

## Summaries of Professional Doctorate projects

The following abstracts offer a sample of the work undertaken by graduates of the Doctor of Professional Studies (DProf) awarded by Middlesex University in 2016. Included in the list are two DProf by Public Works and one from the Ashridge Doctorate in Organisational Change, a validated partner of the DProf. Together they illustrate the range and variety of fields of practice and research methods adopted by practitioners on the programme. In most cases the full thesis is available on the Middlesex University Research Repository and readers interested in following up on the individual studies are invited to contact the authors through the email address provided.

**Dr Andrew Atter** Andrew, the winner of this year's Ken Goulding prize for his work in the rapidly developing field of micro-business and support of young entrepreneurs, developed a model that describes three crucial aspects of the way the entrepreneur conceives and develops their venture.

**Dr Ayodele Hippolyte** This context statement, submitted for the award of DProf by Public Works, examines the changing role of the media in a post-colonial context (St Lucia) through the public work undertaken by the candidate, with a particular focus on its impact on national identity and socio-economic development.

**Dr Marit-Due Langaas** This study examines the current practice of international knowledge exchange in the road transport industry and develops a model to address the constraining factors that limit knowledge exchange.

**Dr Finbar Lillis** This study discloses, through discourse analysis, the level of central control that is evident in public policy on lifelong learning over a 15 year period and discusses the relevance of this approach to current initiatives in promoting adult learning in the UK.

**Dr Eddie McCaffrey** A recipient of the DProf by Public Works, Eddie explores the key themes and threads that have connected his personal development and his work as a film-maker and lecturer.

**Dr Jo-Ann Myers** This study demonstrates how the learning of Hebrew in Jewish schools can be enhanced when it is seen as a cultural language (embracing religion, culture and time) rather than just a modern foreign language, and provides a unique insight into the role of language in the development of Jewish identity.

**Dr Jane Riddiford** A graduate of the Ashridge Doctorate in Organisational Change, Jane crafts a narrative path through the variety of influences on her everyday experience of leadership, leading to a view of leadership that is rooted in what she calls "cosmic indigeneity".

**Dr Helen Tyler** As a practitioner deeply immersed in her practice, Helen presents a critical viewpoint on a topical issue of great importance in the field of primary education – the changing demands on mentors in Initial Teacher Training.

Dr David Adams, Summaries Editor

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**Andrew Atter (2016) *Into the light: a grounded model for supporting the growth and learning of early phase entrepreneurs.* DProf thesis, Middlesex University**

This project offers a new model of early phase entrepreneurial development which places the

central emphasis on the learning and development of the founder and the consequences for the team dynamics amongst the co-founders; in contrast to conventional approaches that stress the correct application of methods or techniques derived from financial or management theory. The research was conducted through the application of grounded theory method and other supporting mixed qualitative and quantitative methods. The research draws upon my own direct coaching and mentoring work with different samples of early phase entrepreneurs. One outcome from the research is a new psychometric instrument that is now in use at fifteen universities in the UK and several technology accelerators in the UK and Hong Kong. The instrument identifies and differentiates between three distinct elements derived from motivational theory: Mindset, relational preferences and work style. My research suggests that it is these aspects have a determining influence on the way the entrepreneur conceived and develops their venture. The research was conducted by making transcriptions of recorded mentoring and coaching sessions. I created a database of codes and categories and then developed a model based on this data. Built into the project was a strong emphasis on the development and testing of the model with users. My project shows that entrepreneurs do not follow a single course or method, but adapt between different profiles depending on and their own mindset and how they decide to evolve their venture. This thesis highlights the need for entrepreneurs to develop the necessary agility to develop the necessary skills and behaviors or work effectively in collaboration with others. This lays the basis for a learning approach that is quite different from the classical linear “life cycle model” prevalent in the Silicon Valley model. This research contributes to the rapidly developing eco-system of microbusinesses and provides a set of practical learning tools for early phase entrepreneurs.

