



# Connecting Research Communities (CRC 7):

## 7th International Student Conference

at Palacký University Olomouc, Czech  
Republic



2025



Palacký University  
Olomouc

# Connecting Research Communities (CRC 7): 7th International Student Conference

During this conference, students will present their research on a relevant topic of their professional interest (foundation projects', bachelor's and master's theses, etc.) and share their ideas with students from other educational institutions. The topics are primarily related to the English language, linguistics, culture and foreign language teaching. Durham University Foundation Students will be presenting work from Arts & Humanities, Business & Economics, Science and Social Sciences.

**Dates:**

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025** (student poster conference)

**Time:** 09:00-13:30

**Venue:**

Palacký University Olomouc,  
Faculty of Education,  
Purkrabská 2,  
779 00 Olomouc, Czech Republic

**Type:** poster conference

**Poster format:** A1 (portrait)

**Language:** English

**Organizers:**

Dr Blanka Babická ([blanka.babicka@upol.cz](mailto:blanka.babicka@upol.cz)), Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic

Dr Izabela W. Walczak ([izabela.w.walczak@durham.ac.uk](mailto:izabela.w.walczak@durham.ac.uk)), Durham University, United Kingdom

**CONNECTING RESEARCH COMMUNITIES (CRC 7):  
7<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE**

**PROGRAMME**

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Venue: Palacký University Olomouc, Faculty of Education, Purkrabská 2, 779 00  
Olomouc, Czech Republic, room 2.25 and the corridors**

<b>09:00 – 09:30</b>	Registration (Conference participants only)
<b>09:30 – 10:15</b>	Conference opening: Dr Blanka Babická, Dr Izabela Walczak (Conference participants only)
<b>10:15 – 10:45</b>	Break
<b>10:45 – 11:45</b>	<b>Poster session 1 and 2</b> - conference posters on display, the presenters available to answer questions as specified below
<b>11:45 – 12:00</b>	Break (change of posters)
<b>12:00 - 13:00</b>	<b>Poster session 3 and 4</b> – conference posters on display, the presenters available to answer questions as specified below
<b>13:00 – 13.30</b>	Conference closing: Dr Blanka Babická (Conference participants only)

**Session 1 (10:45-11:15)**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>POSTER TITLE</b>	<b>FIELD</b>
Jessica O'Toole	Durham University	<i>Victorian Vandalism: How does Victorian church restoration affect how historians interpret medieval tombs?</i>	Arts & Humanities
Callum Hood	Durham University	<i>The Effects of Natural Disasters on U.S. Banks: A Case Study on Hurricane Katrina and Louisiana State</i>	Business & Economics
Olivia Zheng	Durham University	<i>From Boom to Bust: The Short-Lived Employment Boost Of The Eat Out To Help Out Scheme</i>	Business & Economics
Juno Bain	Durham University	<i>Rivers at Risk: Where is Phosphate Pollution Coming From?</i>	Science
Ehiua Emmanuel M'Ian	Durham University	<i>To what extent are health regulatory bodies liable for the failure to provide adequate care for sickle cell patients in the UK?</i>	Social Science
Štěpán Jelen	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Implied Ideology in ELT Coursebooks Used in the Czech Republic in the 1980s and 2010s</i>	English Language Teaching
Anna Kučerová	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Assessing grammar of lower-secondary school learners</i>	English Language Teaching
Simona Bartošová	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Discussing Contemporary Issues Using Harry Potter Books</i>	English Language Teaching (literature/ culture)
Nikol Skřepská	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Teaching human characteristics and moral values through The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe</i>	English Language Teaching (literature/ culture)
Veronika Fryková	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>The Different Faces of American and British Suburban Life in Film</i>	Literature/ Culture

## Session 2 (11:15-11:45)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>POSTER TITLE</b>	<b>FIELD</b>
AJ Abe	Durham University	<i>What is the definition of knowledge in relation to conspiracies in celebrity culture ?</i>	Arts & Humanities
Joseph Badham	Durham University	<i>Investigating the social challenges associated with collegiate living at Durham University from the perspective of mature students</i>	Business & Economics
Tara Phull	Durham University	<i>Antioxidants in cell survival</i>	Science
James Bryant	Durham University	<i>Diplomatic immunity and its legal ramifications in the 21st century</i>	Social Science
Kristýna Hrušková	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Cultural Contexts and Language Pedagogy: A Comparative Analysis of English Language Teaching in the Czech Republic and Japan</i>	English Language Teaching
Gabriela Chudárková	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Approaches to teaching English nouns in lower secondary school</i>	English Language Teaching
Tereza Ryklová	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>The Use of Moodboards in ELT at the Upper-secondary Level</i>	English Language Teaching
Jiří Adámek	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Teaching English Through Harry Potter</i>	English Language Teaching (literature/ culture)
Marie Kolajová	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S.Lewis in ELT</i>	English Language Teaching (literature/ culture)
Jiří Lhotský	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Jhumpa Lahiri's Interpreter of Maladies in ELT</i>	English Language Teaching (literature/ culture)

