

# Why Not Me?



## Keys to Success from 10 Years Learning

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Tuesday, 19 June, 2007

Mary Immaculate College,  
Limerick

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*“And in today already walks tomorrow”*

*(Samuel Taylor Coleridge)*



COLÁISTE MHAIRE GAN SMÁL | MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE  
18 JACOB STREET | UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK





## CONTEXT

Educational disadvantage results from the interaction of social, economic and educational factors that result in lower attainment and achievement for some students. It has been a priority in Irish education for several decades with many interventions being established to address the associated challenges. Mary Immaculate College has a significant record of work in the area of educational disadvantage and its social contexts. This work has been carried out in Targeting Educational Disadvantage (TED), the Centre for Educational Disadvantage Research (CEDR), the Learner Support Unit (LSU), the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) as well as the Departments of Education and of Geography. It ranges from pure research to action research and the development of intervention measures. This colloquium will highlight the current state of knowledge in the field of educational disadvantage and help to identify future directions for research and other initiatives.

## AIMS OF COLLOQUIUM

This Colloquium on educational disadvantage will provide an opportunity for the coming together of educationalists, policy makers, service providers, statutory and voluntary groups, regional and local authorities, local partnerships and development boards, religious groups, social partners and local business people to discuss the issues and strategies to address the difficulties encountered in the Limerick context.

## Booking Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*State which of the 3 thematic sessions you would wish to attend*

- A. Issues and Interventions to address educational disadvantage
- B. Issues of Access to Higher Education
- C. Issues of Traveller Education

*If you have dietary or any other specific requirements please tick and we will contact you on receipt of your booking.*

**Mail booking form to:**

Caroline Considine, TED Project, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.  
Tel: 061- 204574 E Mail: [caroline.considine@mic.ul.ie](mailto:caroline.considine@mic.ul.ie)

# Conference Programme

9.00 Registration

9.30 Welcome and opening address: *Peadar Cremin, President, Mary Immaculate College*

## 9.45 **Session 1** Contexts of Disadvantage

Chair: *Eucharía McCarthy, Director, Curriculum Development Unit*

- **Overview of TED Initiatives to Address Educational Disadvantage**  
*Sandra Ryan, Ann Higgins, Ruth Bourke & Caroline Considine, TED*
- **Educational Disadvantage in Limerick: The Socio-Economic and Spatial Context**  
*Des McCafferty & Angela Canny, Mary Immaculate College*
- Plenary Discussion

11.00 Tea & Coffee

## 11.15 **Session 2** Language Variation

Chair: *Kevin O'Kelly, Head of Research and Policy, Combat Poverty Agency*

- **From Difference to Disadvantage: "Talking Posh!" Sociolinguistic Perspectives on the Context of Schooling in Ireland**  
*Áine Cregan, Mary Immaculate College*
- Plenary Discussion

12.30 Lunch

## 13.30 **Session 3** Developing Partnership

Chair: *Ann Kavanagh, PAUL Partnership*

- **Developing Partnership between Families, Schools and Communities: Lessons and Issues from the Family-School-Community Educational Partnership**  
*Sandra Ryan, John Galvin, Jeanne O'Connor, Mary Maguire, Susan Williams, Katie Williams, Ann Burke, FSCEP Project*
- Plenary Discussion

## 15.00 **Session 4** Thematic Sessions

- **A: Issues and Interventions to Address Educational Disadvantage**  
Chair: *Jim Mulkerrins, Principal Officer, Social Inclusion Unit, DES*
- **My school, Your school, Our school, The Evolution of a Designated Disadvantaged Primary School into a Community Learning Centre, 1985-2005**  
*Ann Higgins, Ita Tobin and Michelle Harte*
- **Working Together: Promoting Positive Behaviour**  
*Claire Lyons & Ann Higgins, CEDR/TED*
- Plenary Discussion
- **B: Issues of Access to Higher Education**  
Chair: *TBA*
- **Learning from Learner Support: A Profile of a Unit and its Learners in Action**  
*James Binchy, LSU*
- **Pathways to Third Level for Adult Learners of Different Backgrounds: A Case Study of the MIC Adult Access Foundation Certificate**  
*Agata Vitale & Geraldine Brosnan, LSU*
- Plenary Discussion
- **C: Issues of Traveller Education**  
Chair: *John Heneghan, University of Limerick*
- **Moving On: Achieving Equity of Access to Higher Education for Minority Groups**  
*Caroline Healy, LSU*
- **Same difference? Exploring the discourse of Irish Traveller and Settled Families**  
*Brian Clancy, LSU*
- Plenary Discussion

