The Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at UL are convening a One Day Postgraduate Conference on Thursday May 19th 2016.

The conference will showcase work by our research postgraduates.

Venue: Millstream Common Room, UL, 8.30am to 4.30pm.

AHSS 2016
POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE
CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

All inquiries to Niamh.Lenahan@ul.ie

The conference is free to attend and refreshments including lunch will be provided.

Follow AHSS on Twitter @ahssul for updates
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Thanks to the following for their help with organizing this event:

Dr. Niamh Lenahan
Jess Beeley
Claire Ryan
Professor Eoin Devereux ADR
Sean Whitney (Conference Assistant)
UL Print Room
# AHSS Postgraduate Conference 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30am</td>
<td>Registration &amp; Breakfast in the Millstream Common Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am</td>
<td>Opening Address: Dr. Mary Shire, Vice President of Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Panel 1**
*Culture & Communication*
- 9.15-10.15am
- 3 Papers
- Chair: Hope Davidson
- Caron Barry (C&C)
- Kathryn Hayes (C&C)
- Iva Yates (C&C)

**Panel 2**
*Department of History*
- 10.15-11.15am
- 3 Papers
- Chair: Una Clancy
- Catriona Delany (History)
- John Harrington (History)
- Gerald Maher (History)
- Sean Whitney (History)

**COFFEE BREAK**

**Panel 3**
*Modern Languages & Applied Linguistics*
- 11.30am-12.30pm
- 3 Papers
- Chair: Joanna Baumgart
- Muireann Prendergast (MLAL)
- Anais Guittonny (MLAL)
- Yanuar Dwi Prastyo (MLAL)

**LUNCH BREAK**

**Panel 4**
*Law*
- 1.30pm-2.15pm
- 2 Papers
- Chair: Majka Ryan
- Hope Davidson (Law)
- Steven Strauss Walsh (Law)

**Panel 5**
*Modern Languages & Applied Linguistics*
- 2.15pm-3pm
- 2 Papers
- Chair: Muireann Prendergast
- Niall Curry (MLAL)
- Steven Byrne (MLAL)

**CLOSE OF CONFERENCE**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSTER #</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 1</td>
<td>Margaret Grene</td>
<td>Exploring the effectiveness of using plain English to promote health literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 2</td>
<td>Elaine Walsh</td>
<td>Investigating the effectiveness of the written assessment brief in communicating assessment requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 3</td>
<td>Pam Wall</td>
<td>Web communication: establishing the importance of communication-specific heuristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 4</td>
<td>Mansour Alammar</td>
<td>The Effectiveness of Group Work vs. Individual Writing: A Case Study to Compare Group Work with Individual Writing in Class to Improve Essay Writing for Male Saudi ESL Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 5</td>
<td>Mazin Al-Hilu</td>
<td>Complimenting Behaviour in Native Speakers of English and Iraqi Arabic: A Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 6</td>
<td>Yasser Aljuhney</td>
<td>Investigating the Impact of E-learning Management System (System Design and User Interface) on teaching methods used by Faculty Members. An Empirical Study on Najran University (NU) and University of Limerick (UL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 7</td>
<td>Mohammad Alolayan</td>
<td>The Effectiveness of Watching Subtitled Films on Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition: A Case Study on second year EFL students at Onaizah Community College, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 8</td>
<td>Sana Hussein</td>
<td>Social Media as an autonomous learning Tool of English among Foreign Language Learners in Libya: Opportunities and Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 9</td>
<td>Seán O’Connell</td>
<td>A presentation of the precursor study to an investigation into a phonologically-based and speech therapy-informed approach to pronunciation teaching: its implementation in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classroom and an evaluation of its effectiveness on learner and teacher experience and outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 10</td>
<td>John Hogan</td>
<td>Generalised Trust and the Design of the Common African Defence and Security Policy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 11</td>
<td>Orla Banks</td>
<td>Strategic planning in Irish universities – creating public value or bowing to the demands of the market?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 12</td>
<td>Zach Roche</td>
<td>Life after debt: the engagement and non-engagement of debtors with the insolvency service of Ireland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTER 13</td>
<td>Majka Ryan</td>
<td>Theorising my research findings: The process of conceptualising the impact of discretionary policy on the work of social welfare decision-makers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Little attention has been paid to collaborative learning to improve learners’ essay writing in the Saudi universities. Hence, the current study aimed to examine the extent to which cooperative learning, as opposed to individual work in class, is useful in improving learners’ essay writing.

This research study focuses on the role of group work in class to improve learners’ essay writing. The main focus is (1) to investigate to what extent group work is more or less significant than the individual work to improve essay writing in class, (2) to establish L2 learners’ perspectives on working as individuals, as opposed to working as a group to improve essay writing, (3) to investigate if group work reduces common errors in essay writing, compared to individual writing, and (4) to see if there are barriers that negatively affect group work.

The researcher chose 16 L2 male students in level 3 at Imam University, College of Languages and Translation in Saudi Arabia.

To collect the study data, the researcher utilizes four researcher-made instruments: an EFL essay writing test, error correction writing test, an open/ended question questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews.

The data was collected from the participants, using a mixed methods technique that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis in unique treatment.

