



Lightning Conference

25.11.2023 | 10AM - 1PM | ONLINE EVENT

10:00am	Welcome, introductions and aims for the conference – Nathan Douglas (IPDA England)
10:05am	Welcome and IPDA support for ECRs – IPDA Chair Dr. Lizana Oberholzer
10:10am	The power and place of qualitative research: An introduction – Dr. Linda Devlin (IPDA England)
10:20am	Navigating Educational Research: An Insider Teacher-Leader’s Perspective – Claire Harley
10:30am	Reflecting upon your honesties and greeting the lodgers – Annie Pendrey
10:40am	Issues of Positionality and Reflexivity in a Qualitative PhD Study – Barbara Mulvihill
10:50am	From recognising researcher identity to utilising it in qualitative research design: Operationalising reflexivity as an analytical tool in qualitative research – Laura Jude
11:00am	The Impact of Belonging to a Community of Practice – Sharon Cunningham
11:10am	The Insider as a Disruptor: Navigating Positionality in Social Justice Research – Dr Barry Morrissey – Dr Amy Markos – Dr Fiona King – Dr Josephine Peyton Marsh
11:20am	Break



11:30am	Dr Who? Researching as time travel: why and how an ECR undertook the same data (re)generation activities as the participants in their EdD study – Lynne Jones
11:40am	Going through a phase: gathering data over a bounded period of time. – Dr Tracy Wallis
11:50am	Creating the conditions to thrive: exploring the inter-relationship between organisational culture, collaboration and teacher wellbeing, through narrative inquiry – Catherine Place
12:00pm	Arts-based research: a qualitative approach or emerging paradigm? – Jackie Lysaght
12:10pm	Methodological Reflection – the use of the Diary Method as a Data Generation Instrument in a Qualitative Study – Angela Cahill
12:20pm	Break
12:30pm	Are insider research participants honest? A study of the hierarchy of power imbalance. – Darren Gravell
12:40pm	Selection and recruitment in qualitative research – Paul Gaffey
12:50pm	The ups and downs of recruiting and working with participants during qualitative research: An insider-researcher perspective – Karina Curley
1pm	Plenary and close – Dr. Linda Devlin (IPDA England), Dr. Lizana Oberholzer and Nathan Douglas (IPDA England)



Abstracts



Presenter	Title	Abstract
<p>Claire Harley</p>	<p>Navigating Educational Research: An Insider Teacher-Leader's Perspective</p>	<p>This research paper provides a concise yet comprehensive exploration of insider research, with a particular emphasis on educators who simultaneously serve as teachers and school leaders while actively engaging with educational research. It defines insider research and explores the unique position of teacher-scholars operating within the educational system. My presentation starts by outlining the broad landscape of insider research and narrows its focus to highlight the challenges and opportunities encountered by teacher-researchers. Specifically, it delves into the experiences of educators who, in their dual roles, integrate educational research into their daily practice, bridging the gap between theory and practice. The merits and limitations of insider research are examined, underlining the significant contributions that teacher-leaders can make to the field of education through their insider perspectives. This paper emphasizes their valuable insights in adapting research findings to the realities of the classroom and school leadership, but also explores the personal and professional risks of being involved in this form of research. Ethical considerations within insider research are explored, including issues related to confidentiality, role conflict, and informed consent. Various methodologies used by teacher-researchers are investigated, such as action research, practitioner inquiry, and self-reflective journals. Drawing from the author's personal experiences as a teacher and school leader actively engaged in educational research, this presentation will give an honest give of my journey so far.</p>
<p>Annie Pendrey</p>	<p>Reflecting upon your honesties and greeting the lodgers</p>	<p>Reflecting upon the honesties and greeting my data as lodgers in an IPA which investigates Further Education teachers' lived experiences of the Advanced Teacher Status professional formation with a focus on professional identity and agency is the focus of my abstract. Engward and Goldspink (2020, p. 41) state that, 'reflexivity is understood in qualitative research as attentiveness to the influence of the researcher on the research process. However, experiencing reflexivity as an IPA researcher is tricky, time-consuming, and often uncomfortable; it does not 'happen' and the researcher has to live with the data'. Savin- Baden and Fisher (2002) states there are several ways to develop honesties within research. These include, situating yourself in relation to the data, voicing your mistakes and taking a critical stance towards your research. I aim to share how I have begun to welcome my data as lodgers within my research, lodgers that stay for a while, evoke emotions and reactions, and leave you with their personal experiential statements to interpret.</p>