16.30 Launch of the report "*From Difference to Disadvantage: "Talking Posh!" Sociolinguistic Perspectives on the Context of Schooling in Ireland*" by the Minister for Education & Science

16.50 Closing Remarks *Teresa O'Doherty, Dean, Faculty of Education, Mary Immaculate College*



## Targeting Educational Disadvantage (TED)

Targeting Educational Disadvantage (TED) was founded in 1998 and seeks to harness and develop the strengths and resources of Mary Immaculate College to enable those experiencing educational disadvantage to reach their full potential. A core aspect of TED work is the relationship with 31 schools within two networks (one based in Limerick City and the other in the Western Mercy Province). Issues from these schools such as absenteeism, behaviour management and partnership have driven the research agenda within TED and led to action research within the schools on these issues. This work has involved personal and professional development for school staff, pupils and their families. Other aspects of TED include work in School Age Childcare, After School Support Education and Training (ASSET), Celebrating Difference-Promoting Equality, supporting schools in issues such as school places and delivery of summer courses for teachers. TED also works with a range of community representatives. For further information see [www.mic.ul.ie/TED](http://www.mic.ul.ie/TED)



## Centre for Educational Disadvantage Research (CEDR)

The Centre for Educational Disadvantage Research (CEDR) at Mary Immaculate College promotes, supports and facilitates high quality research on educational disadvantage and on equality and justice issues in education. The Centre is focused on both policy and practice issues and it specialises in working collaboratively with teaching practitioners. CEDR is committed to the development of policy and practice in the area of development education in Ireland and currently has a 3-year project underway entitled 'Educating the Development Educators.' CEDR aims to focus on how learning from research can impact on teacher education in Ireland. A major goal of the project is the dissemination of its work through academic papers, web-based materials and educational resources. For further information see [www.mic.ul.ie/ted/newpage3.htm](http://www.mic.ul.ie/ted/newpage3.htm)



## Learner Support Unit (LSU)

The Learner Support Unit (LSU) was established in 1997 as a direct result of the Higher Education Authority's Targeted Initiative Funding scheme. Its initial remit was to provide academic support for mature students taking a degree at Mary Immaculate College (MIC). In the past decade, the LSU's role and brief has expanded considerably, and this is directly related to continued and increased investment by the HEA under the Strategic Initiative Scheme. The LSU is based on an integrated model focused on 1) widening participation in higher education, especially, though not exclusively, for mature students 2) providing structured, as well as individual support within higher education with a view to enhanced learning, retention, successful completion and career orientation. The day-to-day work of the LSU spans the following areas: learning support services, developing learning resource materials and special projects. For further information see [www.mic.ul.ie/lsu/index.htm](http://www.mic.ul.ie/lsu/index.htm)




## Combat Poverty Agency

The Combat Poverty Agency is a state advisory agency developing and promoting evidence-based proposals and measures to combat poverty in Ireland. Combat Poverty works for a poverty-free Ireland by striving for change which will promote a fairer and more just, equitable and inclusive society. In line with its statutory role (Combat Poverty Agency Act 1986) Combat Poverty promotes policy advice to Government on policies pertaining to poverty, informed by its research, its demonstration programmes and engagement with groups experiencing poverty. Combat Poverty has undertaken and continues to support work on educational disadvantage, including its Demonstration Programme on Educational Disadvantage (1996 - 2000). For further information on Combat Poverty's work see [www.combatpoverty.ie](http://www.combatpoverty.ie)




**Targeting Educational Disadvantage Project (TED)**

<http://www.mic.ul.ie/ted>




### TED

- Located in the Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College.
- Funded by the Higher Education Authority since 1997.