The findings of this study are expected to provide empirical data, regarding the effectiveness of instructional methodologies (group versus individual work) and the need for additional research.

KEYWORDS:

- group work, individual work, essay writing test, errors correction test, qualitative and quantitative analysis, Level 3 male learners
ABSTRACT

Speech Acts are defined as those acts produced while saying words. One of these expressive speech acts that are widely used in everyday interaction to establish and maintain rapport between interlocutors is complimenting (Holmes, 1986). This speech act noticeably varies from one language to another. To be expressed and responded to suitably, compliments require two types of competence, i.e., linguistic and pragmatic. That is why sometimes speakers of English might view the manner in which Arabic speakers express compliments as rude (or offensive). Such a misunderstanding could be ascribed to a discrepancy in the cultural norms of the two cultures (Wierzbicka, 2003; Ting-Toomy, 2005). The present research aims to pinpoint the points of convergence/divergence between the two languages in the production of the speech act under inquiry.

To achieve its aims, the current research study has utilized mixed-methods design (Triangulation) with two phases of data collection: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative phase involves a questionnaire in the form of discourse completion task (DCT), while the qualitative phase comprises retrospective interviews and content analysis of a conversational textbook taught at most departments of English, at Iraqi universities. The purpose behind employing the qualitative tools is to explain and validate the results obtained by the DCT. Questionnaire participants include undergraduate students (n=50) recruited from the University of Limerick for the academic year 2015-2016, and another (50) Iraqi Arabic undergraduates from Wasit University (Iraq).

It is hoped that the results of the present study will fill a lacuna in cross-cultural pragmatics research as far as complimenting behaviour is concerned. The practical findings of this study have the potential to benefit English language teachers, ESL/EFL curriculum designers and textbook writers.
ABSTRACT

The problem of this study addresses the lack of knowledge about how much of an impact the design and user interface of learning management systems (LMSs) like Blackboard or Sulis can have on the pedagogical performance of staff members at NU and UL regarding teaching method used. The independent variables in the study are the system design and user interface provided by Blackboard and Sulis. The dependent variable is teaching methods used by teachers. In the field of Human-Computer Interaction, the interviews are considered as the most popular method. However, the researcher believes that the interviews cannot provide enough evidence to answer the research questions. Therefore, the present study has relied on Mixed-methods research design. The researcher had interviewed 23 lecturers from different colleges on both sides of the investigation area whether in Ireland or Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the study has received the responses from 248 lecturers in both sides of research area regarding the questionnaires which had been administered online. From analysing the data which came from the interviews as well as the surveys, the study has enough evidence to pinpoint the points of weaknesses and strengths regarding the LMSs system in terms of Design and user interface. Additionally, the impact of Design and user interface of LMSs on teaching method used by teachers has been investigated. The poster contains five parts namely: Study objectives, Study importance, Method of Research, Study design and the Result up to date.
ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate whether watching movies in the English language classroom can improve the EFL learners’ vocabulary acquisition, compared to the traditional methods of passage reading, passage scanning, passage skimming, word list memorization, translation, etc, that are prevalent nowadays in vocabulary teaching classroom and propagated in most of the available vocabulary/reading textbooks. In addition, the study explores the vast range of possible language activities and tasks that can be based on watching subtitled movies. Additionally, the study will attempt to identify areas where an involvement could substantially improve the learners’ ability to acquire vocabulary in a semi-authentic manner. Furthermore, being in an interactive environment could help the learning process to be achieved. Lastly, the study aims to introduce a module on vocabulary acquisition through watching subtitled movies, which may be integrated within the EFL syllabus. The study will be applied on Saudi EFL students at university of Qassim, Saudi Arabia. Data will be collected from experimental and control students via watching subtitled films. There will be three instruments used in this study. They are, profiling questionnaire, pre-test and post-test, and Interviews. Results will reveal significant differences between the experimental and control groups in regards of using subtitles films in second language vocabulary acquisition.
Poster Title: Strategic planning in Irish universities – creating public value or bowing to the demands of the market?

ABSTRACT:

Strategic planning has become a cornerstone of the management of higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide, largely in response to an external environment that is exerting increased pressure on the sector (Lillis and Lynch 2013). Changes to the funding model of the higher education system across Europe are being implemented and linked to the economic development agenda as HEIs are being recognised as key actors in the economic and societal recovery from the recent recession.

Irish universities are increasingly focused on assessing and meeting the needs of the market in terms of securing funding, recruiting students and enhancing their reputation. This is articulated in the objectives of their strategic plans. It is contested however, whether what has sometimes been characterised as a neoliberal or New Public Management (NPM) approach to strategic planning generates a sufficiently broad, education oriented and sustainable university model or whether it instead produces narrower, specialised and short term outputs designed to meet the changing needs of the market. As a result, some question whether a different approach to strategic planning is required or merited.

To situate this theme the research will examine the main public sector management theories and how they have evolved along a continuum of political, economic and social development over the last half century and how this has been reflected in Irish public administration and in the management of Irish higher education.