### Session 3 (12:00-12:30)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>POSTER TITLE</b>	<b>FIELD</b>
<b>Aaron Keegan</b>	Durham University	<b><i>Have The Premier League's Financial Fair Play Rules Affected Competitiveness?</i></b>	Business & Economics
<b>Paweł Mehring</b>	Durham University	<b><i>The impact of ESG scores on mining companies' stock market value: Evidence from the UK</i></b>	Business & Economics
<b>Amy Vickers</b>	Durham University	<b><i>Milk Madness: A study into the Enzyme Reaction of Trypsin in Cow's Milk</i></b>	Science
<b>Nuala Teather</b>	Durham University	<b><i>Counter-Terrorism Legislation, Human-Rights and Arbitrary Detention: Assessing the extent in which counter-terrorism legislation infringes on human rights in relation to arbitrary detention</i></b>	Social Science
<b>Tomáš Bulko</b>	Palacký University Olomouc	<b><i>New expressions based on Snowclone forms</i></b>	Linguistics
<b>Eva Motičáková</b>	Palacký University Olomouc	<b><i>Comparison of the principles of regular and chosen alternative schools (Waldorf, Montessori) with the emphasis on the teacher's role in English lessons</i></b>	English Language Teaching
<b>Ondřej Šváb</b>	Palacký University Olomouc	<b><i>Inclusive Environment for Gender and Sexual Diversity in ELT Classrooms</i></b>	English Language Teaching
<b>Marie Vičková</b>	Palacký University Olomouc	<b><i>Cultural Values in ELT Coursebooks</i></b>	English Language Teaching
<b>Jáchym Wiaczka</b>	Palacký University Olomouc	<b><i>AI for teachers</i></b>	English Language Teaching
<b>Lucie Jirsáková</b>	Palacký University Olomouc	<b><i>Using The Hunger Games Book Series in ELT</i></b>	English Language Teaching (literature/ culture)

### Session 4 (12:30-13:00)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>POSTER TITLE</b>	<b>FIELD</b>
Robert Koles	Durham University	<i>The Impact of Financial Literacy on Debt Management Among Mature Foundation Year Students at Durham University</i>	Business & Economics
Caroline Oreoluwa Oshibogun	Durham University	<i>The Role of Influencers in Conscious Consumerism</i>	Business & Economics
Asli Ozgur	Durham University	<i>Perceptions on Artificial Intelligence</i>	Science
Erin Garroch	Durham University	<i>An Investigation into How Different Auditory Stimuli Can Influence Memory Recall in Foundation Year Students at Durham University</i>	Social Science
Marek Adamec	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Use of chatbots at universities in the Czech Republic and abroad</i>	English Language Teaching
Hana Poskočilová	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Teaching Czech Public Holidays in lower secondary English classes</i>	English Language Teaching
Linda Sehnalová	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Exploring the Ethical Boundaries of Teacher Influence in English Education: A Study of Propaganda and Pedagogy</i>	English Language Teaching
Adéla Valouchová	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Promoting Mental Health and Well-being: Teachers' Strategies in English Classroom at Secondary Schools</i>	English Language Teaching
Vojtěch Neuwirth	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>The Use of Song Lyrics by The Beatles in ELT</i>	English Language Teaching (literature/ culture)
Filip Turna	Palacký University Olomouc	<i>Echoes of Freedom: An Analysis of the Intersection of Android Autonomy in 'Detroit: Become Human' and Historical Slavery in the United States</i>	Literature/ Culture

# Poster Contributions

## Field: Linguistics

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Author, Institution, email	Title, Abstract
<b>Tomáš Bulko</b> <i>Palacký University Olomouc</i> <a href="mailto:tomas.bulko01@upol.cz">tomas.bulko01@upol.cz</a>	<b>New expressions based on Snowclone forms</b> <p>This diploma thesis focuses on new expressions based on snowclone forms. The theoretical part provides an overview of the historical background of the term snowclone, defines the concept, and further examines the general properties of snowclones. The practical part analyses responses from a questionnaire completed by English-speaking individuals across various proficiency levels, offering insights into how they generate and perceive new snowclone expressions.</p>

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## Field: Literature/Culture

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Author, Institution, email	Title, Abstract
<b>Veronika Fryková</b> <i>Palacký University Olomouc</i> <a href="mailto:veronika.frykova01@upol.cz">veronika.frykova01@upol.cz</a>	<b>The Different Faces of American and British Suburban Life in Film</b> <p>This work examines the portrayal of suburban life in British and American films, highlighting the cultural, social, and economic dynamics reflected in each. It explores themes such as the “American Dream,” class structures, family dynamics, and gender roles, showcasing how these themes evolve in the respective cinematic traditions. In American films, suburbia is often tied to the idea of the “American Dream,” where material success masks deeper issues, such as alienation and familial disintegration. When in contrast, British films emphasize the struggles of the working class, focusing on limited social mobility and economic hardship within suburban settings. This poster focuses on showcasing ongoing research and an introduction to the topic.</p>

