



Student Teachers as Readers (STaRs)

**Faculty of Wellbeing Education
and Language Studies (WELS)**

Call for PhD projects starting in October 2024

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Project description

School

Education, Childhood, Youth & Sport

Members

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Aim

In the context of increased professional interest in fostering young readers and the mandate to encompass Reading for Pleasure (RfP) in the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014), the study aims to explore UK student teachers' identities as readers, reading repertoires, childhood and adolescent experiences of reading and expectations for their roles as future teachers. It is nested within the OU's extensive Higher Education coalition of 36 UK partners and RfP ambassadors, enabling data collection and dissemination opportunities.

<https://ourfp.org/ou-rfp-higher-education-partners/>

Research questions

Overarching questions for the data include:

1. What are student teachers' identities as readers and what value do they ascribe personal reading in their lives?
2. In what ways have their past experiences as readers shaped their current dispositions towards RfP for themselves and their future pupils?
3. To what extent do they associate own reader identity / themselves as a reader to their perceived self-efficacy as a reading teacher?

Methodology

The pilot study using an anonymous online questionnaire has been completed with Year 1 Primary Teaching student volunteers from 10 UK initial teacher education providers and is currently being analysed with a view to publishing findings. In addition to employing descriptive and inferential statistics, the collected data will be analysed using methodology of corpus linguistics and thematic analysis. The next phase of the project is still in development, and we are considering employing a participatory collective case-study approach.

Contribution

This study offers a new contribution to international understanding about student teachers as readers. Comparable data is not currently available in the UK, and previous international studies have considered some elements of student teachers' experiences as readers but more commonly with a much smaller sample in one location. Recent small-scale studies have been

completed in Australia and Scotland so this UK wide sample has the potential to add to this body of work. Cremin et al's (2014) study of teachers as readers highlighted significant gaps in class teacher knowledge of children's texts and ways forward for RfP pedagogy that have been recognised by UK policy and guidance for schools and adopted internationally. The STaRs study has the potential to attain a similar reach and impact on initial teacher education. It could enable providers to better understand the needs of student teachers and support them to foster children's reading for pleasure in their future teaching roles.

PhD project

The applicant would be given access to the current data set and would be able to work alongside team members to examine the data. In addition, they would have the opportunity to identify their own research questions and develop a complementary empirical study. This is likely to include additional data collection, potentially employing an ethnographic approach or replication of the data collection in a different context.