This research will examine the development of approaches to planning and strategy development taken over the last 20 years by Irish universities and will assess whether they are concerned with meeting more narrow market oriented goals rather than reflecting a deeper appreciation of education as a public value. It will further explore where there is a perceived need and potential to expand planning horizons to encompass a more academically liberated orientation.

REFERENCES:

Paper Title: “Yeats’s Hellenic Vision of Ireland”

ABSTRACT:

This paper will examine the idealistic and utopian vision of Ireland created by Yeats throughout his literary career. In particular this paper will focus on the Hellenic aspects of this vision and the ways in which Yeats conflated ancient Greek mythology with ancient Irish mythology in order to create an image of an Ireland that was once both spiritually and aesthetically aware and could be so again. In ancient Greece, Yeats found the perfect balance of art, spirit and life, all working towards a common end, and in harmony with the immediate natural environment. Yeats saw the possibilities for this kind of spiritually fulfilling life in Ireland, through the richness of her ancient culture. By aligning Celtic tradition with Hellenic tradition, Yeats gave ancient Ireland the same high cultural status as classical Greece in a global historical context.

This paper builds on Seamus Deane’s famous statement in his essay “Yeats and the idea of Revolution”, that for Yeats Ireland was a vestigial Greece in a sternly Roman world, and highlights why for Yeats Celtic Ireland and Hellenic Greece were so compatible. This paper will examine a selection of Yeats’s poetry from different eras of his life in order to show how this vision of Ireland never faded in his imagination. The foregrounding of imagination is furthermore an important aspect in Yeats’s utopian Graeco-Celtic Ireland and the function and possibilities allowed by imaginative spaces will jointly be considered throughout the essay.
Paper Title: ‘Attitudes towards the Catalan Language: An Investigation of Young People’s Attitudes towards Catalan’

ABSTRACT

The Catalan language has been studied from a wide range of perspectives by scholars of sociolinguistics and related strands. González-Riaño et al. (2013) note that Catalonia has been the focus of systematic research into language attitudes since the late 1970s, when studies on language attitudes in Catalonia were first carried out. Since then a range of different studies examining language attitudes have been carried out in Catalonia (see e.g. Huguet Canalís and Llurda 2001; Huguet Canalís and Suïls 1997; Newman, Trenchs-Parera and Ng 2008; Rojo Robas, Huguet Canalís and Janés Carulla 2005 and Woolard 1984, 1989, 2009).

In Catalonia, Catalan and Spanish coexist daily, but the knowledge and use of the Catalan language differ considerably and as Lasagabaster and Huguet (2007) point out, language attitude research is of particular interest in regions where two or more languages are in contact. This research aims to explore the attitudes towards Catalan in Catalonia today.

Since the mid-2000s, the question of self-government has become an increasingly salient issue in Catalonia. As Woolard and Gahng (1990) point out, political change is the most significant feature of the social context that enables the creation of new sociolinguistic meanings. Language attitudes cannot be detached from the social and political context in which language is used (Cameron 1992). This is a point which is reiterated by Dorian (1993) who stresses that all arguments about languages are political in nature since languages are inevitably intertwined with political positions.

The junction between these two concerns; language attitudes and views on Catalan independence, is where this paper is located. The main objective of this paper is to highlight the importance of language attitude research, with particular reference to the Catalan language. Furthermore this paper sets out to illustrate that language attitudes are not static but instead they are in a constant state of transition and fluctuation and are shaped by wider social and political forces.
Paper Title: Contrastive studies of academic writing: the current state of the art and future directions.

Academic writing is of major interest in applied linguistics with researchers recognising the dialogic nature of academic writing and the relevance of reader-writer interaction. Generally, research on academic writing has mainly focused on English, yet there is a growing interest on comparative research which usually compares English and another language. Such research studies the similarities and differences between two languages and is part of what is known as contrastive linguistics. Contrastive linguistics came to prominence in the 1940s following Fries (1945) view that a second language could be learned more easily upon identifying similarities and differences between first and second languages where the differences indicate what is more difficult to learn. This idea still stands today; however, it has undergone significant advancements. My thesis, ‘Reader engagement in academic research texts: A corpus-based contrastive analysis of questions and reader pronouns in Economics research articles in English, French and Spanish’, builds on this advancement from traditional approaches in contrastive linguistics to the current corpus-based, or technology based, contrastive analysis and focuses on three languages.

The aim of this paper is to illustrate how my research sits on the precipice of current contrastive linguistic research. Firstly both the background and the current state of the art in contrastive linguistics will be considered. Following that, this paper illustrates the use of corpus-based contrastive analysis in the study of the dialogic nature of research articles by drawing on examples of reader pronouns such as ‘we’ or ‘us’ from my research. Finally, the future directions in the fields of academic writing and contrastive linguistics will be considered and the position of my research therein.

Paper Title: The new Irish capacity legislation – what will it do? And what will it not do?

The new Irish capacity legislation, the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015, has been eagerly awaited both nationally and internationally. Nationally this is because the legislation governing capacity or incapacity, the Lunacy Regulation (Ireland) Act 1871, is plainly outdated and indeed reflects a time when ‘our understanding of mental capacity was different, our treatment of the vulnerable was harsher and our recognition of fundamental rights was narrower.’ Internationally particular focus has been on how we would draft our legislation in order to comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006, which we have committed to ratifying, and which mandates not the protection but the participation of ‘vulnerable’ people in decision-making processes concerning themselves.