Presenter	Title	Abstract
Barbara Mulvihill	Issues of Positionality and Reflexivity in a Qualitative PhD Study	<p>This 7 minute ‘Lightning Conference’ presentation addresses the complexity of positionality and reflexivity for a qualitative PhD researcher. Recognition is given to the lived experience and value-system of the researcher (Scotland, 2012) and the careful navigation of both in conducting ethical research. Reference is made to the explicit incorporation of identity and experience (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011) and the importance of critical integration of assumptions and bias (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). Finally, reflexive strategies used by the PhD researcher so far, including reflexive journaling (Elbow, 1973) and storytelling (Etherington, 2004) are presented.</p>
Laura Jude	<p>From recognising researcher identity to utilising it in qualitative research design: Operationalising reflexivity as an analytical tool in qualitative research</p>	<p>Le Gallais’ (2008) phrase “wherever I go there I am” sits on a Post-it note, stuck to my desktop computer. As I progress through my doctoral journey it reminds me that both my professional and researcher identities matter, intersecting and influencing one another. Reflexivity provides researchers with an opportunity to think critically about identity. To examine our experiences, thoughts, assumptions, values and beliefs, recognising the ways in which these colour the meaning and sense we make about the world, as well as how this shapes our research and positionality. For Professional Doctorate early career researchers in particular reflexivity, when used analytically, can take this one step further: it provides a sharp tool to apply what we learn from thinking critically, to infuse our research design with the professional knowledge and curiosity we have gained from our time in the field. As an early career researcher how can one operationalise reflexivity from a conceptual tool to an analytical one? This presentation explores one approach using Pierre Bourdieu’s work as a foundation.</p>
Sharon Cunningham	The Impact of Belonging to a Community of Practice	<p>Teacher education in Ireland has witnessed a transformative reform agenda stemming from recommendations from national and international reviews of existing teacher education. Teacher professional learning has also gained attention from the recent publication of Cosán’s Framework for Teachers’ Learning (2016) by The Teaching Council and the recent Action Plan (2021) to support its implementation. Literature has moved from teacher professional ‘development’ (PD) to teacher professional ‘learning’ (PL). PL has to be led by teachers themselves based on their own experiences as continuous engagement and collective learning occurs more frequently when teachers work together to further develop their own professional growth. Communities of Practice (CoPs) offer a high-quality, job-embedded form of professional learning that has a number of benefits. A CoP runs on and is sustained by collaboration and shared learning. Reflective practice is also an important component in teacher education and it brings numerous benefits to teachers. Reflection journals (RJs) have been recognised as a vital tool in promoting learning, as they facilitate critical thinking and self-engagement and push participants to overcome challenges. This research focuses on the impact on teachers of belonging to a CoP. Data collection tools include participant’s reflective journals after attending each of six CoPs in their school.</p>