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**Filip Turna**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[filip.turna01@upol.cz](mailto:filip.turna01@upol.cz)

**Echoes of Freedom: An Analysis of the Intersection of Android  
Autonomy in 'Detroit: Become Human' and Historical Slavery in  
the United States**

Video games have evolved into powerful tools for social critique and historical allegory. Detroit: Become Human exemplifies this by mirroring historical oppression, particularly American slavery and the Civil Rights Movement, through its narrative, character struggles, and moral dilemmas. This thesis examines how the game constructs its moral universe, engages players in decision-based gameplay, and reflects systemic discrimination. By drawing parallels between android subjugation and real historical injustices, the study assesses the role of interactive storytelling in ethical discourse. The findings contribute to understanding video games as immersive and interactive platforms for moral engagement, historical reflection, and social critique.

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## Field: English Language Teaching

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**Author, Institution, email**

**Title, Abstract**

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**Marek Adamec**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[marek.adamec01@upol.cz](mailto:marek.adamec01@upol.cz)

**Use of chatbots at universities in the Czech Republic and abroad**

The work focuses on the analysis of the use, impact and perception of chatbots in universities in the Czech Republic and abroad, focusing on their effectiveness, challenges and ethical aspects. It addresses the benefits and challenges of use of AI chatbots in universities as well as the approach of universities and university staff.

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**Gabriela Chudárková**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[gabriela.chudarkova02@upol.cz](mailto:gabriela.chudarkova02@upol.cz)

**Approaches to teaching English nouns in lower secondary  
school**

This diploma thesis deals with approaches to teaching English noun categories. The theoretical part first explains the differences between the terms approach, method and technique. The next part focuses on the description of the approaches according to the selected author and the last chapter deals with the individual categories of nouns in English. The empirical part aims to find out which approaches are most used in lower secondary school, based on interviews with selected teachers and analysis of their coursebooks.

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**Kristýna Hrušková**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[kristyna.hruskova02@upol.cz](mailto:kristyna.hruskova02@upol.cz)

**Cultural Contexts and Language Pedagogy: A Comparative Analysis of English Language Teaching in the Czech Republic and Japan**

This thesis examines the cultural influences on English Language Teaching (ELT) in the Czech Republic and Japan, comparing their historical developments, teaching methodologies, and classroom practices. It explores how sociocultural and educational contexts shape teacher approaches and student engagement. The first chapter focuses on the historical evolution of ELT in both countries, highlighting key reforms and policies. Other chapters analyse teaching methodologies, curriculum design, trends and challenges to identify similarities and differences.

The research employs a questionnaire distributed to English teachers in both countries and an interview with a Czech citizen living in Japan to gain additional insights and statistics on English language proficiency. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how cultural contexts impact language education in different educational settings.

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**Štěpán Jelen**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[stepan.jelen01@upol.cz](mailto:stepan.jelen01@upol.cz)

**Implied Ideology in ELT Coursebooks Used in the Czech Republic in the 1980s and 2010s**

My diploma thesis poster focuses on implied ideologies in ELT coursebooks used in Czech Republic. Its main aim is to demonstrate that coursebooks contain implied ideologies that can influence students beyond English language teaching and to comparatively analyze, how these ideologies have evolved in the last decades. The researched coursebook I mostly focus on is Tom Hutchinson's Project, 1st (1980s) and 4th (2010s) edition, which is one of the primarily used ELT coursebooks in Czech Republic. Implied ideologies could be a good source for studying society's values and morals, therefore analyzing their development might help us better understand contemporary society, and also indicate its future course.

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**Anna Kučerová**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[anna.kucerova01@upol.cz](mailto:anna.kucerova01@upol.cz)

**Assessing grammar of lower-secondary school learners**

English grammar tends to be very difficult to learn for Czech learners, as Czech grammar is significantly different. Czech teachers often struggle with assessing grammar in English lessons. Both teachers and learners often dislike writing grammar tests but testing through speaking and writing has also many disadvantages. This project focuses on grammar assessment and the main aim is to find out the opinions of the lower-secondary school teachers and learners on this topic. The research consisted of two parts, the questionnaire for the learners and interviews with teachers. Some of the results might be quite unexpected and it might be very interesting to compare the opinions of the teachers with the responses of the learners.

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**Eva Motičáková**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[eva.moticakova01@upol.cz](mailto:eva.moticakova01@upol.cz)

**Comparison of the principles of regular and chosen alternative schools (Waldorf, Montessori) with the emphasis on the teacher's role in English lessons**

The poster discusses a diploma thesis entitled Comparison of the principles of regular and chosen alternative schools (Waldorf, Montessori) with the emphasis on the teacher's role in English lessons. It contains points such as introduction, aims and research questions, research methods, results, conclusion and bibliography.