Our new legislation, when operative, will be a significant piece of legislation. Its stated aim is to reform the law and to provide a modern statutory framework that supports decision-making by adults and enables them to retain the greatest amount of autonomy possible in situations where they lack or may shortly lack capacity. This paper aims to provide a guide through the current or existing legal framework and to detail in what ways this new piece of legislation will affect positive change for people who have difficulties in making decisions for themselves, both now and in to the future. It will also indicate where the Act falls short and what issues it fails to address, and indeed whom will remain untouched by it. Since the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in England and Wales has been operative for ten years now, useful comparison can be made with it and the ADMCA 2015 and some of the differences and potential pitfalls can be drawn out.
Paper Title: ‘No honours, riches, pomp or power’: financing the denominational secondary school, 1940-58

Following the establishment of the Department of Education in 1924, the principle of state funded education was introduced in Ireland which remains in place today. The Intermediate Education (Amendment) Act, 1924, abolished the traditional payment by results system whereby the government awarded money to secondary schools based on their success at state examinations. Under the new Act, the intermediate and leaving certificate examinations were established and financial aid from the government was henceforth to be provided by means of a capitation grant per pupil. During the period 1940-58 the capitation grant awarded to school managers did not exceed £10 for each recognised pupil. In addition to the capitation grant, the Department of Education also provided incremental salaries of up to £200 for recognised secondary school teachers. In 1940 there were fourteen Presentation secondary schools in receipt of the capitation grant and incremental salary. By 1958 this number had increased to thirty-four. Nonetheless, while the Department of Education offered capitation and incremental salaries the reality was that in many cases these sums were insufficient and did not meet the basic needs of the school. As a result, religious congregations, such as the Presentation Sisters, often had to develop alternative forms of income in order to support their schools.

Based on official archives and those of the Presentation order along with other sources including oral history, the paper examines firstly, how the Presentation Sisters funded their secondary schools and secondly, the financial contribution of the wider lay community to second-level education. It argues that during a period of limited state investment in education, the business acumen of religious teaching congregations played an integral part in ensuring that the post-primary school sector was both financially stable and viable.
Paper Title: Student Teachers’ Perceptions on the Application of Cooperative Learning in Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study, as part of PhD Research on the effects of cooperative learning in improving student teachers’ communicative competence and motivation in Indonesia, is aimed to explore the student teachers’ perceptions on the application of cooperative learning in Indonesian English classroom. Forty seven second-year English student teachers of a private teacher training and education institute in Indonesia participated in a 14-weeks speaking class using cooperative learning. Data were collected through questionnaires in pre- and post-treatment and followed by semi-structured group interview to 6 students at the end of the study. Questionnaire data analysis indicates positive changes in participants’ perception towards the application of cooperative learning in Indonesian English classroom. In addition, thematic analysis on the interview data reveals some strengths and drawbacks of the application of cooperative learning in the present study as well as suggestions on the future adaptation of cooperative learning in Indonesian English classrooms.
Plain English is a style of presenting information that helps readers understand it the first time they read it. The Plain English movement forms part of a wider campaign, known globally as the Plain Language movement, and the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) champions the promotion of Plain English in organizations and government bodies in Ireland. NALA also promotes health literacy in Ireland, and they endorse the USA Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the Department of Health and Human Services definition of health literacy, because it emphasises the dual responsibility for health literacy—that is, the health care professional providing health information and the individual seeking health information. (Health Service Executive and NALA, 2009)

“Health literacy emerges when the expectations, preferences and skills of individuals seeking health information and services meet the expectations, preferences and skills of those providing information and services.” (IOM, 2004)

As a simple and clear writing style, plain English could play a strategic role in the promotion of health literacy in Ireland. We need to understand the process better from both sides—the healthcare professionals providing the information and services and the information users seeking health information and services. With the healthcare professional in mind, trainee General Practitioners (GPs) will be invited to participate in a targeted needs assessment to establish if the trainee GPs feel that health literacy is important, if they routinely consider health literacy in patient care and if they feel they have the knowledge, familiarity, and confidence to communicate with patients who may have low health literacy. With the health information user in mind, user testing with health information documentation will be conducted with the help of the National Adult Literacy Agency.

REFERENCES:


Paper Title: The question of women’s autonomy in eighteen-century French gynocentered utopias

I would like to use the opportunity of this conference to present initial developments in my research project and share my main interrogations, some points of my work that I am trying to grasp at the moment, and some of my difficulties. The basic framework of my topic is the literary world of the eighteenth century in France. Specifically, I am focusing on a peculiar type of utopia which appears precisely at that time. If it is singular it is because of the issues the authors raise by the means of the utopian process. The question of women’s autonomy appears as the main concern for these male authors. Is it possible for female autonomy to occur in the margins of male dominated community? These utopias imagine independent female societies built on the model of the mythical figure of the Amazon. Thereby, they show that it is an “unnatural” project which is going to wreak havoc and despair. Furthermore, they focus on providing a standard of behaviour that women must follow in order to maintain order and happiness in existing society. My chief concern is then to shift this idea of autonomy which is really new to this area in France. First of all, I need to find out where this new desire comes from. A deep understanding of all political and economic modifications of this century is necessary in order to grasp repercussions on people’s behaviour and mentality. Then, I must identify by what means this desire is expressed by women throughout the century in order to understand why we got this reaction from male authors. I need to understand as well, what consequences this reality will cause in man-women relationship. Answers to all of these questions would be necessary to understand what type of utopian process these authors created. This is the question that I am going to focus on and explore in my thesis.
Paper Title: Canals network for prosperity and conduit for the spread of republicanism and revolution.

