



Welcome to the Fourth All-Ireland Conference for Undergraduate Research (AICUR), hosted by the Centre for Teaching and Learning and all University of Limerick faculties.

What is AICUR?

AICUR is just like any other academic conference but what makes it special is that the presentations will be delivered by undergraduate students showcasing research work they have done as part of their studies.

The main aim of AICUR is to promote and applaud the fascinating and worthwhile research work that goes on at undergraduate level. In multi-faceted ways, it supports and recognises the development of UL's Graduate Attributes: articulate, proactive, responsible, collaborative, knowledgeable, and creative. The conference is designed to give undergraduate students (from first to final year) from colleges and universities across Ireland the opportunity to present their research and discuss their creative accomplishments through posters, performances, demonstrations and oral presentations. The goal is to give undergraduate students from across the country the opportunity to present their research work at an academic conference. This year's participants are paving the way for all future AICUR events and should feel themselves pioneers, exploring the parameters of what undergraduate research in higher education can achieve.

We have structured the programme to create interdisciplinary and cross disciplinary themes so that papers from different fields of study can come together allowing for, and encouraging students, and attendees alike, to interact with and learn from their peers across the academy. Apart from creating academic opportunities, we want to provide opportunities for a dynamic exchange of ideas as this is really at the core of AICUR. It is hoped that during the conference you will be able to meet and talk to undergraduate researchers and faculty across many disciplines and this, in turn, will provide an insight into how other disciplines approach research problems.

'By heightening awareness and creating dialogue, it is hoped research can lead to better understanding of the way things appear to someone else and through this insight lead to improvements in practice.'

Barritt (1986: 20)

The AICUR Organising Committee
Limerick, 2017





AICUR Organising Committee

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Special Thank You to the Deans and Faculties at the University of Limerick who contributed in many ways to the AICUR event. The AICUR Organising Committee would also like to thank our sponsors who have generously supported the AICUR awards.

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Plenary Speaker – Anna Geary



Title: “What doesn't challenge you, doesn't change you”

Anna Geary is a Broadcaster, Athlete, Columnist and qualifying life coach. The former All Ireland winning Camogie captain is well known for her successful career on the pitch and also as a former Cork Rose in 2014.

Since retiring from intercounty camogie, the Cork native regularly features on TV and Radio in the areas of sport & health. She was the winning coach on the popular RTÉ One's television programme "Ireland's Fittest Family". Additionally, she is the face of a health and fitness slot for RTÉ One's Today show. She is also a Sky Sports Living for Sport Athlete Mentor. Currently she is an ambassador for the Healthy Clubs Project.

With a degree in Business from UL, a Post Grad in PR & Communications and qualifications in the areas of leadership & performance, she spent 7 years in the corporate world before bravely changing her career direction. In 2015 Anna received a UL Alumni award for outstanding achievement in sport by a UL Alumni. With over 20 All Ireland medals, including 4 senior with Cork and 3 Senior Club titles with Milford too, she draws her experience from a variety of areas.

For more on Anna visit @annagcork





Student Presentations (listed in alphabetical order by presenter name)

The Trope of Kathleen Ni Houlihan in the poetry of Dora Sigerson Shorter and Eva Gore-Booth

Emily Ahern, New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This research examines the metaphorical use of the “Katheen Ní Houlihán” character in selected poetry by the women poets: Dora Sigerson Shorter and Eva Gore-Booth. The trope of “Katheen Ní Houlihán” has appeared in Irish literature as a physical representation of Ireland since the 1800s, usually manifesting as either an old peasant woman or a young fair maiden. The trope has been the topic of much scholarly research, however, Katheen Ní Houlihán is usually analysed as a stand-alone figure in literature or else explored within the work of male writers. By analysing the ways in which Katheen Ní Houlihán is represented and depicted in the work of these two women poets, this project explores the radical messages being communicated through their portrayals of the character. My study organises the depictions of Katheen Ní Houlihán into three categories: (1) sexualised young woman, (2) passive, chaste female (directly associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary) and (3) old, peasant mother figure. In order to investigate the significance of this trope in the poetry of Sigerson Shorter and Gore-Booth this study employs a close analysis of the poems: “Kathleen’s Charity”, “Lady Kathleen” and “They Did Not See Thy Face” by Dora Sigerson Shorter (1907-1918) and “Christmas Eve in Prison”, “Clouds” and “The Anti-Suffragist” by Eva Gore-Booth (1898-1918). The close reading and analysis of the poetry in the following pages exposes the harrowingly restrictive force of the social expectations of gender in early twentieth century Ireland. It explores how nationalism and religion reinforced the conservative moral expectations of women and how these women poets subverted these expectations through their use of the Katheen Ní Houlihán trope.



An investigation on Irish female bloggers and their influence

Sarah Jane Allen, New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This Final Year project examined Irish female bloggers and the potential influence they have on their readership in today's society. Various types of research was carried out throughout the completion of this project, such as following Irish female bloggers' social media platforms to see the stats in regards to how many followers they gain over 3 months. An online survey was conducted with Irish females in society aged between 18-30 years and they were asked various questions in regards to the female bloggers they follow. A select number of Irish Bloggers and their blogs were analysed as well as interviewing 9 Irish Bloggers, asking them an assortment of questions like how they feel they are received by their readership and if they think they are influential. The results found throughout the research suggest that Irish female bloggers have both a positive and negative influence on their female readership but that

Loving Your Neighbour as Yourself or for Yourself: Self-Interest and the Minimal Group Paradigm

Ryan Barrett, BA Psychology and Sociology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Traditionally researchers in psychology (including social psychology) have prioritised experimental control over social interaction. Modern social psychology has begun to develop methods to explore social interaction whilst maintaining control. The minimal group paradigm (MGP) was conceived by Henri Tajfel and colleagues to study the minimal conditions required for discrimination to occur between groups. However, these original studies did not in fact involve social interaction, but rather the participants filled out reward matrices individually, without any feedback concerning the behaviour of their peers. This traditional research was effective in studying an individual's perception of groupness and the emotional impact of social categorisation but because individuals are not correspondingly interactive, social interaction is not being analysed. Using a new program called the Virtual Interaction APPlication (VIAPPL) my project explores the MGP with social interaction. Specifically the project explores how an individual's bias toward their own group changes over time in relation to an individual's awareness of the duration of their group membership. Theoretically, it is normal for group members to help one another in order for everybody to benefit, although this norm can be manipulated to benefit self-interested individuals within the group and alter this "ingroup bias". In addition I will measure and analyse how the individuals view the games nature (competitive/cooperative) and whether this affected their patterns within the game with respect to self-interested behaviour. This interactive analysis is applicable to social groups in many settings (eg. corporations, team sports, political parties, etc) because group projects require cooperation for completion.



Competitive balance and team stability in the League of Ireland

Pádraig Brock, Economics and Sociology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The issue of competitive balance is a central one in the field of sports economics. The competitive balance of sports leagues is an important topic as according to the Uncertainty of Outcome Hypothesis, a central tenet of sports economics, a sporting competition must maintain a certain level of competitive balance to maintain fan interest. This thesis measures and compares the competitive balance of the League of Ireland Premier Division over thirty-two seasons with three other leagues - the Scottish Championship, the Allsvenskan and the English Football League One. Three measures of competitive balance are used in this thesis - the Hirschman-Herfindahl Index, ordinarily used in the field of industrial economics to measure the market concentration of certain industries, the C5 Index of Competitive Balance, a common measure of the competitive balance of sports leagues and the Adjusted Accumulated Points Difference, a measure of competitive balance created for this thesis. The League of Ireland Premier Division was the least competitively balanced league over the thirty-two seasons included in this study. This thesis also includes an analysis of the relationship between team stability and performance in the League of Ireland Premier Division and the Allsvenskan. For this purpose, a unique database of squad stability rates of League of Ireland Premier Division and Allsvenskan teams was created. A positive relationship was found between squad stability rates and average points and average league position in the League of Ireland Premier Division, but not in the Allsvenskan, though the sample is small in both cases.