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**Hana Poskočilová**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[hana.poskocilova01@upol.cz](mailto:hana.poskocilova01@upol.cz)

**Teaching Czech Public Holidays in lower secondary English classes**

This study examines the impact of integrating Czech public holidays into English language lessons for lower secondary students at the A2-B1 level. By incorporating cultural elements into language teaching, learners enhance their ability to describe Czech traditions in English. The research includes a theoretical analysis of culture in second language acquisition and a practical study involving pre- and post-tests. Students first completed a quiz on Czech public holidays, followed by a four-week instructional period using short interactive activities. A post-test measured their progress, alongside a feedback section to assess engagement and understanding. This research highlights the benefits of combining language learning with cultural education.

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**Tereza Ryklová**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[tereza.ryklova01@upol.cz](mailto:tereza.ryklova01@upol.cz)

**The Use of Moodboards in ELT at the Upper-secondary Level**

The aim of this diploma project is to examine the possibilities of using moodboards for different aspects of language learning in upper-secondary school English lessons. In order to do so, questionnaires focused on the familiarity with moodboards were distributed to secondary-school teachers of English. Most respondents have encountered moodboards, but only a minority have tried using them as a technique in their lessons. Next, 3 different moodboards-themed lessons were conducted at 3 different types of secondary schools. Teachers who observed them were interviewed, and learners were asked to reflect on them in a written form. The majority of the teachers and learners found **moodboards** helpful. Based on the literature review and research, a guide for using moodboard as a teaching aid aimed at teachers of English will be created.

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**Linda Sehnalová**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[linda.sehnalova01@upol.cz](mailto:linda.sehnalova01@upol.cz)

**Exploring the Ethical Boundaries of Teacher Influence in English Education: A Study of Propaganda and Pedagogy**

This thesis explores the ethical boundaries of teacher influence in English education, focusing on the thin line between pedagogy and propaganda. It examines how teachers' personal beliefs, values, and choices of materials can shape students' worldviews, sometimes unintentionally crossing into indoctrination. Through a critical analysis of educational theories and case studies, the thesis highlights the complex role of teachers as both educators and influencers. It also investigates the extent to which teachers should guide students' thinking without imposing their own ideologies. By addressing the risks of propaganda in the classroom and proposing ethical guidelines for English teaching, the study aims to contribute to more balanced and reflective pedagogical practices. Ultimately, this work emphasizes the importance of fostering critical thinking and autonomy in learners while maintaining professional integrity and respect for diverse perspectives.

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**Ondřej Šváb**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[ondrej.svab01@upol.cz](mailto:ondrej.svab01@upol.cz)

**Inclusive Environment for Gender and Sexual Diversity in ELT Classrooms**

This thesis examines the integration of gender and sexual diversity in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms, focusing on representation in teaching materials, teacher and student perspectives, and available methodological resources. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study includes content analysis of ELT textbooks, surveys, and interviews with teachers, students, and school psychologists, as well as qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The findings highlight the extent of inclusivity in ELT materials, the challenges educators face, and the effectiveness of current strategies. Based on the results, the research proposes practical recommendations and develops a methodological checklist/material to support inclusive teaching practices.

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**Adéla Valouchová**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[adela.valouchova01@upol.cz](mailto:adela.valouchova01@upol.cz)

**Promoting Mental Health and Well-being: Teachers' Strategies in English Classroom at Secondary Schools**

This diploma thesis explores strategies used by English teachers to promote the mental health of secondary school students. Using a quantitative approach, a questionnaire was administered to explore common practices such as using mindfulness exercises, creative writing for self-expression or reducing stress activities. Findings highlight the key role of teachers in promoting mental wellbeing and suggest improvements for incorporating mental health promotion into the curriculum.

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**Marie Vlčková**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[marie.vlckova01@upol.cz](mailto:marie.vlckova01@upol.cz)

### **Cultural Values in ELT Coursebooks**

This thesis focuses on the influence of English Language Teaching (ELT) coursebooks on the development of pupils' cultural values. The research compares two commonly used coursebooks, Bloggers and Project Explore, at the lower-secondary level. Through a qualitative approach, combining content analysis of the coursebooks and semi-structured interviews with ELT teachers, the research aims to identify which coursebook is more effective in promoting cultural values. Although the study is ongoing, it is evident that integrating cultural content into ELT coursebooks is essential. The findings will inform ELT teachers which ELT coursebooks might be more helpful in teaching cultural values. This thesis will hopefully contribute to understanding the role of ELT coursebooks in shaping pupils' cultural perspectives and understanding.

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**Jáchym Wiaczka**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[jachym.wiaczka01@upol.cz](mailto:jachym.wiaczka01@upol.cz)

### **AI for teachers**

Updating, changing, or creating school education programmes every year is a lot of work. Let's help out teachers tasked with this job by employing AI to aid them. My thesis explores the usefulness of Artificial intelligence in the teaching profession.