The Industrial Revolution almost overnight turned Britain from an agrarian nation to ‘the workshop of the world.’ Towns became cities as peasants moved off the land in vast numbers, to become factory workers. The factories, the workers and the markets all needed to be fed. The factories with coal and raw materials, the workers with bread and the markets with finished goods. The arteries that kept this ecosystem supplied with the required nutrients where the canals. These waterways enabled the new class of industrialist to cultivate vast profits, this ensured that an explosion of canal building occurred creating a reliable transport network across Britain. This Canalmania resulted in 4,500 miles of manmade waterways being created by 1850.

Not to be out done the Irish Ascendancy spotted the economic opportunity that industrialisation presented. Artificial waterways soon connected the Shannon with the Liffey, the Boyne, the Bann and Lough Neagh. Timber and wheat the only resources Ireland had to offer to propagate the mechanisation of Britain, were soon travelling the length and breadth of the island to the ports of Dublin and Belfast to be exported to feed the ever insatiable Leviathan of progress.

While the canals offered a route to profits and prosperity for the elite, they also offered a route by which separatism and republicanism could be dispersed among the middling and lower orders of Irish society. The Act of Union and Daniel O’Connell’s campaigns for Catholic Emancipation and Repeal seemed to have stifled the republican ideals of the United Irishmen. This was not true, often over looked and dismissed as a localised mob, the Ribbonmen were a highly organised and sophisticated secret society dedicated to the ending of British rule. Their leaders crew the barges that plied their trade along the waterways, recruiting new members and spreading the gospel of republicanism.
Paper Title – ‘Freelance journalism: An exploration of how working conditions affect the decisions and output of freelance journalists.’

ABSTRACT

“For he who works for exposure shall die of exposure, there being no cash for clothes or heating.” (Freelance report to the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) Delegate Meeting, April, 2016)

Despite much debate around disruptions in journalism and the future of the industry, self-employed journalists who deliver material to a variety of media outlets are seldom the focus of research on journalism practice. The typical unit of analysis is more often the newsroom within large and stable organisations or the full-time news reporter. Freelancers: journalists who traditionally chose to work for themselves rather than it being a forced process, have historically been considered a vulnerable group within the media profession. The increased casualisation of labour in journalism, the emergence of the ‘forced lancer’ and the ‘citizen’ journalist, has seen news work become more uncertain and market driven. The aim of this research is to explore how working conditions affect the decisions and output of freelance journalists in Ireland. The study is taking place at a time when the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), both in the UK and Ireland, describe the freelance sector as the largest growth area in journalism. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) also report an increased reliance on freelancers, while the proportion of freelancers working in parts of central Europe was as high as 60 per cent in some countries, according to a study carried out by the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) in 2011. Studies of freelance journalists and concerns over professionalism, declining rates of pay, exploitation, independence and copy right control, have taken place in Canada (PWAC 2006), Sweden (Cohen, 2012, Edstrom and Ladendorf, 2012), Germany (Gollmitzer 2014) and Sydney (Jannabi, 2007). This study aims to address the gap in literature that exists on the working conditions of freelance journalists in Ireland, through a qualitative analysis of the work done by freelancers in this country.

Key words: freelance journalism, casualisation of labour, exploitation.
Generalised trust – a personality-based variable that reflects one’s faith in others – has recently been proposed as a significant factor in explaining the organisational design of international institutions (Rathbun 2012). This dissertation examines the extent to which generalised trust informed the preferences of African Union (AU) policy-makers that crafted the Common African Security and Defence Policy (CADSP).

Launched in 2004, the CADSP established the indivisibility of security of African states, broadened the areas of African life for which the AU took responsibility, established a Security Council without vetoes or permanent members and reinforced the broad grounds for AU intervention in states established in the organisation’s Constitutive Act in 2002.

Because of the diversity of regimes amongst its members, with democratically-elected leaders and dictators signing its founding document, the CADSP presents a puzzle for commonly-used explanations for the establishment and design of international institutions, which predict minimal cooperation between states unless motivated by material benefits or cultural norms.

A generalised trust-based argument of institutional choice proposes that the degree to which diplomats and policy-makers commit to cooperative, multilateral institutional arrangements depends on their level of generalised trust.