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**Ayodele Hippolyte (2016) *Fostering National Identity and Socio-Economic Development: New Frontiers for the Role of Media and Communication in Saint Lucia*. DProf by Public Works, Middlesex University**

This context statement proposes that the traditional role of media and communication in Saint Lucia as mostly an information delivery system must be challenged and reinvented. Within the postcolonial context of Saint Lucian society, the statement posits that media and communication can and should play a catalytic role in national development. Through the critical reflection on and appraisal of the public works submitted, I demonstrate that media and communication can have such a role in two vital areas of national development: national identity and socio-economic development.

The first series of public works comprising four television features on the arts seek to articulate the Saint Lucian national identity as well as to foster public consciousness and appreciation of that identity. They are of ideological importance because a people with a solid sense of their identity can determine the kind of nation they want to build instead of merely imitating external models touted by more powerful countries. The

latter set of public works are more concerned with communication strategy utilising a variety of media tools and other methods to encourage social and economic development. These works include a financial literacy television series, sustainability initiatives and policy formulation. At the core of these works is a commitment to the postcolonial project of nation building albeit enacted in different organizational contexts i.e. quasi-public and private sector.

This context statement addresses both theoretical issues and those related to praxis. It aims to present a theoretical model of media and communication in Saint Lucia that emphasises the developmental and transformative dimension of the field. Local practitioners should conceive of media and communication as an ideological resource that can be a part of the discourse on national development and social progress. This necessarily involves a re-thinking of the role of the media professional in the Saint Lucian context. The traditional view of the media practitioner as simply a purveyor of information must give way to a new perspective that promotes the multi-faceted and strategic role of the media professional in organisations and the wider society. This context statement proposes how this can be achieved by examining the issues of leadership, processes and approaches adopted to realise results, and the role of reflection in practice. All of these considerations impact how the profession is actually practised and can lead to a transformation of the current paradigm.

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**Marit-Due Langaas (2016), *Exploring the potential for improving results of international knowledge exchange in the field of road transport*. DProf thesis, Middlesex University**

This research addresses the topic of knowledge exchange across borders in the field of road transport. Road transport administrations around the world learn from each other by taking part in various forms of knowledge exchanges. From my engagement and experiential learning in this area, I perceive a potential for attaining higher returns of such knowledge investments. The overall purpose of the project is to improve the results of international knowledge exchanges, while the aim is to explore the potential for making improvements in the knowledge exchange process. I have carried out the research mainly within my own organisation and explored the views and experience of participants in exchanges. The project draws on a review of theoretical and operational sources of knowledge and information. In the review, I deal with the research topic in three different contexts: theories and empirical studies, development cooperation, and the professional field.

The methodological approach is qualitative and inductive within the paradigm of constructivism. The primary method for data collection is individual semi-structured interviews with selected exchange participants. The interview data are analysed using thematic analysis. As a means of ensuring quality, the interview findings have been

triangulated by focus groups and individual discussions. The validity and the reliability of the research are restricted, since it is context-bound and small-scale. However, discussions with professionals abroad indicate that the results apply more generally.

The findings show that there are constraining factors throughout the knowledge exchange process that prevent the participants and the organisation from taking full advantage of the exchanges. I have used the findings to construct a holistic, life cycle model that can make knowledge exchanges more effective. My model is unique of its kind and differs from existing models for acquiring, creating, and managing knowledge in organisations in that it is determined by the characteristics of my organisation and by a multinational knowledge exchange environment. In order to prepare the ground for its application, I have promoted the model both in my organisation and in the professional community abroad. The real value of the model can, however, only be demonstrated when it has been used for some time.

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**Finbar Lillis (2016): *Discourse, practice and power in adult learning reform in England and Wales, 2000 – 2014*. DProf thesis, Middlesex University**

This analysis of the exercise of power in and behind some of the important discourses in adult learning reform in England and Wales, 2000-2014, examines how the early narrowing of the concept of what constituted (publicly funded) lifelong learning – controlled through increasing centralisation of adult learning reform discourses - was to affect the conduct and course of described adult learning reforms, through the exercise of centripetal government power - and outlines some implications for current adult learning reform discourses.