Overt or Covert Sexism in modern sport: an investigation into gender discrimination in Surfing and the Olympics

Aoife Broderick, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Women's participation in sport is on the rise and has seen development since the women's movement in the 1960s. This study evaluates gender identity, sexism and power relating to sports media. The study investigates the patterns found in a corpus of multimodal texts from the World Surf Organisation. The multimodal video chosen for this study was filmed in Australia, California, Hawaii and Mexico and contains a cast of Americans and Australian female athletes, recognised in the sport of surfing. The other videos under review were four male surf competition finals for men and four finals for women. The results indicate that women's comments on these multimodal platforms were more positive than men's. Men's commentary tended to more negative than female commenters and targeted at a personal level. Also the ratio of male commenters to female commenters was much greater. Out of the total 37 commenters through the medium of English, 31 male



commenters compared to only six female commenters on the multimodal platform. These findings are in line with Muller and Swift (1976), in that there were many commenters who appeared to be covertly sexist when responding to the surf film and possibly not intending to be sexist at all. With regard to my study of the large body of text and drawing parallels from the Cambridge corpus, my own studies have led me to agree that there is an overall improvement in the amount of airtime received by men and women. However, it also appears that there is more regard for women's appearance than their sporting achievements versus the male athletes.

An exploration of the benefits of dance on expression in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Erris Burke, BA in Voice and Dance (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This presentation will be based on my research study which explores how a child with autism uses movement to express themselves and improve their social skills and behaviours. Children with the diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) often have difficulties with communication and social interaction in particular. They are often concrete thinkers who need set patterns and structures, which is why dance is very appealing to them. Along with having the structure those children with ASD need, dance is also a way to allow these children to unlock their creativity and imagination. Through dance and movement children with ASD can also learn to connect with others which is usually very challenging for them. It gives them a form of expression which is crucial for a child with ASD. It allows and encourages them to work socially and creatively with others in a safe and happy environment. In this research study a number of interviews were carried out and case studies were explored and examined to show how much of an impact that dance and movement can have on these children. I also use my own experience of working with young children with ASD during my time in Ghana, West Africa on my co-op, as a way to explore the benefits dance can have on children with ASD. By putting together all the different qualitative research methods I use I will be able to discover the benefits of dance for children with ASD. I hope someday this could increase the use of dance therapy throughout Ireland.

Genome Sequencing in Electrical Nanopore

Seán Carey, BSc Mathematics and Physics (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This project uses computational physics techniques to examine the potential use of a graphene nanopore to sequence DNA. The four nucleobases (Adenine, Cytosine, Guanine and Thymine) which are the building blocks of DNA are introduced to the pore, and their effect on the pore is categorised. Experimentally, DNA is slowly pulled through the nanopore, in a viscous non-conducting solvent and a distinct electrical signal



depending on which nucleotide is interacting with the pore is measured. Genome sequencing allows doctors to test a patient's predisposition to various diseases and conditions such as: Autism, Breast / Colon / Prostate / Skin Cancer, Cystic Fibrosis and Parkinson's Disease, as well as many others. Therefore, this device could reduce the time taken to diagnose such conditions and allow early intervention to prevent their onset, hence having a major impact in the field of personalized medicine.

An interaction energy and change in geometric structure of the pore were measured for each of the nucleobases and a change in current over a range of applied voltages across the nanodetector was also measured for two of the nucleobases (Adenine and Cytosine)

The Sexualisation of Women in the Social Media Age

Laura Connolly, BA New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The media has always had powers of influence and persuasion; however now that we live in the social media age our consumption of information is more frequent than it was previously and is largely based online. This means that what we view in online media can greatly impact our thoughts and behaviours. The aim of this paper was to highlight the significant connection between the sexualisation of women in the media and how the media can influence young people. This paper examined three main themes; how women are represented in the media, young people and social media and the influence that the media has on young people. Through documentary analysis of relevant articles and novels, as well as in depth interviews, I explored these themes in order to highlight the effect the sexualisation of women has on the younger generation. I focused on the impact social media has on their lives, behaviours and thoughts. Furthermore, I will describe the detrimental consequences that are arising as a result of the continuous sexualisation of women in the social media age.

Is the one-legged stance test a useful predictor of falls in community-dwelling older adults?

James Connor, Physiotherapy (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Falls among community-dwelling older adults pose a significant economic burden to the Irish Healthcare System, though they are largely preventable. In order to justify the commencement of falls prevention treatment, a person must first objectively be deemed to be at risk of falls. The one-legged stance test (OLST) is a clinical tool used to predict falls in this population, however its predictive validity has not yet been assessed. This study aimed to examine the difference in OLST times between elderly fallers and non-fallers in



the community, and establish the predictive accuracy of this falls screening tool. A systematic review was conducted in October 2016, aiming to identify studies that examined the reliability of the OLST at predicting falls in community-dwelling older adults. A pooled analysis of mean OLST times between fallers and non-fallers was executed, and data relating to the predictive reliability of the OLST were extracted from the studies. Nine studies were identified. Four papers reported results of OLST times of fallers and non-fallers, resulting in an average difference of 2.86 seconds, suggesting that participants who have fallen have a significantly reduced ability to maintain single-leg standing. However, the results also show that there is no cut-off point that can be used to clinically predict whether a person is or is not at risk of falling.

Conclusion- There is significant differences in OLS times between fallers and non-fallers, and the OLST has poor predictive ability in determining falls in community-dwelling older adults.

Evaluating the Influence of Morningness-Eveningness on cardiovascular responses to stress

Christopher Coughlan, Psychology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Several studies have found associations between personality type and cardiovascular response to acute stress. However, the association between personality type Morningness-Eveningness and cardiovascular responses has yet to be clarified. The aim of this study is to investigate how personality type Morningness-Eveningness influenced cardiovascular stress response and to see if this varied by time of day. Method: 91 healthy young adults were recruited and complete the self-assessment version (MEQ-SA) of the Morningness-Eveningness measurement. They underwent a standardised stress testing protocol, baseline, task, recovery, have their blood pressure and heart rate monitored throughout with time of testing recorded. Results: Factorial ANOVA's will be conducted to examine the interaction between personality type and time of day. The results will be discussed in light of research linking Morningness-Eveningness and well-being, but also for methodological considerations for stress reactivity studies. Conclusion: The results will contribute to the literature on stress response and cardiovascular well-being by providing a more complete understanding of the effect Morningness-Eveningness has on them.



Psychopathic and Sociopathic Characters in Literature and the Nature versus Nurture Debate

Sarah Coughlan, BA New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The nurture versus nature debate is one of the oldest arguments in psychology history, especially in regards to the origin of psychopathy and sociopathy. This project examines both sides of the debate, and regarding the protagonists in the novels *The Wasp Factory*, *The Collector*, *American Psycho* and *Perfume*, it concludes that it is most often both nature and nurture combined that create a psychopath or sociopath.

Towards a Post-Radical Front National? From Political Fringe to Political Mainstream

Claire Cronin, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This study seeks to analyse the current political stance of the Front National (FN), France's political party which was once seen as a right-wing populist and nationalist party. What was once ostensibly a fascist party led by the outspoken former leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, may now be seen as a mainstream political party making the term 'extreme right' palatable in modern French society. This study seeks to examine the strategies undertaken by Marine Le Pen upon her succession, which in turn have cultivated the party's mainstream image and led to a wider appeal to the French electorate from various demographics.

Privacy Concerns on Facebook: The Social and the Institutional

Darina Donnellan, Psychology and Sociology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Past research in the area of problematic internet use has been conducted in the absence of any theoretical framework. Therefore, the proposed research aims to investigate whether problematic internet use is associated with other maladaptive health behaviours, and whether social support, loneliness, and life satisfaction predict these outcomes. In doing so, we can gain an insight into the type of factors that are associated with problematic internet use. *Methods:* An online survey was used to collect data from a sample of 18-62 year olds (N=201). Participants completed measures of problematic internet use, alcohol use, social support, loneliness, and satisfaction with life. *Results:* A chi-square analysis will be used to see if there is a comorbidity between problematic internet use and problematic alcohol use. A multiple regression will be carried out in order to investigate whether the variables can predict alcohol and internet use. As a result of



this research the potential for theory on health behaviours to be extended to problematic internet use can be established. The aim of this research is to take one step in developing a preliminary theoretical framework for research on problematic internet use.