This research focuses upon the institutional design preferences of CADSP signatories and the negotiation process to create the Policy. It will rely on a number of primary and secondary sources (e.g. archival records, biographies, newspaper reports), as well as interviews with prominent actors from South Africa, Nigeria and Libya, the three most influential states in guiding the Policy’s evolution. The first purpose of these interviews is to assess actors’ levels of generalised trust and find out if ‘trusters’ had the institutional design preferences that are predicted by the generalised trust argument. The second purpose of the interviews is to establish the extent to which different actors were able to influence the process of writing the Policy.
ABSTRACT:

The phenomenon of social media has spread extensively in the world where individuals can now be connected to each other through the internet on various social media websites such as Twitter and Facebook, plus many other interactive platforms that have become a fundamental part of the personal life and daily routine of young people. The students' use of social networking sites can be seen to help them to be more independent learners and improve their learning autonomy, particularly when learners create a plan and specific methods that support and develop personal links. College students who are already using social networking tools in their daily lives are usually more motivated to apply these technologies in the academic context and to acquire the essential technical skills (Dohn, 2009).

This research study aims to investigate the connections between learners' use of social networking sites (SNSs) and English language learning in higher education. The study will assess the extent to which can social media can be adapted as an autonomous learning tool among Libyan language learners, given the constraints of the particular context. Additionally, the study attempts to identify the main opportunities and challenges of using social media tools in learning English among EFL learners.

This research utilizes a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design with the implementation of both quantitative and qualitative designs, including questionnaires, diaries and interviews. This study will be applied to 150 students (n=150 for the questionnaire and n=20 for the interview and diary) at Subratha College of Arts and Science in Libya. The findings may suggest the need for implementing different social media platforms in higher education. This research study is expected to contribute to the future development and implementation of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) as an autonomous learning tool of English among Libyan university students.

REFERENCES:

This paper details the role of Irish republicans in the complex and deeply effective gun-running operation between America and Ireland, 1916-1921. As a guerrilla army, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) needed to arm itself through clandestine means. Small supplies could be procured at home, however, to boost the effectiveness of their campaign, the military command explored many avenues for supply including Britain, Europe and Russia. But the key target area was the United States with its large Irish diaspora in who had historically been strong supporters of physical force Irish republicans. The role of Irish republicans in American gun-running was crucial for the operation’s success. A relatively small number high and low profile figure, female and male, travelled to America and effectively controlled the entire process, and maintained a watertight operation that continued with only minor breeches during the entire period.

The paper outlines who these Irish republicans were and how they conducted the gun-running operation from America. It shows how they began to dominate the landscape of Irish-American nationalism during this time, and how they used this dominance to campaign, primarily through public propaganda, for support for the struggle for Irish independence. The paper provides a detailed sketch of the incredibly complex and risky means by which war materials gathered in American were smuggled to Ireland. It will also shed light on the often-overlooked military dexterity of the republican movement in Ireland, who conducted a highly productive trans-Atlantic gun-running operation under the nose of imperial Britain.
Poster Title: A presentation of the precursor study to an investigation into a phonologically-based and speech therapy-informed approach to pronunciation teaching: its implementation in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classroom and an evaluation of its effectiveness on learner and teacher experience and outcomes.

ABSTRACT

This initial study (which formed part of the taught MA (TESOL) University of Limerick 2014) examines how effectively a phonologically-based approach to persisting pronunciation errors in Spanish speakers of English can reduce such errors.

The study identifies some of the common persisting (sometimes referred to as fossilised) pronunciation errors of advanced Spanish speakers of English studying at the University of Limerick, Ireland. A group of seven students formed the population for the study.

The objective of the study is to examine if a phonologically-based approach to a classroom programme of intervention can reduce these errors. Some strategies employed in the field of speech and language therapy are applied to this programme. Students are tested pre and post intervention to monitor the effect of the programme. Qualitative data is also collected to monitor how the students experienced the process. A control group of three students are isolated from the programme which is undertaken by four students.

The results show that significant reduction in the incidence of errors occurs and can reasonably be attributed to the intervention programme. Conclusions are drawn concerning the term ‘fossilisation’ and some implications for pedagogy and further research are presented in the light of the results and the relevant literature.
Paper Title: Humor Registrado: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Political Cartoons During Argentina’s Last Military Dictatorship 1982-1983

For post-dictatorship countries attempting to come to terms with a difficult past, humour can be used as “a strategy, a platform of resistance, refusal and creation” (Sosa 2013, p.84). Humour also functions as a tool in the construction of “collective memory” (Achugar 2008) as a way of reaching out and engaging with newer generations and audiences on a “national trauma” they have not directly experienced (Sosa 2013).

Political cartoons are an example of this as a form of humour requiring memory to understand through “the unpacking of one or more layers of available cultural consciousness” (Medhurst and DeSouza 1981, p. 219). Barajas (2000, p.8) describes cartooning as “one of the few effective critiques possible under a barbaric government” as it is often dismissed as an absurd, even lower, art form.

This paper investigates the political cartoons of the satirical fortnightly publication *Humor Registrado* during the final year of one of the most brutal dictatorships in history, Argentina’s Dirty War. It analyses how key actors, events and political ideologies were depicted in six magazine covers during Argentina’s difficult period of transition from dictatorship to democracy following defeat in the 1982 Malvinas/Falklands War.

