoa educators were 3.1–7.5 times more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs and 5.3 times more likely to experience work-life conflict than the general population. Additionally, whanaungatanga was evident, with 94.5% of wellbeing-enhancing practices being relational and collective, while a leadership-wellbeing nexus emerged, highlighting tiakitanga and manaakitanga within educational leadership. Amid shifting geopolitical agendas, teacher shortages, and high attrition, this paper urges systemic investment in sustaining educator wellbeing.

Submitted by: Suskya Goodall, Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira; Te Herenga Waka

V1 12112026

Pepa 257
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:15:00 PM to 12:45:00 PM - Rehua 328
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Salma Mushtaq
University of Canterbury

John Everatt
University of Canterbury

Kris LaVenia
University of Canterbury

Brigid McNeill
University of Canterbury

Keywords: Mental health, female students, socialcultural factors

Sociocultural factors affecting the Mental Health and females in Pakistan in Higher Education

This presentation discusses the social and cultural factors that can influence the mental health of female students in Pakistani universities. While mental health in higher education is frequently approached as an individual concern, it is embedded within broader social and cultural structures (Irfan, 2016; Nakalema, Ssenyonga, 2014). For example, for female students, gendered expectations, family dynamics, and sociocultural norms have the potential to shape their experiences of stress, anxiety, and well-being, as well as their sense of belonging within academic spaces (Bedewy & Gabriel, 2015; Zhang et al., 2022). This study addresses an important gap in understanding the relationship among gendered expectations, family influences, and female students' experiences in Pakistani higher education. In addition, a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews will be reported to increase our understanding of these relational and cultural contexts. Pilot interviews with female university students have been conducted to refine the interview process. The findings indicate how gendered expectations, family influences, and sociocultural norms shape experiences of wellbeing, and how students respond to these influences in different ways. Although grounded in the Pakistani context, the paper will address broader issues relevant to higher education, particularly regarding female students' experiences of relationships and inclusion within university environments.

Submitted by: Salma Mushtaq,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 260
Session: Session 1 - Mon1 - 12:10:00 PM to 12:40:00 PM - Central 2
SIG: Wellbeing Education

Yong (Samuel) Tan
University of Canterbury

Yunying Liang
Ministry of Social Development

Keywords: International students; HPV; sexual health education

Perceptions and decision-making behaviour of human papillomavirus vaccine (HPV) injection among Chinese International Students in New Zealand

In the context of China, the uptake rate of HPV vaccination remains low among the youth, partly due to the hesitant attitudes towards public health and the higher cost of receiving a full course of three doses compared to developed countries. Promoting the coverage of the HPV vaccine is a significant health issue for Chinese International Students (CISs). Yet, perspectives and decision-making processes regarding being vaccinated with HPV among CISs are less understood. Given the significance of the HPV vaccine for the sexual health of young people, the purpose of this study is to understand CISs' awareness and knowledge of HPV and their behaviour of getting vaccinated cross-border in New Zealand. By employing the semi-structured interviews with five CISs and the thematic analysis approach, emerging themes suggest that vaccination decision-making and uptake behaviours in this cohort are driven by largely external factors (social structure, solidified gender norms, social media manipulation, and social relation pressure). In contrast, internal awareness and orientation toward vaccination are less salient. The findings in this study intend to inform educators and policymakers to pay attention to raising internal awareness of sexual health, and provide insights into health decision-making for a wider group of international students in New Zealand.

Submitted by: Yong (Samuel)Tan,
University of Canterbury

V1 12112026

Pepa 261
Session: Session 7 - Wed1 - 10:15:00 AM to 10:45:00 AM - Rehua 009
SIG: Pasifika Caucus

Siosaia Sisitoutai
University of Auckland

Keywords: Talanoa, Koloa, Tongan Analytical Framework

TAKI: Tongan Analytical Koloa Interpretation as a Framework for Relational Qualitative Research

Pacific and Indigenous research methodologies have re-centred relationality, cultural accountability, language, spirituality, and community responsibility in research. In Tongan and wider Moana-Pacific scholarship, Talanoa and Kakala have provided culturally grounded approaches to relational data generation and the careful preparation, weaving, and presentation of knowledge. However, the analytical movement between talanoa as relationally generated data and findings as scholarly presentation remains underdeveloped. This article introduces TAKI, or Tongan Analytical Koloa Interpretation, as a Tongan analytical framework for organising koloa entrusted through talanoa research. Developed from doctoral research on inspirational and transformative leadership within Tongan Lotu contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand, TAKI is proposed as an organising and interpretive framework rather than a process of making koloa. It consists of five interrelated movements: Teu, Fokotu'u Koloa, Tohi Koloa, Ui Koloa, and Fola Koloa. These movements guide researchers in preparing for, staging, recording, naming, and presenting participant meanings with cultural, relational, ethical, and interpretive care. The article argues that TAKI contributes a culturally specific analytical grammar for Tongan talanoa research and offers one Tongan methodological contribution to wider Pacific and Indigenous research conversations.