Investigating the Opportunities and Challenges Relating to the Integration of Augmented Reality into an Irish Second Level School

Brendan Duff, Materials and Engineering Technology (Ed) (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The effective integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in enhancing the quality of learning experiences for pupils has become a priority in the 21st century classroom environment. One form of technology looking to push boundaries is 'Augmented Reality' (AR). This research study investigated the opportunities and challenges relating to the integration of Augmented Reality into an Irish second level school. Participants in the study included teachers from all subject disciplines in one second level school in Ireland. Research questions using a mix of qualitative and quantitative data was collected using two surveys. The first survey focused on opinions and values of surveyed teachers towards ICT and sought for familiarity with the term 'Augmented Reality'. Following the first survey, an intervention around AR was provided. This included images of AR in everyday life and two short videos illustrating its capabilities. Subsequent to this intervention a second survey was administered. The purpose of this was to establish if participants could see potential for integration into their subject area. The findings from the research study have shown that AR is broadly considered as being a valuable teaching and learning resource. Participants of practical subjects generally favoured AR and could clearly see opportunities for its integration. While other teachers could identify its value, they struggled to see opportunities within their subject area. In conclusion, this research study is of importance for the future direction and investment in ICT within Scoil Uí Mhuirí Secondary School. As a result of the study, a plan has been put in place to facilitate teachers engaging in CPD to develop their understanding and skill in AR. In addition, a financial plan has been devised to support the purchase of AR equipment for teachers to employ in their teaching.

Gaeilge Amháin; Todhchaí fhoghlaim na Gaeilge nó cur amú ama?

Paul Finn, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Sa lá atá inniu ann, síltear gur dúshlán é mac léinn a chur ar a chompord agus an Ghaeilge in úsáid aige ach tá dóthain uirlisí ar líne a chabhródh leis agus é ag iarraidh "cruinneas" a bhaint amach. Mar sin, is fiú féachaint ar ghrúpaí ar an idirlíon mar acmhainní riachtanacha i gcúrsaí féinmhuiníne teanga na mac léinn.



Ar *Facebook* ach go háirithe, tá a leithéid le *Gaeilge Amháin*, a spreagann cumarsáid trí mheán na Gaeilge agus a cruthaíonn pobal gur féidir an teanga a úsáid ann. Sa taighde seo rinneadh anailís, le modhanna eitneagrafaíochta agus anailíse dioscúrsa, ar phobal *Ghaeilge Amháin* ar mhaithe le tionchar an ghrúpa a mheas i leith mac léinn ollscoile. Tugadh faoi ndeara go gcruthaíonn an grúpa ionad sóisialta don fhoghlaiméir ach ag an am céanna go bhfuil fadhbanna áirithe ag baint ach go háirithe le cruinneas gramadaí, an aidhm pholaitiúil fholaigh agus grúpsmaointeoireacht ann. Léiríodh go bhfuil níos mó taighde agus machnamh ag teastáil sula mbaintear úsáid as na hacmhainní seo in aon chúrsa ag an tríú leibhéal. Cé gur cúis mhaith í áit a chur ar fáil do scoláirí gur féidir leo an teanga a úsáid inti, is gá féachaint ar na contúirtí a bhaineann lena leithéid nuair nach bhfuil lámh ag múinteoir sa chóras. Léiríonn an taighde seo go bhfuil bearna le fáil sa staidéar a bhaineann le mionteangacha ar na meáin sóisialta agus na himpleachtaí atá aige sin ar teagasc na Gaeilge ach go háirithe.

An exploration of UL language students' use of Personal Learning Environments (PLEs)

Jane Foley, BA Joint Honours (French and Mathematics)

Abstract

With the advent of Web 2.0, new ways of learning and new ways to appropriate e-learning tools and services are emerging. Personal Learning Environments (PLEs) are systems specifically designed using Web 2.0 and social media technologies that enable users to self-direct their own learning in a way which best suits their requirements as autonomous, lifelong learners. Research on this subject is continually in progress, as the concept is still in its early stages of development. It is hoped that this research paper will present new perspectives on informal, self-guided language learning for 3rd level students. The purpose of this study is to examine the use of PLEs by University of Limerick (UL) language students, and how PLEs can be used to support their language learning in conjunction with formal, in-class learning. The primary research was gathered via qualitative and quantitative methods. Online questionnaires were distributed to UL language students, via web link posted on the UL Language Learning Hub (LLH) Facebook page. Questions related to the application of their knowledge of the target language outside class hours, the tools and/or services that they use for self-study and the value of their PLEs as tools for advancing their language skills. Preliminary findings suggest that the PLE offers a promising approach to lifelong informal learning, as it is designed to accommodate the needs of each individual learner, without the limitations of time or of a specific programme of study.



Peer-tutor perceptions of power in tutoring sessions

Loran Horgan, New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Much of the existing literature, concerning power relations between tutor and tutee, is divided between arguments that underline the importance of an equal status between peers (Harris; Bruffee) and those which claim that tutors inevitably occupy a position of dominance (Scott; Carino). Scant consideration has been given, however, to circumstances in which a tutor may feel less than equal to the tutee. Despite being invested with a level of institutional authority (Trimbur), tutors may feel comparatively inadequate when working with certain tutees. Focusing on the role of power in the peer-tutoring session, this paper considers the reasons a tutor might feel unequal and the ways in which a tutor can respond to this by identifying strategies that can address feelings of inequality. In order to identify some of those reasons and responses, a collaborative systematic auto-ethnography has been conducted, which involves the post-session recording of field notes over a period of six weeks. Through an inductive qualitative approach, these field notes were analysed, identifying perceptions of power inequality and how power functions in the peer-tutoring session. The results highlight the importance of power relations in the peer-tutoring session and demonstrate that this power is not always held by the tutor. The findings of this small study could be used in the continuing professional development of tutors in writing centres with a particular focus on equality in the peer-tutoring session and its impact on the tutee but also on the tutor. Key words: peer-tutoring; auto-ethnography; power;

Autism Spectrum Disorder, Teacher-Child Attachment and Adjustment to Early School Environment

Amy Johnson, Psychology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The first two years of primary school are a time of major transition and adjustment for any child, and even more so for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It has been suggested that Ainsworth's attachment theory be used as a functional framework for understanding pupils' needs in the classroom. However, this solely focuses on parent-child relationship, minimising the role of the teacher-child relationship in adapting and adjusting to the classroom. Indeed, a secure teacher-child attachment relationship can compensate for an insecure parent-child relationship. Children who are more securely attached adjust more smoothly to school; however, ASD can negatively affect how a child attaches with their parents. Qualitative and quantitative research was carried out in the hopes of determining whether teacher-child relationship (as conceptualised by Ainsworth's Attachment Style) has an effect on adjustment to first two years of primary school in children with ASD. Methods: Ten (10) teachers from various employment backgrounds were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule aiming to identify teacher-child attachment



relationship and child's adjustment to the first two years of school. In addition, the Teacher Rating Scale of School Adjustment (TRSSA) was administered. Expected Results and Implications of Results: A thematic analysis will be carried out on transcripts of these interviews in order to identify any overarching themes in the data. Additionally, results of the TRSSA will be analysed in SPSS. It is hoped that results will highlight an important area of educational psychology and identify factors that aid children with ASD in adjusting to school.

Representations of the Travelling Community in the Irish Print Media: A Corpus-Based Critical Discourse Analysis of the Buncrana pier and Carrickmines fire events

Patrick Kearns, BA New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

How the travelling community are depicted and represented in the Irish media is a relatively unquantified social issue which is currently prevalent in Irish public discourse. The purpose of this study is to investigate the representations of the members of the Irish travelling community throughout the Irish print media's coverage of the Buncrana Pier event which occurred in March 2016 where five lives were lost and the Carrickmines Fire event which occurred in October 2015 where ten lives were lost. All newspaper articles covering both disasters were collected and added to the corpus for a subsequent Corpus-Based Critical Discourse Analysis. This mixed methodology was applied to provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis on this social issue. The corpus was divided by each of the events and specific discourse features were analysed and compared against each other. This was done to illustrate how the travelling community were depicted throughout the Carrickmines event corpus in comparison to how the settled community were portrayed throughout the Buncrana disaster corpus. This showed that the travelling community in Ireland were depicted throughout the Carrickmines disaster coverage in an unbalanced and unjustified manner by the Irish print media.