The theoretical and methodological framework underpinning this analysis includes Semiology (Barthes 1968), Social Semiotics (Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Jewitt 2014) to analyse the linguistic and non-linguistic “modes” or semiotic features used in representation. This approach acknowledges that “modes” do not exist in a vacuum but have a “socially shaped and culturally given” context (Kress 2014, p.60).

In exposing the multimodal construction of dominant discourses, social actors, events and ideologies this study seeks to add to the body of literature on the role of humour in Argentina’s dictatorship context (e.g. Sosa 2013).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


ABSTRACT:

The state established the Insolvency Service of Ireland (ISI) in 2013 to respond to a crisis situation involving more than 150,000 mortgages in long-term arrears, and €157bn of personal debt (the third highest in the OECD) (Honohan 2009). The ISI's strategy has focused upon teaching financial skills (budgeting etc.) to insolvent debtors, combined with up to 5 years of financial supervision, after which some debt is written off. Through this institution the aftermath of the economic boom and crisis is being dealt with, and life after debt has become possible for some Irish debtors. However, although debt is prevalent in Ireland and has been linked to stress (Mind 2008), food poverty (Pressman and Scott 2009), and financial/social exclusion (Combat Poverty Agency 2009), only 4,420 debtors (out of an estimated 150,000 who qualify) have applied for the ISI's services.

The ISI's internal research states that the reason behind this gap is primarily due to a lack of awareness by debtors of its services (Insolvency Service of Ireland 2014). Some scholars (Stamp 2013; Hourigan 2015 and Coulter 2015) and NGOs (Irish Mortgage Holders Organisation 2015; Society of Saint Vincent de Paul 2013) have disagreed, arguing that the ISI is creditor focused (creditors may veto any arrangement), and overly complex.

My research aims to go beyond these explanations by providing a new empirically driven sociological explanation for why the ISI has failed to persuade the vast majority of debtors into using its debt relief programmes. This research adopts a novel theoretical approach which offers new insights into indebtedness by synthesising micro (interviews) and macro-level data (policy analysis). Finally, by including diverse populations (e.g. men and women) this research distinguishes itself from existing research on indebtedness, and broadly comments on the efficacy of the ISI’s policy approach.
Poster Title: Theorising my research findings: The process of conceptualising the impact of Discretionary policy on the work of social welfare decision-makers.

ABSTRACT

Welfare staff’s position has two contradictory duties assigned to it: one is to fulfil a position of an accommodating agent for those who require social protection, and two - to fulfil organisational needs as required by the State’s Department for Social Protection (Taylor 2014). Embodying both identities may constitute a difficult task. On the one side, following rules and depersonalising decisions provide a safety net especially in complex cases which are disallowed. On the other side, those decisions that result in clients’ hardship are the ones in which welfare officers more likely become personally and emotionally invested (Dubois 2010). Furthermore, fulfilling the position of a ‘double agent’ allows them in many situations to control their encounters with the public. Depending on a client, a case at hand, and the circumstances, public servants can either choose to act as bureaucrats, to underline the institutional strength of their position; or they can engage on a more personal level, if they wish to express sympathy and/or recognition. This “double play” is an important aspect of public service work, especially in welfare institutions (Dubois 2010).

This poster presentation provides a working theory conceptualising the impact of discretion (in the context of the HRC legislation) on the work of Social Welfare officers in Ireland. It presents a theorisation of how welfare officers are not only driven by what’s right for their place of work, their responsibility towards the state, what’s right for them as employees, and their capacity to ensure they are efficient, but also how they are affected, sometimes deeply, by the stories of their applicants. I argue that the individual values, morality, the feelings of righteousness, and the understanding of the consequences of actions on clients, are significant factors shaping the decision-making process of Social Welfare staff (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003).
Paper Title: The Contours of Victim Relations in Pre-Industrial Albion and Ierne

This paper will outline a period specific history for victims of crime. The objective of the paper is to contribute a historically informed assessment of victim accommodation within the criminal justice system of eighteenth century Britain. This involves laying out the eighteenth century’s way of knowing the victim and assessing how the period’s legal frameworks worked to aid victim inclusion in Britain.

Drawing on an array of legal historians, the paper will provide insight into the discontinuity in history. It will present a “history of the present” which explores rifts in “history” that subvert preconceptions, allowing further rifts to emerge (Roth, 1981:43). This “antihistory” constructs a “history” that can be transcended rather than intimately clung on to. It allows one to discover a “history” which shifts our outlook forward, towards the time when “history” becomes superfluous, when it does not require incessant evocations and is located “in the scattering of the profound stream of time” (Roth, 1981:44).

This will be achieved by explaining how the victim was perceived during the age and how they went about obtaining justice. The victim’s standing as sublime ideal and bizarre reality is discussed at length. (Rock, 2004:334-337). Their crucial role as decision maker, (King, 2000) investigator (Beattie 1986) and prosecutor (Hay, 1983) will be engaged with through a detailed examination of their right to privately prosecute offenders in court. This mandates explanation of the egalitarian (Stephen, 1883) and libertarian (Hay, 1983) nuances to the private prosecution, which was so often deployed to great effect by the victim.