Presenter	Title	Abstract
<p>Dr Barry Morrissey</p> <p>Dr Amy Markos</p> <p>Dr Fiona King</p> <p>Dr Josephine Peyton Marsh</p>	<p>The Insider as a Disruptor: Navigating Positionality in Social Justice Research</p>	<p>Resistive, disruptive and anti-oppressive approaches to inquiry are key tenets of transformational social justice research (Brown & Strega, 2015). They enable the discovery of new lenses, methodological tools and interpretive pathways that support the activist researcher in making positive change (Lorenzetti, 2015). But questions abound on how positionality is navigated, in particular where the researcher is an insider or is personally affected by the potential change. This paper probes that point using qualitative data collected from a transatlantic research collaboration, between Dublin City University and Arizona State University, on the potential role of doctoral education in bringing about social justice and equity. The preliminary findings point to ethical dilemmas experienced by PhD / EdD students, on the extent to which they allow their personal experiences as insiders to inform their approaches to data collection and interpretation. The paper concludes with a discussion on the value-added attributes that an insider can bring to social justice research, to disrupt structures and bring about more just realities.</p>
<p>Lynne Jones</p>	<p>Dr Who? Researching as time travel: why and how an ECR undertook the same data (re)generation activities as the participants in their EdD study</p>	<p>My doctoral study explores how teacher leadership is understood and experienced in Scotland. In this lightning talk, I explain why and how I have undertaken the same data generation episodes as the participants in my EdD study. I also share my current understandings about the ways in which my identity has (re)formed through the experience of researching teacher leadership. Data generation for the study involved an online survey and two semi-structured interviews. The survey was open to anyone working in the Scottish education system. The interviews with individual educators who identified as teacher leaders, were variously mediated by online, visual and mobile methods. I identify as teacher leader and beginner researcher. Before launching the survey and facilitating each round of interviews, I used the tools to generate data from myself, about myself as a teacher leader. Only after a first cycle of analysis was complete on the subset of data generated by respondents/interviewees did I analyse my own data. Addressing the conference theme of researcher identity during qualitative research in this talk, I draw on entries in the research journal that I have kept from the start of the study to show how my identity has developed during the process.</p>

Presenter	Title	Abstract
Dr Tracy Wallis	Going through a phase: gathering data over a bounded period of time.	<p>This paper, taken from a thesis for a Professional Doctorate in Education, focuses on the gathering of qualitative data through questionnaires and focus group interviews structured into phases over the period of a year. It illustrates how the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher inform the research paradigm of interpretative constructivism, the research methodology and, subsequently, the methods chosen to gather data. Central to the methodology is the phased nature of data gathering. As the participants were trainee teachers, their perspectives were gathered over a year with the training programme design utilised to drive the data gathering phases to fit in with when the trainees were attending university to allow opportunities for reflection of their development as teachers. Therefore, the research was well integrated into the programme to ensure that the participants were in an appropriate setting for the data gathering process and were in an environment that was safe and familiar to them (Braun and Clarke 2013). The phased structure of the data-gathering allowed for themes to emerge and for the trainees' thoughts, feelings, and opinions to be captured through an inductive, iterative strategy where the themes from the data were constructed from their own words (Merriam 1998).</p>
Catherine Place	Creating the conditions to thrive: exploring the inter-relationship between organisational culture, collaboration and teacher wellbeing, through narrative inquiry	<p>"Looking at teachers' wellbeing is an interesting angle to better understand current challenges of the teaching profession" (Viac and Fraser, 2020, p. 8). This doctoral study aims to explore the lived experiences of teachers and the impact these experiences have on their overall ability to thrive. It will explore how collaboration is understood and how it interrelates with teachers' wellbeing and it will better understand how organisational culture supports teachers to thrive. This research will employ a qualitative research design through the use of narrative inquiry and life stories (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). Narrative inquiry considers personal experiences shared in social contexts. It values life stories and places participants at the heart of the research. Furthermore it explores the interplay between participants' stories and the role of the researcher. This research study will include the researcher's story and will explore the relationship with participants as both an inside and outside researcher. This relationship poses both ethical considerations and potential position of power. It also examines the role of researcher identity throughout the research process.</p>