Pro-rich or pro-poor? An analysis of primary and secondary care utilisation

Amanda Keegan GEMS (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Objectives: This research aims to examine the differences in primary healthcare service utilisation between GMS patient and private patient groups and to compare the secondary care referral rates between both groups. **Methods:** 100 participants were randomly sampled from the GP computer database 'Socrates' from a population of all patients over 50 years of age who had visited a given GP practice at least once in the previous two years. Data was compiled from relevant electronic and paper charts regarding patient



demographics, General Medical Service (GMS) status, and primary and secondary care utilisation. Results: The average number of GP visitations differed between the GMS and private patient groups, with GMS patients attending the GP more frequently. Both GMS patient and private patient groups were found to have similar frequency of referrals to secondary care facilities. Despite the similar usage, there was a difference in the method of referral with most GMS patients being referred publically while most private patients were referred privately. Conclusion: The research is consistent with recent studies in Ireland suggesting that GMS patients are more likely to visit their GP more often than private patients. Average secondary care referral rates were comparable between the two groups, however methods of referrals differed.

A patient's view on Maternal/Foetal Conflict in Ireland

Lorraine Lally, Spanish Studies (National University of Ireland Galway)

Abstract

The question can the State can intervene in cases of maternal/foetal conflict? Curran commented that 'illicit drug and alcohol use in pregnancy is a grey area of Irish social and legal policy'.¹ The same can also be said in relation to issues of diet and treatment refusal during pregnancy. In a High Court case from 2002 a woman refused to undergo treatment which would have substantially reduced the risk of her unborn child contracting HIV.² The woman eventually submitted to the treatment without the need for the Courts to consider the issue. Finnegan J warned her of the possibility of issuing orders which would have had a serious effect on her bodily integrity. As the woman submitted to the treatment it is not clear what the nature of possible orders could have been. This case provided the impetus for this article. It raised questions such as the conflict of maternal and foetal rights, what forms of maternal/foetal conflict were the Court concerned with, the potential statutory or constitutional provisions which could be relied on by the Court and the overarching question of whether the State can legitimately intervene in cases of maternal/foetal conflict?

¹ L Curran, 'Maternal Consumption of Drugs and Alcohol in Pregnancy: A Child Protection Concern' in J Schweppe (ed), *The Unborn Child, Article 40.3.3° and Abortion in Ireland: Twenty-Five Years of Protection?* (The Liffey Press, Dublin 2008) 129.

² -- 'High Court orders treatment for baby' (19 July 2002) <<http://www.rte.ie/news/2002/0719/hiv.html>> accessed 14 January 2009.



An exploratory study on the relationship between psychometrics measures of group identification and cohesiveness with social network positions in the minimal group paradigm

Mackenzie Lynch, Psychology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Studies in the minimal group paradigm (MGP) have consistently found that mere categorisation is enough to invoke prejudicial behaviour. From this finding social identity theory (SIT) was developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner to explain behavioural phenomena related to groups. SIT has been highly influential many areas of psychological research and study design, including social network research. However, no study has yet been conducted that examines a person's position in their social network and assesses: 1) to what degree that individual identifies with their own group, 2) what degree they identify with the opposite group, and 3) what position they occupy as a cause and/or consequence of their perceptions. This study examined these features using the virtual interaction application (VIAPPL), a software that recreates a MGP environment. After playing the game for 20 rounds, participants completed a short survey on Questback which measured their in-group and out-group identification, and perceived cohesiveness. It was hypothesised that there should be a correlation between measures of network position (degree centrality, betweenness centrality, closeness centrality, and bridges) and psychometric data (group identification and cohesiveness). In particular, a second stage of analysis is proposed in which participants will be clustered by their higher degree centrality (which group they gave to the most, and which group they received the most from) and correlated with psychometrics.

“The Stench of Death”: Jim Kemmy and the Limerick Leader in 1982.

Rachel Lyons, European Studies (University of Limerick)

Abstract

By critically analysing selected *Limerick Leader* articles, this paper attempts to understand the role of the media in Limerick politician Jim Kemmy losing his seat in the November 1982 General Election. These articles alongside a study of Kemmy's ideological evolution through primary and secondary sources amount to a holistic, qualitative methodology. The research described takes a critical approach to discourse analysis to evaluate the representation of one of Ireland's most high-profile politicians of the 1980s in the print media. The case study in question refers to articles, editorials and letters published in the *Limerick Leader* following the release of the Democratic Socialist Party's policy on abortion. Initially, the study was undertaken to utilise the Kemmy Collection at the University of Limerick which consists of Kemmy's papers and letters from his career and personal life. The overarching framework of understanding, provided by Foucault's theory of discourse, is complemented by two further inter-related theoretical approaches, namely representation and selection. The analysis of these practices identifies the hegemonic role of the Catholic Church in progressively influencing media production at the time. Combining analyses of media content (discourses) and audience



reception (beliefs, attitudes to abortion) a conclusion can be reached as to the significance of the coverage of Kemmy on the subsequent election.

Trademarks and technology: paving the path for the future of trademark registration

Alan McCabe, Law and Sociology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Trademarks have evolved since the 19th Century and the legal framework within which to register a trademark has evolved. Unconventional trademarks have emerged and a liberal trademark registration system has allowed sounds, smells and shapes to be registered as trademarks. But, as this conference presentation shall prove, technology has made it entirely possible to allow a new type of trademark – the ‘electronic trade mark’. In the presentation I will unveil this new type of trade mark which I have created during my Final Year Project. The format of the Presentation will be a brief historical analysis of trademarks followed by explaining the registrability of both the ‘Holographic trademark’ and the new ‘Electronic trademark’. I will give my thoughts and views on whether this new type of trademark can be registered under the current registration regime.

Depression and anxiety among Irish people with Multiple Sclerosis: A Cross-Sectional Study.

Caroline McCarthy, Physiotherapy (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Introduction: Depression and anxiety are common in Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Little is known about the prevalence of these comorbidities and their impact on MS outcomes among Irish people with Multiple Sclerosis (PwMS). **Aim:** Using an inactive sample of Irish PwMS, the study aimed to determine the prevalence of depression and anxiety, evaluate the relationship between these comorbidities and the MS outcomes of fatigue, QOL and walking mobility and compare these MS outcomes between people with and without depression and between people with and without anxiety. **Methods:** This cross-sectional study included 65 PwMS. Spearman’s correlations were used to investigate the relationship between the Hospital and Depression Scale-Depression subscale (HADS-D) and the HADS-Anxiety subscale (HADS-A) with the MS outcomes (Modified Fatigue Impact Scale (MFIS), Multiple Sclerosis Impact Scale-29v2 (MSIS-29v2) physical and psychological subscales, Six Minute Walk Test (6MWT), Multiple Sclerosis Walking Scale-12 (MSWS-12)). Mann-Whitney U tests were used to compare these MS outcomes between participants with and without depression and between participants with and without anxiety. **Results:** The prevalence of depression and



anxiety were 29.2% and 50.8%. HADS-D and HADS-A were statistically significantly correlated with the MFIS and both MSIS-29v2 subscales. HADS-D was also correlated with the MSWS-12. MFIS and MSIS-29v2 physical and psychological scores were higher in participants with depression versus those without depression and higher in participants with anxiety versus those without anxiety. Conclusion: Depression and anxiety are highly prevalent among Irish PwMS. Both comorbidities are related to fatigue and QOL. Furthermore, depression is related to subjectively measured walking mobility.

Using online and paper dictionaries: Perception and practices of early-stage university students of German

Brid McConnell, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

In the present study, early-stage university students of German are asked what type of dictionary (online/paper) and brand of dictionary they use, as well as where, when, why and how they use them, in order to gain an insight into their dictionary preferences, needs, habits and dictionary using skills. Data for this FYP were collected via an online survey and a one-to-one face-to-face follow-up interview. The results of the online survey and follow-up interview highlight that early-stage German Foreign Language Learners at the University of Limerick prefer to use online dictionaries to paper dictionaries and perceive them to be better, as they are easily accessible, quick, easy and convenient to use. Furthermore, the results suggest that where students complete linguistic tasks and the situation they are in often affects whether they use an online or paper dictionary. The results also indicate that students generally use online dictionaries for completing translation tasks but paper dictionaries for reading comprehensions. Moreover, these results suggest that many students lack adequate dictionary using skills, linguistic skills or motivation in an attempt to find the correct translation of the word they need. It is hoped that the results of this research project will lead to students being further educated on how to use online and paper dictionaries efficiently and effectively, so that they can establish a better practice of strategic dictionary consultation and become more motivated to enhance their language-learning skills.