The author adapts an approach outlined in 'Technologies of Truth' (Heikinenn, et al. 2012) to reveal one distilled 'catalogue of possibilities' from 'KPS' analyses of 'Knowledge', 'Power' and 'Subject' relations, within the discourse of each 'Public Work' report recontextualised for this doctoral study; analyses the operation of (individual and institutional) subjects within those discourses and how discursive subjects were constituted; calls on Foucault and Fairclough's thinking and approaches to discourse analysis and on Blommaert's work on 'scales' (Blommaert 2006), 'indexicality', 'stratification' and 'text and context' (Blommaert 2005) to further subject the results of KPS analysis to detailed questions concerning the discourses and their control.

'KPS' analysis shows repeated, observable patterns of discursive control: Government (and those in its orbit), constrained the adult learning reform discourses described, "centering" control over each discourse, narrowly circumscribing and stratifying lifelong learning and who should be publicly funded to pursue it; with contrasting government positions and approaches to establishing qualifications frameworks in Wales and England.

What does this analysis mean for understanding how discourse in adult learning reform is controlled now? The author suggests (at least) a detailed analysis of recent and current discourses associated with Apprenticeships in England, scrutiny of key texts and guidance documents, further adapting the (Heikinenn, et al. 1999) approach, using 'linguistic technique to answer social-

scientific questions' (Blommaert 2005: 237).

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**Edward McCaffrey (2016) *A Celtic Knot: Educating for a future in corporate film-making – A practitioner's perspective*. DProf by Public Works, Middlesex University**

In this critical engagement, I attempt to link my professional practice and academic knowledge with the key socio-economic, cultural and political factors that have shaped who I am, what I do and the way I do things in a context of rapid technological change over thirty years.

Combining autoethnography with a critical autobiography, I explore the key themes and threads that, like a Celtic knot, connect my personal self with my work as a film-maker and lecturer. This exploration has revealed personal skills and values that I had previously failed fully to comprehend or even acknowledge; it has helped me realise the significance of storytelling and innovation in my public works; it has improved my articulation of what I do and how I do it; and it has convinced me, a former research-cynic, that practice (action) and academic rigour (research) are opposite sides of the same coin: interlinked and of equal importance.

From international disease prevention and motorcycle safety awareness, to online social networking and citizen empowerment, this statement connects what at first appeared to be disparate threads into a more cohesive whole. The audience is, in the first instance, myself, to inform further public works. Others who may find it useful are students looking to know what is required to make change in a sector that is rapidly changing, and colleagues who come from strong practice fields thinking of developing themselves as professional practitioners in higher education teaching. This doctoral undertaking has changed the way I think and work both as a professional practitioner in film-making and in higher education teaching.

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**Jo-Ann Myers (2016) *Hebrew, the Living Breath of Jewish Existence: the Teaching and Learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew*. DProf thesis, Middlesex University**

Most Jewish day schools in the United Kingdom underperform in the teaching and learning of Hebrew. Indeed, prominent figures in the UK Jewish establishment have singled out the teaching of Ivrit (Modern Hebrew) in Jewish day schools as in need of improvement. Former Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks argues that whilst children are undoubtedly better educated Jewishly now than in the past, many challenges remain. I contend that the physical separation between the Jewish Studies and the Hebrew departments in Jewish day schools does a disservice to both by shutting the door to crucial teaching and learning opportunities of Hebrew. I recommend that Jewish day

schools should be working towards breaking down these 'barriers'. In the present research, I address this issue from the perspective of my own interest, namely Hebrew pedagogy. My research investigates the extent to which creating connections between Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew can enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in Jewish day schools.