Presenter	Title	Abstract
Jackie Lysaght	Arts-based research: a qualitative approach or emerging paradigm?	Arts-based research (ABR) has been categorised as a methodological tool within the qualitative paradigm. However, recently some researchers have proposed that ABR is an emerging new paradigm and not a qualitative method (Leavy, 2017). This ambiguity poses a challenge for post-graduate research students of where to situate their study, within the qualitative or ABR paradigms. This decision is further complicated if the researcher uses ABR alongside qualitative methods, as mixed methods usually refer to mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches. While researchers merely state their position in situating a paper either in the qualitative or ABR fields (Wang et al., 2017), postgraduate students must also explicitly justify their choice. In this presentation, we consider what we already know from the literature and what questions remain. We conclude by suggesting that guidelines on how to position a study using ABR methods would scaffold this process.
Angela Cahill Place	Methodological Reflection – the use of the Diary Method as a Data Generation Instrument in a Qualitative Study	There has been very little investigation of middle management practices in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector in Ireland. This study looks to examine the perceptions of middle managers/FET Coordinators on the day-to-day enactment of their role encompassing their leadership practice and the influence (or not) of current FET strategic priorities. This presentation considers the proposed methodological approach that will be used to examine the nature of FET Coordinators' daily work. An overview of the unique features of the Diary Method, which is a comparatively little used qualitative instrument, will be considered. The Diary Method involves researchers soliciting research diaries from participants who can offer time-sensitive and context-specific insights into the phenomenon of interest. Diarists 'record everyday meanings as they interpret and reinterpret them.....The ongoing nature of the diary and the relationship between the researcher and the participant distinguish diary methods and the nature of knowledge they produce from other methods' (Herron et al, 2019, p.1005).
Darren Gravell	Are insider research participants honest? A study of the hierarchy of power imbalance.	Research conducted during the summer of 2022 focused on perceptions from staff of coaching style lesson observations in a primary school as part of a Master's Dissertation. During the data collection process, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to gather the thoughts and opinions of the coaching process from colleagues at their place of work. This provided an ethical consideration due to the fact the researcher is also a member of the senior management team which therefore created an imbalance of power between them and their participants. When considering to conduct any type of interview, it is best achieved when there is no hierarchical relationship between the parties (Oakley, 1981; Simons, 2012). However, Hilsen (2006) acknowledges that power and relationships between interviewer and participants can be unavoidable despite measures being put in place. To address this potential ethical situation, participants were interviewed at home via Microsoft Teams, to allow them to feel comfortable and 'safe' to speak freely. The interviewer ensured BERA guidelines were adhered to throughout the process. Additionally, the participants were given plenty of notice to withdraw from the research as well as reminded of the confidentiality agreement.

Presenter	Title	Abstract
Paul Gaffey	Selection and recruitment in qualitative research	<p>There is a lack of teachers in Ireland that come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. There are a number one-year access courses offered at universities , which seeks to address this. These courses aim to prepare individuals to begin initial teacher education, and therefore help them embark upon the educational journey to become teachers. The purpose of the qualitative study was to explore how a university based access to teaching programme helps to harness the motivation of participants to become teachers. The central research question of this study is to understand how an access to teaching course seeks to support students on their educational journey and to understand how students experience and navigate such supports. From this central question, a number of further sub questions have emerged: What has motivated socioeconomically disadvantaged students to take part on an access to teaching programme ?, How has the access to teaching programme harnessed this motivation, and encouraged students, and what further could be done in this regard? and in what formal and informal ways do programme staff seek to support students' engagement in and progression through the programme? This presentation will account for the selection and recruitment process and how I worked with participants during my qualitative research project.</p>
Karina Curley	The ups and downs of recruiting and working with participants during qualitative research: An insider-researcher perspective	<p>In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in the diversity of the student body in higher education in Ireland, reflecting an upward trend in migration from across the globe. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) encourages universities to embrace diversity and ensure all students feel a sense of belonging on campus (HEA, 2022). This research study focuses on belonging in third level. It explores the degree to which ethnic minority students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged feel a sense of belonging to the university environment. The National Access Plan 2022-2028 identifies ethnic minorities, including migrants, refugees or students who have experience of the international protection system, as a sub-group needing additional support to access and complete higher education (HEA, 2022). The primary research approach for this study is qualitative, using Participatory Action Research as a methodology and creative research methods for data-generating. The recruitment plan included a purposeful sampling of second and third-year undergraduates who identify as ethnic minorities and are categorised as widening participation students. The lightning talk presents an overview of the positive engagement process, having navigated the challenges in recruiting students.</p>