Exploring Casual Conversation: A corpus-based approach

Rachel McCourt, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This research project aims to identify and analyse the key features of casual conversation in the context of Irish English. Casual conversation is an integral part of daily life and yet we rarely think of the importance of what we are saying, or indeed how we are saying it. To analyse casual conversation, two same-sex conversations were recorded and transcribed. These form the Corpus of Friends' Talk, which is the source of



primary information in this project. It is believed to reflect current language use in young Irish speakers today. The project adopts a corpus-linguistic approach to the investigation of casual conversation, introducing both quantitative and qualitative dimensions to the analysis. Areas such as spoken language, Irish English, corpus linguistics, language and gender and taboo language are all investigated. The findings suggest that male and female conversation have different aims, and therefore involve different uses of language. This project is relevant in the context of English Language Teaching in Ireland, as principal features of the variety are highlighted, analysed and discussed.

Exploring teachers as researchers and their use of evidence based practices in the classroom

Kevin Meade & Aidan Coleman, Materials and Engineering Technology & Materials and Architectural Technology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore teacher's perceptions of themselves as researchers and to assess their understanding and use of evidence based practice (EBP). 12 qualitative interviews were conducted with pre service and in-service teachers to identify key themes relevant to the research questions. Findings indicated that teachers understood that research is an important aspect of teaching but did not feel they had capacity to engage in research. Further to this teachers were positive towards evidence based practice but identified a variety of barriers to implementing EBP in their work. Key themes included: resistance to research, lack of support for research in schools and constraints in conducting research and implement EBP i.e. time, resources and curriculum. The findings of this study have implications for the ongoing development and implementation of ITE programmes in Ireland.

Effectiveness of psychological interventions at reducing self-harm: an integrative literature review

Denis Murphy, Health Sciences (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Background: Self-harm, which refers to non-fatal intentional self-poisoning or self-injury, is an ongoing problem in Ireland. In 2014, 1 in 200 people attended an emergency department due to self-harm. Despite its persistence, there is a lack of evidence on suitable treatments. Psychological interventions are the only recommended treatment specifically for self-harm but these recommendations are brief and vague. **Aims:** To explore the current literature on the effectiveness of adding psychological interventions to standard care at reducing self-harm, when compared against standard care alone. **Methods:** A literature search of electronic



databases for suitable articles was conducted. 15 articles (1 mixed-method, 4 qualitative and 10 quantitative studies) were included in the synthesis. These were evaluated through quality assessment, data extraction, thematic analysis and meta-analysis. Results: 4 main themes were identified throughout the literature. Overall, added psychological interventions led to a greater reduction in self-harm. However, the effect size of this reduction is small ($d=0.179$) and not significant ($p=0.175$). When the interventions are broken down, the most effective treatments are interventions that focus on improving emotion regulation, i.e. Dialectical-behavioural therapy and Mentalisation-based therapy. These interventions all had large and significant effect sizes ($d=0.701$ to $d=1.023$; $p=0.027$ to $p=0.00$). Conclusion: There appears to be an inverse relationship between emotion regulation and self-harm. The main recommendation from this review is that psychological interventions that focus on regulating emotions should be recommended for treating people who self-harm. The focus of future research should be on the basis of this relationship and on its clinical implications.

A Study of Influence: An Investigation into the connection formed by YouTubers and their following

Joseph Murphy, New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This thesis is situated in the discipline of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and contributes in the understanding of the popular online personalities known as YouTubers. These online personalities have become more influential to their following, which can sometimes be millions of people, over recent times. Thanks to their parent site, YouTube, they have been able to form connections with their fans resulting in brands seeking them out to help market their products. This influence leaves them with the ability to earn large amounts for themselves which is discussed within this thesis. This study is concerned with the level of influence. Therefore, this study is an investigation into the influence a YouTuber can have and also an investigation into the earning ability they can possess. This study focuses on both these topics gathering information from available academic literature, online sources and also an online survey which investigated the relationship between YouTubers and fans, traditional celebrities and fans and also societies interaction with YouTube itself. Based on the online survey carried out, the findings suggested that indeed these YouTubers have amassed large followings from their channels and turned their authentic connection with their viewers into an influence that has been proved stronger than connections with traditional celebrities. Brands have started to take note of this influence and have begun using YouTubers to a certain degree. They have promoted product on their channels resulting in positive marketing strategies. Moreover, it's clear that some people are still unaware of the influence of YouTubers and also unaware of the platform's stature overall. I further argue that more research can be done as a result of my thesis.



The social utility of marital bottom branding; legal rule or the result of non-legal factors?

Daniel O'Connell, Law Plus (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This presentation discusses two infamous cases in criminal law; that of *R v Brown* and *R v Wilson*. Both cases concerned acts of violence committed during sadomasochistic encounters with consenting 'victims' which resulted in criminal prosecution. All raised the defence of 'consent' and at first instance all of the various defendants were convicted. In *Brown* the parties concerned were homosexuals who engaged in various violent acts to satisfy their sexual libido and these acts resulted in actual bodily harm. In *Wilson*, the parties were husband and wife and the act complained of was that of Mr Wilson branding his initials on his wife's buttocks at her request, apparently as an act of love. On appeal to the House Of Lords the appellants in *Brown* had their convictions upheld on the basis that the House of Lords was 'not prepared to invent a defence of consent for sadomasochistic encounters which breed and glorify cruelty'. *Wilson* on the other hand had his conviction quashed by the Court Of Appeal where they found that Mr Wilsons act of branding his wife's buttocks with a hot knife with her consent was akin to tattooing and this was an act which had some social utility that should not be visited by the sanctions of the criminal law. *Brown* has been the subject of much academic criticism and the traditional view is that the decision was largely as a result of homophobia a non legal factor as opposed to any legal rule. The slightly later case of *Wilson* and his acquittal despite the apparent parallels between the two cases only added fuel to the fire. It was seen as evidence that the court viewed acts of violence committed between heterosexual couples as acceptable under the law and subject to the defence of consent but similar acts by homosexuals must result in convictions. Using the themes of American Realism I will propose an alternative hypothesis and attempt to identify an elusive non legal factor which may have influenced the Court Of Appeal in their decision not to apply the legal rule in *Wilson*s case but instead to strive to identify the social utility of marital bottom branding.

The Impact of Flow Theory on Language Learners' Intrinsic Motivation

Siobhan O'Donovan, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Motivation plays a key role in the mastery of a second language (L2), and numerous studies (Gardner 1985; Dörnyei 2005) have highlighted its importance for the successful language learner. While extrinsic factors – such as good job prospects – motivate many students in their second language acquisition (SLA), more internalised motivators – such as an inherent love and genuine enjoyment of the L2 and possession of a positive attitude towards SLA (Gardner 1985) – may foster more affective, long-term SLA motivation and make the overall learning process more enjoyable. Demotivation is a common factor contributing to a



significant discontinuation rate (Watts and Pickering 2005) among language learners, a trend which needs to be addressed. The concept of applying positive psychology to SLA is one on which limited research has been done, however it is certainly worth investigating. *Flow Theory* is a positive psychology philosophy linked to one's happiness, which embodies the optimal experience of enjoyment and involvement in a task felt by an individual (Csikszentmihalyi 1990), which helps them function at their best (Larson 1988). This study aims to bridge the gap between positive psychology and SLA by applying knowledge of Flow Theory to early language students in the University of Limerick who may well face fluctuating motivation and loss of enjoyment in their L2. Questionnaires measuring students' motivation were complemented with carefully moderated focus groups to explore the impact that knowledge of Flow Theory can have on the intrinsic motivation of the language learner; this yielded some positive results, particularly amongst second year students.