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## **Field: English Language Teaching (literature/culture)**

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**Author, Institution, email**

**Title, Abstract**

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**Jiří Adánek**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[jiri.adamek01@upol.cz](mailto:jiri.adamek01@upol.cz)

### **Teaching English Through Harry Potter**

This academic poster presents the use of Harry Potter series in English Language Teaching (ELT) at primary and lower secondary schools. The main focus of the thesis is to design four lesson plans, which will incorporate literature in ELT and which will align with the educational objectives outlined in the Czech Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education. The theoretical part focuses on the key parts of incorporating literature in ELT, which are the motivation, cultural aspects, and the development of the four language skills. The theoretical section also explores the benefits and challenges of incorporating literature in ELT, emphasizing scaffolding techniques and cultural awareness through authentic texts.

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**Simona Bartošová**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[simona.bartosova02@upol.cz](mailto:simona.bartosova02@upol.cz)

### **Discussing Contemporary Issues Using Harry Potter Books**

This diploma thesis explores contemporary issues in Harry Potter books and their role in education. The series addresses slavery through house-elves, racism with blood purity, and political corruption in the Ministry of Magic. It also highlights bullying and abuse of power, seen in Draco Malfoy and Dolores Umbridge. By analyzing these themes, Harry Potter helps students engage with real-world problems in a relatable way. This thesis demonstrates how literature fosters critical thinking and discussion, making Harry Potter a valuable tool for understanding contemporary social issues.

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**Lucie Jirsáková**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[lucie.jirsakova01@upol.cz](mailto:lucie.jirsakova01@upol.cz)

### **Using The Hunger Games Book Series in ELT**

This thesis explores the integration of The Hunger Games book series by Suzanne Collins into English language teaching (ELT) through the creation and evaluation of lesson plans. It analyses how young adult literature can be used as an effective teaching tool to improve language acquisition, engagement, and critical thinking. The research focuses on designing lesson plans followed by an assessment of their pedagogical potential. The findings intend to highlight both the benefits and challenges of using young adult literature in ELT, offering insights into its feasibility and effectiveness while emphasising the role of literature in enhancing students' language skills and making the lessons engaging.

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**Marie Kolajová**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[marie.kolajova01@upol.cz](mailto:marie.kolajova01@upol.cz)

### **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S.Lewis in ELT**

This poster presents the didactic potential of literature in English language teaching (ELT), focusing on The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis. The research combines lesson plan implementation, classroom observation, student questionnaires, and teacher reflection to analyze the effectiveness of literary texts in language acquisition. Findings highlight literature's role in enhancing vocabulary, critical thinking, and student engagement. The study also identifies challenges and offers practical solutions for integrating literary works into ELT.

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**Jiří Lhotský**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[jiri.lhotsky01@upol.cz](mailto:jiri.lhotsky01@upol.cz)

### **Jhumpa Lahiri's Interpreter of Maladies in ELT**

This project explores the use of Jhumpa Lahiri's work *Interpreter of Maladies* in order to potentially enhance language skills and cultural awareness. As an authentic source, literature offers a rich vocabulary, diverse sentence structure, and cultural insights that make it a valuable tool for language development.

A collection of short stories by Lahiri delves into the lives of Indian immigrants in the U.S. providing meaningful context for pupils to engage with topics such as identity, displacement, and communication, fostering both linguistic and intercultural competence. The project investigates how such narratives can promote vocabulary, reading, and the ability to argue about complex issues, as well as bridge challenges such as the complexity of literary language and its relevance to learners' environments. Through classroom activities, questionnaires, and teacher review, this project seeks to demonstrate and figure out how literature can make language learning more engaging and culturally enriching.

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**Vojtěch Neuwirth**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[vojtech.neuwirth02@upol.cz](mailto:vojtech.neuwirth02@upol.cz)

### **The Use of Song Lyrics by The Beatles in ELT**

The poster is based on a thesis which explores use of song lyrics by The Beatles in English Language Teaching (ELT). The research investigates whether Beatles lyrics provide suitable material for language learning and how they can be effectively applied in lessons. Theoretical aspects include an analysis of song lyrics and the pedagogical value of music in ELT. Practical research involves lesson plans incorporating Beatles lyrics, their implementation in real classrooms, and subsequent feedback analysis. Results indicate that Beatles lyrics offer good teaching material, adaptable for different learners and learning objectives.

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**Nikol Skřepská**  
*Palacký University Olomouc*  
[nikol.skrepaska01@upol.cz](mailto:nikol.skrepaska01@upol.cz)

### **Teaching human characteristics and moral values through The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe**

Literature has been implemented in education since its very beginning. Findings from previously conducted research have brought to attention primarily positive outcomes of including literary texts in English lessons, proving literature as a fundamental part of the language acquisition process. This study has been organised with the purpose to see whether *Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and the characters appearing in this story, could be utilised in ELT to improve not only pupils' reading comprehension but also to deepen their understanding of moral values and human character traits. Four grades of learners, with ages varying from 9 to 15 years old, have been chosen to participate in this research. Although the final number of 44 pupils might not be the highest, it is sufficient to provide a credible insight into how this topic would approximately perform in the education system on a bigger scale.