The paper will conclude by highlighting how this victim inclusive system practically worked and the consequences it had for both the victim and their wider community, through an articulation of the advantages (Friedman, 1995) and disadvantages (Emsley, 2005) inherent to the victim centred system.
Poster Title: Web communication: establishing the importance of communication-specific heuristics.

This study forms part of a PhD research project which explores the efficacy of communication-specific heuristic evaluation as a method for evaluating communicability in e-government informational services applications. Communicability is the ‘property of software that efficiently and effectively conveys to users its underlying intent and interactive principles (Prates et al 2000, p. 32). Communication-specific heuristics guide this process as ‘procedures or principles that help their users work systematically toward a discovery, a decision or a solution’ (Van der Geest and Spyridakis 2000, p. 301). The purpose of this study is to establish the importance of communication-specific heuristics in particular for web communication evaluation. It does so by way of a systematic analysis of the literature. Results indicate that the effective and efficient application of communication-specific heuristics by designers and developers at appropriate stages in a website development process, ‘increases the chance of developing a website that is not merely technically sound but also effective in terms of its communicative effect, intended as well as perceived, for particular audiences in particular contexts of use’ (Van der Geest and Spyridakis 2000, p. 302). This outcome will inform the development of a communication-specific heuristics checklist to evaluate communicability in specific domains such as e-government informational services applications.

Key words: web communication, communicability, communication-specific heuristics, heuristic evaluation, e-government communication.

REFERENCES


Poster Title: Investigating the effectiveness of the written assessment brief in communicating assessment requirements

ABSTRACT:

The importance of assessment and its influence on pedagogy is well known. The role of assessment in higher education varies. Assessment is a key aspect of the student experience and it is impossible for students to avoid assessment, including poor assessment (Boud 1995). Students put emphasis on the parts of the curriculum that are assessed (Habeshaw et al 1995) therefore defining the curriculum (Ramsden 2003). For academics, assessment is an opportunity to assess current learning and to guide future learning.

The importance of communication in assessment is crucial as “every assessment task is an exercise in communication” (Dunn et al 2004, p. 83). Assessment instructions, in written format, are described as the assessment brief. The assessment writer must convey the assessment requirements; students must interpret the assessment and articulate their learning; and the marker (when separate from the assessment writer) must interpret the assessment, the student’s work and effectively communicate feedback to the students. It is the importance of assessment and the reliance on the written word that necessitates the investigation of the effectiveness of the written assessment brief.

This poster outlines the three stages of a planned investigation into the effectiveness of the written assessment brief in communicating assessment requirements. The first stage, consisting of two online surveys (one for academic staff and one for students), will provide a baseline report capturing the existing types of assessment in use; the prevailing usage of the assessment brief; and any additional resources used to complement the brief. It will also obtain opinion on the effectiveness of the brief in communicating what is required in the assessment. The second stage will be an analysis of existing assessment brief documentation. The final phase will investigate the effectiveness of each component of the re-designed brief.

REFERENCES:

Paper Title: The Irish tobacco business 1780-1935: The manufacture of tobacco in Ireland from Free Trade to Free State.

ABSTRACT

The presentation is based on the first chapter of my thesis and concerns the production and sale of tobacco in Ireland during the period in question. The tobacco industry has being largely ignored by Irish historians whose contributions thus far has concerned the amounts of tobacco imported and their using of these figures as indicators of the country’s economic well-being. In this presentation I propose to follow the unmanufactured leaf from the bonded warehouse and examine the changing production methods used from hand cranked machinery of local manufactories of the eighteenth century to the machine driven assembly lines of the then largest tobacco factory in the world in early twentieth century Belfast.

The reason for the consolidation of the industry from over 300 manufacturers in the 1830s to 17 in the 1920s will be addressed as will the rise in the numbers employed and the increasing presence of women from the 1880s in the trade. The working conditions of children and adults will also be examined. Special consideration will be given to the founders of two of Ireland’s most successful tobacco firms, Carroll’s of Dundalk and Gallaher’s of Belfast. The study has traced their rise from one man operations to international traders whose considerable output made Ireland a nett exporter of tobacco prior to World War One.

The challenges facing the industry such as the increasing intervention of the state, changes in consumption habits, the illicit trade and the threat from foreign competitors shall also be addressed. The contribution of the retail sector to the success of the industry aided by innovative press and in store advertising shows that tobacco contributed greatly to a more market driven consumerist society in Ireland.
Paper Title: Towards a Re-imagining of Áine: Discovering the Lost Goddess of Lough Gur

Most fictionalized accounts Irish myth and legend focus on its greatest warriors and heroes: Cuchulain, Fionn mac Cumhail, and Oisin. However, little has been written about the minor gods and goddesses of the Tuatha de Danaán, the forerunners of the people who later became the sidhe. Áine is one such goddess.

My creative writing PhD project, provisionally titled ‘Fire of Thought,’ reimagines the myth and folklore of the goddess Áine in contemporary times. Through a series of interviews and archival research, I’ve discovered that knowledge of her existence in both myth and folklore is dwindling.

In my paper, I will examine the original concept for the novel as a fantasy novel; how it evolved with time and in-depth research; the failed experiments and attempts at a narrative; and the challenges in piecing a narrative based on disparate folklore, myths, and legends.