Type D personality is associated with blunted cardiovascular reactivity to acute psychological stress

Adam O'Riordan, Psychology and Sociology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Background: Type D personality has been consistently associated with adverse cardiovascular health. Further, physiological reactivity to stress may be an underlying mechanism facilitating this relationship. **Aim:** The aim of this study is to investigate physiological reactivity to acute psychological stress among type D and non-type D individuals, and also to investigate if this varies by gender. Finally, the association between type D subcomponents (social inhibition and negative affect) and reactivity will also be explored. **Methods:** The sample consisted of undergraduate students (59% Female) who complete a type D personality questionnaire, 51% were Type D (60% Female) and 49% were non-type D (58% female). Participants underwent a standardised stress testing protocol while having their cardiovascular responses monitored throughout. Cardiovascular measures including systolic blood pressure (SBP), diastolic blood pressure (DBP) and heart rate (HR) were recorded during baseline and stress task. **Results:** Type D personality was associated with DBP reactivity ($p = .017$) with Type Ds ($M = 9.27, SD = 4.7$) displaying lower DBP reactivity than non-type Ds ($M = 14.27, SD = 5.74$). Further, social inhibition was negatively correlated with both DBP ($r = -.43, p = .006$) and SBP ($r = -.33, p = .04$). **Conclusion:** It appears that type D individuals display blunted physiological reaction to stress, this blunted cardiovascular response may be a mechanism putting type Ds at risk of cardiovascular disease. Further, it appears that social inhibition may be the toxic component of type D personality



“Like don’t judge my accent before you judge me like” Accents, attitudes and the media representation of the Irish accent and regional accents within Ireland.

Karen O’Brien, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This project aims to investigate the representation of both the Irish accent and regional accents within Ireland in the media and the attitudes held towards these accents. In order to achieve this, attitudinal data were gathered from media discourse, including chat show interviews, comedy sketches and online discussion forums. Both films and TV series were examined to learn about the link between the use of certain accents and characterisation to uncover how they are represented. Such representations are important as they can contribute to creating a stereotype associated with these accents. From this, it was clear that the media uses already pre-conceived opinions of the people who speak in certain accents to aid characterisation.

Linguistic practice in refugee shelters / support-organisations involved in the oversight of refugees in Germany

Luke O’Dea, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The spike in immigration to Europe since 2015 and the large numbers of refugees now seeking asylum has raised questions surrounding their distribution and assimilation. The potential impact that such large groups of refugees could have on European economies and societies in general has become a hot-button issue among politicians of all backgrounds and ideologies in the last few years (Townsend 2015). In a European context, the refugee crisis evokes memories of the mass movement of people during WW2, and the resulting changes to Europe’s demographic makeup largely shaped the multicultural and multilingual societies to be found across the continent today (United Nations et al 2005). Germany is the European country that has received by far the most refugees, thus begging the question of how it plans to integrate close to a million refugees from vastly different languages and cultures. The complex nature of integration is such that the strong focus on economic and political matters sees many other facets of the process overlooked, with a more strategic commitment to providing linguistic capabilities and cultural sensitives in particular required for any meaningful contribution to the integration of refugees (Korinek & Maloney 2010). Based on survey responses from those involved in the care of refugees, this research project explores aspects of linguistic practice in refugee shelters/support-organisations throughout Germany and proposes possible linguistic recommendations and solutions to the more problematic areas of linguistic practice within such shelters / support-organisations.



Investigating the effect of student mobility programmes on the academic accomplishment of BBs Students

Adam O'Donovan, Economics & Mathematical Sciences (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The Erasmus programme is the most popular programme facilitating bilateral student mobility within Europe. Since 1987, the programme has experienced strong growth in the volume of students participating each year. This growth is forecast to continue as the programme widens its objectives and include many potential participants as a result of increased investment from the European Commission in accordance with their long-term economic strategy, Europe 2020. Research into benefits yielded by undergraduates who participate in student mobility programmes has principally focused on the intangible qualitative benefits, rather than the quantitative. This research project investigates the value of student mobility programmes by analysing the academic returns to participants in the form of increased QCA values. This project utilises historic academic data collected by the University of Limerick's internal Student Academic Administration pertaining to Bachelors of Business studies graduates for the period 2010–2016. Under observation was a population of 1722 non-mobile graduates and 118 mobile graduates. Empirical analysis utilised descriptive statistics, paired and independent samples t-tests, two-way ANOVA, OLS regression and propensity score matching statistical techniques. The results of the statistical analysis indicate that mobile students achieve a statistically significant increase in academic achievement due to participation in student mobility programmes. This increase is driven by graduates who had studied a language option as a minor.

OpenGL Network Visualisation

William O'Dwyer, Computer Systems (University of Limerick)

Abstract

NetvizGL is a C++ OpenGL application for the visualisation of network graphs. NetvizGL can draw networks according to a set of graph drawing algorithms. The graphs are rendered in real time and you can observe the changes the algorithm makes to the network. NetvizGL is a visual analytics tool that provides a highly interactive visual interface. It allows the user to add/remove colours and labels to vertices and edges as well as to export the rendered graph as either a PNG image or a vector graphics file. NetvizGL is aimed at a gap in the market for a data visualisation. It is a lightweight network visualisation application designed to be minimal, extensible and scalable.



A Real Woman: Depression, Anxiety and Hormone-Replacement Therapy in Transwomen

Mamobo Ogoro, BA Joint Honours (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The transgender community is a relatively new topic of interest in academia. Though research regarding this community is miniscule, studies show that many transgender people, in particular transwomen, are vulnerable to mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety. Societal obstacles such as violence, lack of social support and legal and medical invisibility may aggravate mental illnesses in the transgender community. However, research carried out on transgender individuals post-physical transition suggests that hormone replacement treatment (HRT) and sexual reassignment surgery (SRS) alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety due to gender affirmation, increased self-esteem and self-acceptance. In particular, studies show that hormone-treated transwomen report better mental health and quality of life, even though in other populations, feminisation drugs have had opposite outcomes. The present dissertation discusses in detail the possible factors which influence the fluctuation in mental health and recommends future areas of research which may be beneficial to researcher and the transgender community

Meaning and Magic: Flow and Meaning in Tabletop Gaming

Kevin O'Malley, Psychology and Sociology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

More and more people are electing to expend effort on playing games that are more like a part time job than relaxation (Yee, 2006). This research proposes that gaming is a form of elective labour rather than passive entertainment. As such we argue that enjoyment depends upon the degree of challenge (Lozzaro, 2014; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) and that, when player skill and task complexity align appropriately, this fosters a sense of meaning in life (Heine, Prouls & Vohs, 2006). To test this players were randomly assigned to play through predesigned puzzles based on a popular table-top game (Magic: The Gathering) that varied in their difficulty (complexity). Their pre-existing skill was measured and the meaning in life questionnaire was subsequently administered. A one way ANOVA showed a significant effect of complexity on enjoyment ($F(2, 422) = 3.97, p = .02, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .012$) indicating that mean player enjoyment increased as across the difficulty conditions. A Factorial MANOVA showed a significant interaction between player skill and task difficulty on enjoyment and the presence of meaning in life ($F(2, 278) = 5.974, p = .03, \text{Wilks' } \Lambda = .96, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$). Graphs indicate that the highest sense of meaning and enjoyment occur when participant skill and task demand align. This provides evidence for a "flow channel" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) and that "good" games are more experienced as more than just a pastime.



Head Pose Estimation using Microsoft Kinect v2.0

Enda O'Shea, Computer Systems (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The focus of this project was to develop a software system that used the Microsoft Kinect v2 sensor to capture a person's image with the purpose of correctly estimating the current head pose of the subject by comparison against a previously captured centralized image of their head. The plan was to use the Iterative Closest Point registration algorithm for the estimation process and for the results to be sufficiently accurate so that facial recognition techniques could later be applied to the data. This was to be achieved by using the Kinect's depth, infrared and colour sensors, its inbuilt joint detection system as well as using Point Cloud Libraries (PCL) provided by pointclouds.org. The data from the Kinect was to be formatted into individual points based on their x, y, z values and then passed to the registration algorithm for transformation. I chose to use Point Cloud Libraries (PCL) Interactive ICP algorithm to achieve the results as it would give both a 3D model of the registration and as well as the numerical fitness value through each iteration. This project aimed to optimize one step of the people recognition pipeline and make an important contribution to the Efficient Secure Access Control (ESAC) research project at Lero.