Submitted by: Siosaia Sisitoutai,
University of Auckland

V1 12112026

Pepa 262
Session: Session 4 - Tue1 - 9:35:00 AM to 10:05:00 AM - Central 2
SIG: Education for Sustainability

Md Rabiul Alam
School of Education, The University of Queensland

Keywords: volunteer interpreting; linguistic sustainability; multilingual learning

Who Makes Multilingual Learning Possible? Volunteer Interpreting and Linguistic Sustainability at the Biswa Ijtema in Bangladesh

At large multilingual gatherings, access to knowledge often depends on formal interpreting services; yet participants themselves bridge linguistic differences. This paper examines volunteer interpreting at the Biswa Ijtema in Bangladesh, one of the world's largest transnational religious gatherings, bringing together approximately three million participants annually and serving as an informal setting for religious learning. It asks how volunteer interpreters enable access to religious knowledge and participation in learning across language groups, and what their practices reveal about sustaining multilingual learning where formal language-support infrastructure is limited. Data were generated through ethnographic fieldwork, including field observations, interviews with organisers, volunteer interpreters and participants, informal conversations, and multilingual interactions. Analysis was conducted using reflexive thematic analysis, with Spolsky's tripartite model of language policy serving as an analytical lens and Language Management Theory as a sensitising framework for understanding grassroots intervention. Findings show that volunteer interpreters draw on multilingual repertoires, religious commitment, and peer coordination to relay religious messages across language groups. Their work enables participation and sustains access to learning across linguistic differences, although the availability and quality of mediation remain uneven. This reliance on voluntary provision, however, makes multilingual access both possible and contingent. The paper argues that linguistic sustainability in multilingual learning environments depends not only on the presence of multiple languages but also on social arrangements that mobilise linguistic resources and distribute communicative responsibility. By foregrounding volunteer interpreting as multilingual learning infrastructure, the study contributes to broader understandings of sustainability by highlighting the social and linguistic conditions that enable learning in diverse communities.

Submitted by: Md Rabiul Alam, The University of Queensland

V1 12112026

Pepa 265
Session: Session 8 - Wed2 - 12:45:00 PM to 1:15:00 PM - Rehua 102
SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Anne Yates
Victoria University of Wellington

Linda Hogg
Victoria University of Wellington

Sue Cherrington
Victoria University of Wellington

Tianxiao Wang
Capital Normal University, Bejing

Keywords: career change student teachers; career change student teachers' identity development

Career change student teachers: Initial Teacher Education as a time of identity development

Career change student teachers (CCSTs) are a significant group in secondary initial teacher education (ITE). But research has identified some CCSTs find it difficult to leave prior professional identities behind and struggle to develop a teaching identity. Thus, CCSTs face a unique career identity transition, starting with their ITE programme. To understand their developing teacher identities, we drew on Wenger's (1998) Community of Practice framework. Wenger suggested that identity formation is affected by three modes of belonging: engagement, imagination, and alignment.

A qualitative approach of two in-depth interviews with five CCSTs was used to examine how CCSTs perceive ITE adds to their teacher identity development. The first interview was early in the programme with a follow up end-of-year interview.

In Wenger's framework engagement encompasses passion and investment in the profession. Participants shared initial developing ideas about the importance of teaching people (not just subjects), developing effective relationships, creating safe learning spaces, and teaching in the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Imagination encompasses how people see themselves and was shown through participants being clear on the type of teacher they wanted to be. Alignment is a process through which people bring their professional practices in line with the broader profession. This mode of belonging was more complex for participants – they considered schools as great workplaces, teachers as collegial and teaching offering varied career opportunities. But doubts were expressed about the sustainability of teaching due reduced pay, starting at the bottom, and needing help from younger people.

Submitted by: Anne Yates, Victoria University of Wellington

V1 12112026

Pepa 266
Session: Session 5 - Tue2 - 11:35:00 AM to 12:05:00 PM - Rehua 528
SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Xinyi Zhang
University of Auckland

Keywords: women doctoral students; narrative inquiry; music elicitation

Listening to Their Refrains: Designing a Music-Elicited Narrative Inquiry into Women Doctoral Students' Educational Experiences in Northwest China

Doctoral education in China has expanded rapidly. However, compared with research in China's economically developed eastern regions, doctoral students' experiences in less-developed regions such as Northwest China remain underexplored, particularly those of women doctoral students. This doctoral research-in-progress examines how women doctoral students at Lanzhou University, an elite research university in Northwest China, narrate and interpret their educational experiences; how these experiences are shaped by intersecting gendered, institutional and regional conditions; and how they respond to these conditions while exercising agency.

The study draws on intersectionality and situated agency as theoretical frameworks and applies contemporary Chinese feminism as a situated lens. Methodologically, it combines narrative inquiry with music elicitation as an arts-informed method. Narrative inquiry understands experiences as storied across time, place and social relations. Building on arts-based research that recognises artistic forms as ways of producing knowledge, and on existing uses of music in life-course and educational research, music elicitation may support remembering, feeling and storytelling that are difficult to access through direct questioning alone. Music is therefore approached as an elicitation prompt whose meanings are rooted in the participants' narratives and co-constructed through the interview interaction. The study will recruit 10-15 women doctoral students from diverse background for individual narrative interviews. Participants may bring personally meaningful music, select from a researcher-prepared music menu, or ask the researcher to choose. These options support participants' choice and agency, and they will decide whether the music is played, paused, changed or stopped.

As data collection is planned for 2027, this presentation focuses on the study's design and methodological rationale. It considers both the possibilities and limitations of music elicitation, including its potential to support participant-led narration, emotional discomfort, researcher interpretation, and the researcher's insider-outsider positionality as a woman, an international doctoral student, and a graduate of the Lanzhou University. The presentation examines how music elicitation may extend narrative inquiry while maintaining participants' interpretive rights and contributes to methodological discussions of creative and affective approaches in doctoral education research.

V1 12112026

Submitted by: Xinyi Zhang, University of Auckland

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