## Field: Arts & Humanities

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**Author, Institution, email**

**Title, Abstract**

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**AJ Abe**  
*Durham University*  
[aanu.abe@durham.ac.uk](mailto:aanu.abe@durham.ac.uk)

**What is the definition of knowledge in relation to conspiracies in celebrity culture ?**

My academic poster focuses on what we can claim to be knowledge, when it comes to conspiracies within celebrity culture. There are always scandals within the Hollywood industry and therefore within celebrity culture, and with this comes conspiracies. What my project aims to discover is when can we stop calling them conspiracies, and just admit that the theorists are simply smart, and see through the cloud of deception that the celebrities (and in turn the media) are trying to feed us. In order to do this though, we must determine what knowledge is, and how that can be applied to real life, and not just stay in the theoretical.

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**Jessica O'Toole**  
*Durham University*  
[kp1139@durham.ac.uk](mailto:kp1139@durham.ac.uk)

**Victorian Vandalism: How does Victorian church restoration affect how historians interpret medieval tombs?**

This study will explore how the extensive Victorian era church "restoration" impacts contemporary interpretation of medieval tombs, with particular reference to St Giles Church in Coberley, Gloucestershire. It will first introduce St Giles Church and its tombs that were relocated in its "restoration", with a brief examination of why an historical framework was rejected in this study. Next it will explore the wider conflict between contemporary academics in relation to the value of the Victorian restorationists work, with particular attention to the reasons for removal of tomb decoration such as canopies and niches, and whether this could be viewed as vandalism or revival. Finally, with these examinations in mind, it will address St Giles Church, and the resulting effect on identifying the extant tombs there and their possible lost meanings, with particular attention to the unidentified "child" burial of the de Berkeley family.

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**Author, Institution, email**

**Title, Abstract**

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**Joseph Badham**  
*Durham University*  
[joseph.i.badham@durham.ac.uk](mailto:joseph.i.badham@durham.ac.uk)

**Investigating the social challenges associated with collegiate living at Durham University from the perspective of mature students**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the social challenges associated with collegiate living at Durham University. The study will examine this phenomenon from the perspective of mature students (21 and over at the time of commencing their studies). The target demographic includes current foundation year students and members of the Mature Students' Association. The study will draw upon primary research data gathered through a Microsoft Forms questionnaire. The desired sample size is n=30, with the current number of respondents at n=15. The challenges faced by mature students in higher education are well-documented in academic literature. However, there is a lack of research regarding the experiences of students at collegiate institutions such as Durham University. Existing literature typically identifies three key themes: financial challenges, academic challenges, and social challenges. Due to Durham University's exceptional circumstances, this study will focus specifically on the social challenges.

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**Callum Hood**  
*Durham University*  
[nkrp15@durham.ac.uk](mailto:nkrp15@durham.ac.uk)

**The Effects of Natural Disasters on U.S. Banks: A Case Study on Hurricane Katrina and Louisiana State**

Hurricane Katrina was the costliest natural disaster to happen within the U.S. history. This case study looks at a sample of three banks: local, regional and national each categorized based on state level deposits. I employ three metrics to measuring the effects, Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Equity (ROE) and Loan Defaults(90+ days). The effects are measured from one year before (2004) and up to two years after (2007); data has been selected using annual reports and state issued financial documents such as 10-K. The findings highlight banks recovery strategies and long-term mitigation efforts.

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**Aaron Keegan**  
*Durham University*  
[qgwk25@durham.ac.uk](mailto:qgwk25@durham.ac.uk)

**Have The Premier League's Financial Fair Play Rules Affected Competitiveness?**

The Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulations in the Premier League were introduced in 2015 by the organisation to mitigate financial doping and foster financial stability. Since their implementation, the efficacy of these regulations in achieving their intended objective of ensuring a level financial playing field has been a subject of ongoing debate. Critics have questioned whether the rules have successfully reduced financial disparities, or whether they have reinforced existing financial and competitive inequalities. This case study examines Everton Football Club, analysing the club's annual financial reports and the standard deviation of points per season in the league. By evaluating these factors, the study aims to determine whether the club has managed to sustain financial stability while remaining competitive, or if the FFP regulations have limited their ability to compete with wealthier clubs and should therefore be amended.

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**Robert Koles**  
Durham University  
[xmdn96@durham.ac.uk](mailto:xmdn96@durham.ac.uk)

**The Impact of Financial Literacy on Debt Management Among Mature Foundation Year Students at Durham University**

This study explores the relationship between financial literacy and debt management among mature Foundation Year students at Durham University. Mature students, defined as those aged 21 or older, often face unique financial challenges, including managing pre-existing debts, balancing living expenses, and financing their education. Using a quantitative research approach, the study surveys mature Foundation Year students to assess their financial literacy levels and examine how financial knowledge influences their debt management strategies. The findings aim to identify key financial challenges within this demographic and contribute to the development of tailored financial literacy initiatives. This research provides valuable insights into the financial behaviours of mature students, informing policies that support their financial well-being.