Emotioneering in Videogames

Adam O'Sullivan, BA New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

To examine the different forms of emotioneering used in videogame game design. Based on the original term by David Freeman, the different techniques of emotioneering will be amalgamated into five core groups and examined to discover which of these techniques are the most effective. These techniques will be tested by four task groups made up of three members each to play one of four chosen games to identify the different techniques and state how effective they are at generating emotion. A group discussion will be conducted to support and add to the data gathered by the questionnaire. This thesis is broken into seven chapters, Introduction, literary review, method, analysis, results/discussion, reflection/opinion and conclusion/recommendations. The content of these chapters included, a background on the term 'Emotioneering' and videogames as a form of media, an in depth analysis of Freemans 32 categories of emotioneering as well as a breakdown of each into the five core categories of emotioneering, a description of the methods used in conducting a group discussion and creating a survey, the recorded results of each reported objectively, a conclusion of the thesis and recommendations for game developers based on what was discovered in this study. The results of the test found that each emotioneering technique effects a game differently and cannot stand alone as a sole contributor to a games success. To create emotion in games it was shown in this study that a balance must be found between two or more of the techniques, working together and complementing each other to create an emotionally engaging video game



Our experience as novice researchers

Emily Pochkhanavala, Fiona O'Sullivan & Laoise McMahon, supported by Deirdre Munro and Mairead Moloney (University of Limerick)

Abstract

We are 20 female first year UL BSc midwifery students, a mixture of ages & experiences. First semester is a challenging journey for students, we learn to navigate college life, each other, modules and exams. Some of us entered UL from leaving cert., others are mature students and some bring lived experience of childbirth into our classroom. Our introduction to midwifery module is facilitated by Deirdre Munro, a midwife passionate about research. She shared her passion and nurtured our understanding of research in a practical way. We learned to search literature, supported by Liz Dore (Librarian) and Michael Smalle (Librarian 1st year student engagement). Deirdre encouraged us to work in small groups and challenged us to write on a topic of choice. Our group needed to interconnect. Assessment / Innovation We decided to research colostrum and investigated the literature. Assigned small groups focused on different areas: Colostrum definition, international, national and local research of Colostrum. We agreed a summary together. We reflected and reviewed each group's submissions in class with Deirdre and emailed each group work to Deirdre for feedback. We decided to submit to a journal. Deirdre invited Mairead Moloney (lecturer) to help edit our paper to keep within the word count. Our paper was accepted and published in the World of Irish Nursing and Midwifery journal in our first semester- just in time for Christmas!

Existential themes in extraordinary tales: Researching the manifestation of themes of Sartrean existentialism in the short stories of Julio Cortázar

Gráinne Pyke, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This research explores how the 20th century existentialist philosophy of Jean Paul Sartre can be used to offer an interpretation of magic realist author, Julio Cortázar's, early short stories. Firstly, the project establishes the fundamental principles of the philosophy. Secondly, these are used to conduct a thematic analysis of selected stories. Thirdly, the manifestation of these themes is detailed, and finally, recommendations are offered as to how further develop this research and apply it in a pedagogic context. The research focuses on four short stories from Cortázar's earliest collections, *Bestiario* (1951) and *Final del juego* (1956). Analyses have been conducted thematically, and the findings suggest a valid expression of Sartrean existentialism in the work. Interpreting the themes requires recognition of the powerful metaphoric value of the stories. The results show that the protagonists of the stories are subject to intense anguish as they come to realise the truth of existence. Ultimately, they are all consumed by this truth and reprieved from a life of bad faith to one condemned to freedom. Considering the research results, applying the theories of Sartre to Cortázarian stories holds value



for students of Hispanic literature. In the researcher's case, it certainly offered an interpretation of work that was previously perplexing.

Sobering but serene: Dark Tourism in the city of Nagasaki

Áine Reilly, Applied Languages (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This research was undertaken at undergraduate level and investigates the relevance of the city of Nagasaki in Japan as a dark tourism site. Dark tourism is a phenomenon which has recently gained interest, whereby visitors travel to sites which are associated with death and suffering. While a significant amount of study has been done on sites such as the Auschwitz Birkenau concentration camp in Poland as a dark tourism site, there has been no study on Nagasaki as a dark tourism city. This study endeavours to highlight the relevance of the city of Nagasaki as a dark tourism site. As Nagasaki is one of the two cities which were victims of nuclear war, it is normally associated with this dark history. However, Nagasaki often comes second to its sister site at Hiroshima, and is rarely mentioned without the latter. While Nagasaki is known for its atomic bomb related past, the city also possesses a dark past in relation to the persecution of Christians throughout the 15th century. This study analyses a number of English-speaking and Japanese TripAdvisor user reviews posted on five of Nagasaki's top tourism sites, which include the Atomic Bomb Museum, Glover Garden, the 26 Martyrs Museum, Oura Catholic Church and Dejima. This study analyses the history of dark tourism, as well as the Japanese and Nagasaki-specific issues which relate to the dark tourism phenomenon. The findings in this study indicate that visitors to Nagasaki possess a keen interest in the city's historical significance, and its dark past.

An Analysis Of Civilian Interactions With Media Coverage Of The 'Repeal The 8th' Movement

Myles Sammon, Emma Douglas & Frank Harnett, Psychology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

This paper examines discourse on civilian interactions with media coverage of the "Repeal the 8th" movement in Ireland, on women's reproductive rights. Data were collected on 30 randomly selected dates over a 90 day period (15/11/2016 to 15/02/2017) from the comment sections of three major Irish newspaper websites. Using discursive methods, it was found that 1) different categorizations such as "foetus" versus "unborn child" were used to warrant different abortion rights; 2) different categorizations of women were used to delegitimize their right to bodily autonomy and 3) religious institutions' use of moral authority was upheld or undermined in negotiating warrants for abortion rights. These findings show that negotiation of



rights centrally involves constructions of relevant agents, agencies and institutions. These are discussed in relation to broader social psychological understandings of rights and exclusion.

The development of physics and chemistry tutorials in the form of online screencasts with the purpose of aiding the study of first year UL students

Eoin Shiel, Science Education with Physics and Chemistry (University of Limerick)

Abstract

The aim of this study was to identify specific topics and concepts in both first-year physics and chemistry introductory modules that students find difficult to understand. Using relevant literature on common physics and chemistry misconceptions, and through interviews with University of Limerick lecturers and tutors, I could identify reoccurring common misconceptions that continuously provide difficulty for first year science students. I then designed a series of 6 screencasts, each focusing on a specific topic, that are to be uploaded onto the University of Limerick's Science Learning Centre to be used by students as online study aids. A screencast is a video of movement on a computer screen, together with audio narration and can be used to guide learners through a systematic analysis of difficult areas of study. It is used to emulate a one on one experience between a subject expert and student. There are 3 videos/screencasts focusing on specific chemistry concepts and 3 on specific physics concepts, each about 10 minutes long. Feedback on the quality of the completed screencasts is then given by a select number of science students and lectures to allow for changes to be made.

An investigation of the Mentor Support Programmes available to Women in STEM²D Courses in Ireland

Jessica Silva, Kristine Surat, Muireann Aherne & Jenna Bromel, School of Engineering (Biomedical, Chemical and Biochemical (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Our main objective was to research how peer mentoring can be helpful to young women in STEM²D courses. Having a peer mentor for females in STEM²D subjects gives females insights into lessons learned and experiences of what they have gone through as undergraduates themselves and in early years of their working career. We conducted our study by addressing the key areas related to our research topic. Our two research questions were: 1. Are mentor programmes available to women in STEM²D related courses in any of the seven universities in Ireland? 2. What is the effect of mentor support on females studying STEM²D related subjects at university level? We propose to present our findings and recommendations based on our research question



Chemical properties of hydrochars

Shannon Slattery, Industrial Biochemistry (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Poultry manure (PM) has the benefits of increasing soil fertility, but there has been environmental concerns about its over application on agricultural sites which may result in human and animal health risks. These risks related to high pathogen and toxicity (including heavy metals, phosphors and chlorine content) have been alleviated to some extent by EU regulations. A new method called hydrothermal carbonisation (HTC) of conversion of PM to hydrochar (HC) may offer a solution to these issues by reducing the accumulation of waste and staying within EU limits. In this study, HTC of PM was carried out to evaluate the impact of treatment temperature on the properties of HC. HTC typically is performed in water at moderate temperatures between 180 and 260 °C and with residence times from 5 min to several hours under self-generated pressures above 1 MPa. During HTC processing, the PM undergoes a number of complex chemical reactions including hydrolysis, dehydration, decarboxylation and recondensation reactions. Disposal technology for animal by product has clearly indicated that HTC process has the capability to covert animal by-products into combustible gases, bio-oils and solid products the HC. Accordingly, HTC is being used to convert PM into useful products while addressing compliance with environmental emission norms. The HC, which has been proposed as a soil amendment and as a substrate for environmental remediation, is carbon and energy-dense. The properties of the HC depend on the composition and conditions of the process such as treatment temperature, residence time, pH, etc. Investigation the properties of the HC, such as chemical properties and energy content, provides insight to the potential applications of the produced HC.