I employed an Action Research methodology within the context of a case study using elements of Appreciative Inquiry and written through the lens of Autoethnography. From a theoretical perspective, I draw on research regarding second and foreign language acquisition and suggest that Ivrit cannot be separated from its religious, cultural and historic framework. That is, while Hebrew is taught in the United Kingdom as a Modern Foreign Language, I propose that we are in fact teaching a cultural language. This term more aptly describes a modern living language bound up in a particular religion, culture and time, as is Ivrit. Using the Hebrew root letters as the route to link Biblical and Modern Hebrew, my research demonstrates that this integration can enhance the teaching and learning of both. My case study shows that schools and teachers who choose to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew can successfully embrace educational change, a process which will require them to confront their belief systems as well as accepting new teaching approaches and materials.

The Hebrew language has evolved, survived and thrived over the millennia and for me it is the essence of Jewish survival.

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**Jane Riddiford (2016) *Enchantment and the Mechanical: An Autoethnographic Inquiry into Leadership framed within a Cosmic and Ecological Story*. DProf thesis, Middlesex University, Ashridge Doctorate in Organisational Change**

What difference would it make writing and sharing autoethnographic stories that locate self within the context of ecology and evolutionary cosmology? How might it change the way I understood my role as a leader of an environmental education charity? Would it help me to step into, let go of and share power? Through this inquiry I have recognised myself as being indigenous to the Cosmos; an identity which I maintain provides context and foundation for collaborative leadership. It is an identity that liberates inherited and often unconscious views of the universe as a machine of separate parts into a living story which endlessly reveals the dynamics of an integrated whole.

As a fifth-generation, Pākehā, (New Zealander of European descent) working in a multicultural setting in the centre of London, I needed to understand two fundamental and seemingly opposing forces that motivate me. One is the opportunistic and single minded drive of

the pioneer and the other is a pull to deeper values of connection and wholeness. What shaped my values? Excavating the past made me curious about the shadow colonialism has cast upon the present. I noticed my ambivalence towards the word 'leadership' despite being in leadership roles for many years. I paid attention to discomfort in the face of difference and discord. Recognising fractures within a culture built on Arcadian idealism held clues to limited notions of leadership that influenced my behaviour.

The Three Baskets of Knowledge, drawn from Māori mythology, helped me find ground beneath the fault lines of the past. Listening to the land and looking back into the depths of time I drew meaning and direction from an ancient and emerging story. Within the 14-billion year account of our origins that science is now revealing, I came home to my own story. I identified with what I consider to be a contemporary form of indigeneity; cosmic indigeneity. I came to welcome non-idealised ways of being and the unpredictable nature of life itself. I learnt to embrace a process of leadership that is fluid and changing, sometimes singular and often collaborative.

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**Helen Tyler (2015) *School-based to school-led initial teacher training: reconceptualising the mentor's role.* DProf thesis, Middlesex University**

In 2012, Education Secretary Michael Gove announced that Initial Teacher Training (ITT) would henceforth be school-led. At the time of his announcement, ITT had been school-based, which itself followed upon an earlier, school-centred framework. The implementation of Gove's announcement fundamentally involved a shift that placed mentors, who are drawn from a pool of practising teachers, at the heart of the process of training future primary school teachers. While such changes in education may or may not be warranted, education professionals face upheaval during such periods of transition. The shift to school-led ITT takes place alongside another significant change, where the method of assessment that is used to evaluate pupils' learning is undergoing radical revision.

This project takes place during this period of extensive adjustment. While it does not question mentors' efficacy in the previous, school-based framework, it argues that mentors are not currently equipped to handle the onus of responsibility placed upon them in the new, school-led framework. Examining these issues from within the workplace, it adopts an Action Research approach that draws upon existing and emerging literature as well as upon the experiences and perspectives of diverse education professionals involved in ITT. It ends with a series of findings, its key recommendation being that while training programmes for potential primary school teachers are being redesigned within the new ITT framework, mentors themselves need a structured training programme to prepare them to carry out effectively their reconceptualised role. This study provides a glimpse into my

workplace, the Forest Independent Primary Collegiate (FIPC), which serves as a case study of a changing ITT environment, at a time when the landscape of education is changing to become more collaborative, with alliances being formed among myriad institutions involved in ITT. As an ITT provider myself, I believe that this study presents a singular viewpoint on a topical issue of great importance in the field of primary education.

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