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**Paweł Mehring**  
Durham University  
[hgin88@durham.ac.uk](mailto:hgin88@durham.ac.uk)

**The impact of ESG scores on mining companies' stock market value: Evidence from the UK**

This study examines the impact of ESG scores on the stock market performance of five FTSE100 mining companies (Rio Tinto, Glencore, Antofagasta, Fresnillo, and Anglo American) over the period from 2020 to 2023. Using quantitative analysis and regression models, the research explores the relationship between ESG performance and stock returns, alongside key financial indicators such as ROA, ROE, firm size, and leverage. The results indicate that ESG scores have no significant impact on stock performance, with ROE and ROA emerging as stronger influences on stock returns. These findings suggest that, in the mining sector, financial metrics play a more important role in shaping stock market value than ESG factors. This study provides valuable insights and sets the stage for further research into the relationship between ESG performance and long-term financial performance.

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**Caroline Oreoluwa Oshibogun**  
Durham University  
[kdqb46@durham.ac.uk](mailto:kdqb46@durham.ac.uk)

**The Role of Influencers in Conscious Consumerism**

Social media has changed the way people discover and engage with brands, with micro-influencers (brand ambassadors and content creators with smaller but highly engaged audiences) playing a growing role in promoting ethical consumerism. Unlike traditional celebrities, micro-influencers build strong, personal connections with their followers, making their recommendations feel more authentic and trustworthy. This study explores whether exposure to micro-influencers encouraging ethical consumption leads to real changes in purchasing habits. A survey of social media users aged 18+ examines how engagement with micro-influencers affects trust in ethical brands and purchasing decisions. Using Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour, the study anticipates that while micro-influencers can positively influence attitudes toward ethical consumption, affordability and accessibility may still be major barriers. The findings will offer insights into the effectiveness of micro-influencers in shaping ethical consumer choices and whether their impact is strong enough to drive lasting change.

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**Olivia Zheng**  
Durham University  
[tvpx32@durham.ac.uk](mailto:tvpx32@durham.ac.uk)

**From Boom to Bust: The Short-Lived Employment Boost Of The Eat Out To Help Out Scheme**

This study investigates the long-term impacts of the UK's Eat Out to Help Out Scheme (EOHO) on employment in the hospitality industry. The EOHO scheme subsidised 50% off food and non-alcoholic drinks between the 3rd and 31st of August 2020, from Mondays to Wednesdays after the UK's first pandemic lockdown. Using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis, the research found a positive correlation between the EOHO scheme and employment but no statistically significant long-term impact. These findings indicate that while the EOHO scheme temporarily boosted employment, it did not lead to sustained long-term employment growth, highlighting the need for more comprehensive measures to support the industry.

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**Field: Science**

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**Author, Institution, email**

**Title, Abstract**

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**Juno Bain**  
Durham University  
[hsw46@durham.ac.uk](mailto:hsw46@durham.ac.uk)

**Rivers at Risk: Where is Phosphate Pollution Coming From?**

This project aimed to observe the relationship between the land use surrounding water sources and pollution levels, hypothesising that water collected from agricultural areas would have higher levels of phosphate pollution, due to fertiliser run-off from arable farmland. High phosphate levels in rivers can lead to eutrophication and increases in harmful algal blooms, which are linked to species loss. This investigation reflected methods used by Earthwatch in their 2024 report on the health of the UK's rivers, using a commercial test kit and UV-Vis spectrophotometry to determine phosphate levels in tested samples. Findings showed that 83% of samples had unacceptable levels of phosphate, indicating a need for intervention in Durham's waterways. This study's hypothesis could not be supported or rejected, as insufficient data was collected to identify statistical correlations - further data collection from more varied sites around Durham would allow patterns between land use and phosphate levels to be observed more confidently.

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**Asli Ozgur**  
Durham University  
[phrr81@durham.ac.uk](mailto:phrr81@durham.ac.uk)

**Perceptions on Artificial Intelligence**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly integrated into society, yet public understanding remains inconsistent. This study explores how AI is defined and perceived in the UK and the USA, considering cultural, educational, and policy influences. Findings suggest that national attitudes towards AI are shaped by differing priorities, with ethics emphasised in the UK and privacy concerns more prominent in the USA. Additionally, younger and more educated individuals tend to have a broader understanding of AI, with exposure to AI tools further shaping perceptions. These insights highlight the need for targeted education and policy strategies to bridge knowledge gaps and foster a more informed public discourse. By addressing these differences, stakeholders can develop AI frameworks that balance innovation, ethics, and regulation for a more responsible and inclusive AI future.