The Design, Implementation and Evaluation of a Lesson Unit for the Integration of Mathematics into Transition Year Science

Elizabeth Storey, BSc (Education) in Physics and Chemistry (University of Limerick)

Abstract

I wanted to carry out this research project as it was very relevant to my undergraduate degree: BSc (Education) in Physics and Chemistry. The work involved in the study incorporated both the scientific and educational aspects of my degree. This study was a case study involving Transition Year students and their teachers (Yin 1994). The study was carried out in a real-life school setting. The researcher was on School Placement over a 10-week period from September to December 2016. It was during this 10-week period that the main aims of the study were implemented. These includes the design, development, implementation and evaluation of a lesson unit which integrated mathematics in science. One of the main aims of the study was to incorporate an 'integrated approach to learning in preference to a single-subject style of teaching and learning' (Cohen et. al 2007, p. 297).



The study was carried out in 3 phases. Phase 1 was concerned with the design and development of the integrated lesson unit. This was done through teacher input and drawing from literary theory. Phase 2 was interested in the implementation of the integrated lesson unit and the collection of data. Phase 3 focused on the analysis of the collected data. This was mainly done qualitative analysis and coding (Cohen et al 2007).

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A Study into Video Games Qualifying as an Art Form

Enda Treacy, BA New Media and English (University of Limerick)

Abstract

For my research I have chosen to take a philosophical and analytical exploration into the topic of video gaming and whether it can, and ultimately succeeds in, being identified as a form of artistic expression. The argument of video gaming viewed as an art form has long been a controversial topic in the entertainment community and industry. To this day, opinions remain divided amongst critics and scholars with many identifying the key issues such as player involvement or participation, the competitive nature of gaming, and an inability to place gaming within established artistic qualifications as core reasons behind its expulsion from artistic status.

Gaming art, or gaming as a medium of art is currently an interest topic due to its highly debated nature at present. Like art itself, critics and scholars have both struggled to give proper qualification toward the medium—some feel digital artistry is the next evolution in artistic possibility, while others abide by the older, more dated art theories and feel games (or digital narratives) have no place amongst the artistic greats such as literature, music or painting. In an interesting retrospective; the film industry was once considered illegible of being defined as art—today, cinema has produced some of the most noteworthy films and critical artistic objects of the twentieth century. My research in the field of gaming, aims to show that digital media is one the course of accomplishing the very same.



Problem Solving Approaches and Associated Cognitive Load Induced by Psychometric Tests of Spatial Ability

David White, Materials and Architectural Technology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Spatial ability is strongly linked with STEM education (Uttal and Cohen 2012) as students are regularly required to create and manipulate cognitive models. The study focuses on examining the potential impact that the nature of stimuli, abstract or familiar, and level of cognitive attainment has on mental effort and resulting problem solving strategies suggesting that the findings of this study have the potential to positively impact pedagogical practices in STEM. The PSVT:R and a pictorial version of the PSVT:R were utilised during this study. The aim of the study is to analyse whether having an understanding of the geometry reduces cognitive load as the necessity to construct cognitive models may be alleviated due to the familiarity of the stimuli. As pupil dilation has been identified as an indicator of cognitive load, eye tracking technology was employed during this study (Tsukahara et al. 2016). Saccades and fixations were recorded during testing to develop an understanding of how participants approached solving the tasks and pupil dilation was measured to illustrate the mental effort exerted for each task. The findings of this study have implications for task design in STEM education. Having a greater understanding on how extraneous cognitive load can be alleviated by adjusting the nature of a task presents the opportunity for students to utilise more cognitive resources in the learning process. Coupled with a greater understanding of approaches students take to solving a problem, it is envisioned that this study has the potential to inform pedagogical practices within the discipline.

Reference List

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Mastery and Locus of Control: Implications for Retention in Benzodiazepine Withdrawal Programme

Alanna Wurm, Psychology (University of Limerick)

Abstract

Background and Aims: Recent years have seen increases in both benzodiazepine prescriptions and benzodiazepine dependency. Withdrawal is psychologically challenging, and is often unsuccessful. Researchers note the importance of users' self-beliefs to their detox outcomes. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship of two self-beliefs, mastery and drug related locus of control, to individuals' benzodiazepine use, and how these self-beliefs predict retention in a benzodiazepine detox programme. **Methods:** Participants enrolled in a benzodiazepine detox programme will complete self-report measures of mastery, drug related locus of control, motivation for benzodiazepine use, and state anxiety. Data will also be collected from participants' case files on comorbidity, length of benzodiazepine use, frequency of use, and length of time spent in the detox programme. Cross-sectional data will be analysed using correlations and multiple regression. **Results and Conclusions:** It is hoped that results will identify how individuals' sense of control and mastery are related to their benzodiazepine use, whether these characteristics change over time, and how they predict retention in a benzodiazepine detox programme. Going forward, data will be collected at two additional time points and longitudinal analysis will be performed to assess whether engagement with detox services predicts change in these self-beliefs, decreased anxiety, and successful detox.

Investigating Dance Imagery in Performance

Kathy Young, BA Voice and Dance (University of Limerick)

Abstract

My research title is "An investigation of Audience and Performers Perspectives on Imagery in Performance." This research is arts practice based, and aims to find how people obtain information from one person to the other through the use of their movement. I am investigating how both the performers and the audience receive any messages or meanings from other people. To gather this information, I will host a performance that is audience participation based. This is to allow the performers to also find messages from the movement of the audience. I am interested to see if the audience will receive any images or emotions that the performers will portray through their movement. This will become evident in the surveys that will be completed after the performance. This method is used to view their opinions and to compare them with my choreographic methods. This is also how I will gather most of my information and answers to my research question. I will ask the performing participants for interviews to gather further information about their rehearsal and performance experience with imagery from this arts practice. In preparation for this performance, I have researched imagery, emotions, and audience participation literature to broaden my understanding of dance communication and previous research practices. Using the literature as a basis, I



developed different improvisation and choreographic methods to teach my performing participants with the aim to apply them in the performance. I also chose a theme for the performance that has allowed me to create relating choreography and small tasks for each individual participant to complete. Through the information gathered from the performance and the literature, I hope to come to a conclusion and better understanding of dance communication.

Writing for The Nation, 1842-48

Mareike Erika Zackariat, English and History (University of Limerick)

Abstract

On 21 February 1849, during his trial, Charles Gavan Duffy (1816 –1903), leader of the Young Ireland movement from 1842 to 1849 and editor of *The Nation* in the period 1842 to 1848, was accused of treason. Among the evidence presented was a nationalist, radical article, which he had supposedly written the year before. The article was entitled 'Jacta Alea Est' ('The die is cast'). Little did the observers in the court main hall and on the public gallery in Dublin know what they were about to witness. When the article was attributed to Duffy and accusations were made, a young woman stood up in the gallery of the Courthouse, avowing the authorship of the same: 'I am the criminal who, as the author of the article that had just been read, should be in the dock. Any blame in respect of it belongs to me.'³ This woman was Jane Francesca Elgee (1827-1896), better known as Lady Wilde or as 'Speranza of *The Nation*'. The following project evaluates women writers and women's political involvement in early-nineteenth century Ireland. It discusses the involvement of women in the Young Ireland movement and its journal *The Nation*, including Jane Francesca Elgee, whose article led to the closure of the journal in July 1848. The chief focus lies on the women writers, their circumstances and motivations.

³ Horace Wyndham, *Speranza: A Biography of Lady Wilde* (London, 1951), p.37.



Notes





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