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**Tara Phull**  
Durham University  
[vsj43@durham.ac.uk](mailto:vsj43@durham.ac.uk)

### **Antioxidants in cell survival**

Cell survival is essential for understanding the workings of biological systems, and how antioxidants play a key role in protecting these cells from oxidative stress. Oxidative stress is caused by an imbalance between the production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) and the cell's ability to detoxify them - they play a large role in cellular damage. Antioxidants are key protective agents that mitigate oxidative stress by neutralising ROS, thereby preserving cellular integrity and function. This study investigates the mechanisms through which antioxidants (vitamin C/ascorbic acid in particular) contributes to cell survival under oxidative stress conditions. By using titrations of different ascorbic acid sources, we will demonstrate that antioxidant treatments enhances cell viability and can promote cell longevity. Ultimately, the finding can be uses in sustainability methods to prolong the lifespan of fresh produce.

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**Amy Vickers**  
Durham University  
[krxf76@durham.ac.uk](mailto:krxf76@durham.ac.uk)

### **Milk Madness: A study into the Enzyme Reaction of Trypsin in Cow's Milk**

This study is an investigation into how pH affects the digestion of the protein casein in cow's milk by the enzyme trypsin. Casein is the most abundant protein in milk but is difficult for the body to digest due to its structure, Trypsin is the proteolytic enzyme which digests casein in the body. The aim of this project is to discover the optimum pH which it works at. The experiment was conducted using colorimetry and 'cross testing' to acquire results. So far, results have shown that acidic conditions (< pH7) lead to a longer reaction time, and alkaline conditions (>pH7) have a much quicker reaction time. It has shown that pH 10 is the optimum, with only 7 seconds taken for the cross to appear. It is useful to understand the optimum for trypsin to enhance medical research to provide dietary advice to patients.

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## **Field: Social Science**

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**Author, institution, email**

**Title, Abstract**

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**James Bryant**  
Durham University  
[James.bryant@durham.ac.uk](mailto:James.bryant@durham.ac.uk)

### **Diplomatic immunity and its legal ramifications in the 21st century**

In recent years, diplomatic immunity has been a contentious issue around the globe, from Zimbabwe with the case of Eric Kiptom and even in the UK with the case of Harry Dunne. This mini dissertation is about diplomatic immunity and its legal ramifications in the 21st Century. This dissertation aims to discover the key aspects of diplomatic immunity if it is still required in the modern day, and if it requires reform by looking at legal cases on both sides of the argument. For this project, information has been gathered by a desk-based approach, reading many journals from many fields. So far, it seems that the ultimate answer to the question of diplomatic immunity requires reform. However, it can also be concluded that there is no way to reform diplomatic immunity effectively.

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**Erin Garroch**  
*Durham University*  
[hdjk95@durham.ac.uk](mailto:hdjk95@durham.ac.uk)

**An Investigation into How Different Auditory Stimuli Can Influence Memory Recall in Foundation Year Students at Durham University**

This research project aims to investigate the influence of various auditory stimuli on memory function, specifically focusing on how different sounds or types of noise can impact the ability to recall visual information. The method for data collection will involve a controlled experiment in which participants will perform an image recall task. Participants will be recruited from Durham University's Foundation Programme, ensuring ethical standards are upheld throughout the study. Through data analysis the results aim to provide evidence-based strategies that can help students create effective study techniques to improve their overall academic performance.

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**Ehiva Emmanuel M'lan**  
*Durham University*  
[ktnl49@durham.ac.uk](mailto:ktnl49@durham.ac.uk)

**To what extent are health regulatory bodies liable for the failure to provide adequate care for sickle cell patients in the UK?**

Discussions around sickle cell treatment continue to arise due to inadequate care being provided to patients, which is highlighted by patients' experience in hospitals. This study investigates whether health regulatory bodies should be liable for the failure to provide adequate care for sickle cell patients in the UK. This study will reveal that there is a lack of knowledge and negligent behaviour from medical staff, which stems from structural problems, which contribute to the inadequate care for sickle cell patients. From this, it will conclude that health regulatory bodies are liable due to failing to uphold a reasonable standard of care.

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**Nuala Teather**  
*Durham University*  
[mvxk47@durham.ac.uk](mailto:mvxk47@durham.ac.uk)

**Counter-Terrorism Legislation, Human-Rights and Arbitrary Detention: Assessing the extent in which counter-terrorism legislation infringes on human rights in relation to arbitrary detention.**

This research investigates the extent to which counter-terrorism laws impact the likelihood of human rights violations, focusing on arbitrary detention (imprisonment/detention without due process or valid legal justification), using legal cases to determine the extent in which these laws impact on the human rights of detainees, and how political and socio-economic instability affect the frequency of countries practising unlawful detention of terror suspects.

Using evidence and examples drawn from the Belmarsh Case (United Kingdom), *El Masri v. United States*, and *Rasul v. Bush* (United States of America) such as corrupt practices and lack of governance (in connection to relevant legislation and treaties), the research (although still ongoing) finds that the extent in which counter-terrorism legislation impacts on the practice of arbitrary detention and the resulting human rights violations is largely dependent on global political and socio-economic factors.