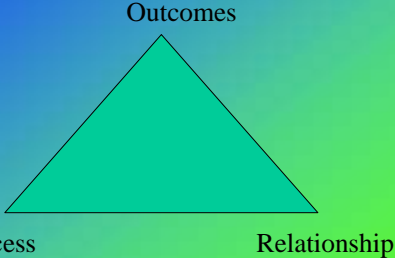


### Mission Statement


*“TED seeks to harness and develop the strengths and resources of Mary Immaculate College to enable those experiencing educational disadvantage reach their full potential.”*



### Dimensions of success




Adapted from : Interaction Associates (1998) *Facilitative Leadership: Tapping the Power of Participation*, USA: Interaction Associates.



### Strands of TED work - Outcomes

- Strand 1: Primary School Networks
- Strand 2: Educational partnership for change
- Strand 3: Behaviour Management
- Strand 4: After School Support
- Strand 5: Research and Evaluation



### Strand 1: Networks

Two networks of DEIS primary schools:

- PLUS (Primary Liaison with University Services), Limerick**
- Cur le Chéile, Tuam based**


Seed bed and site for development and delivery of TED initiatives





### Network Activities

- Peer and school to school support
- Sharing of good practice
- Workshops and information seminars
- Advocacy on issues in DEIS schools
- Educational Disadvantage Curriculum Specialisation
- Teachers, parents and pupils give presentations to undergraduates
- Online Summer schools



### Strand 2: Educational Partnership for Change

On site interventions:

- Working Together Project
- Family School Community Education Project

Other models of collaboration:

- Celebrating Difference, Promoting Equality
- School Age Childcare Programme
- Promoting school attendance



### Working in Partnership with Agencies

- DEIS Primary Schools
- Community groups
- Third level sector
- Limerick City Childcare Committee
- PAUL partnership
- School Completion Projects
- Out of schools group, Limerick city
- Department of Education and Science
- Barnardos
- National Parents Council
- Health Service Executive
- Limerick Community Education Network
- Boards of Management
- Clondalkin Partnership
- Archways



### Strand 3: Behaviour Management

- Working Together Project
- Online summer school
- Seminar on Behaviour Management April 2007
- Incredible Years Programme
- Resource : Working Together for Positive Behaviour, A guide for teachers and schools



### Strand 4: After School Support

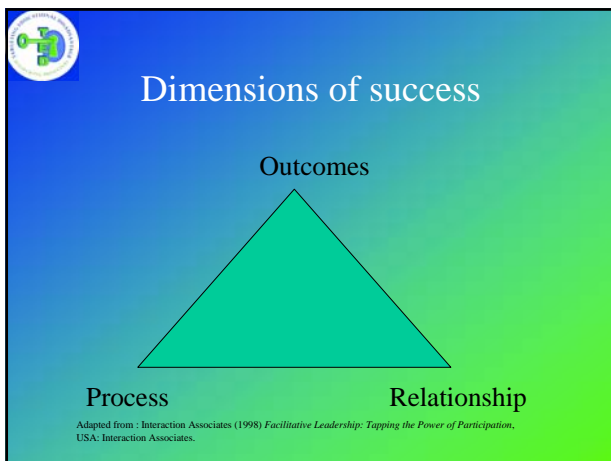
- **After School Support Educational Training (ASSET)**
- **School Age Childcare Programme**
- **Quality Development of Out of School Services (QDOSS)**
- **Growth in after school provision and potential to address learning needs of individual child**



### Strand 5: Research and Evaluation: Centre for Educational Disadvantage Research (CEDR).

- The Centre works to tackle educational disadvantage through the promotion, support and development of educational innovation in policy and practice
- Joint initiatives with TED (Working Together; Celebrating Difference, Promoting Equality)
- Independent initiatives (Network of Teacher Educators; Teaching Social Justice publication; Educating the Development Educators)



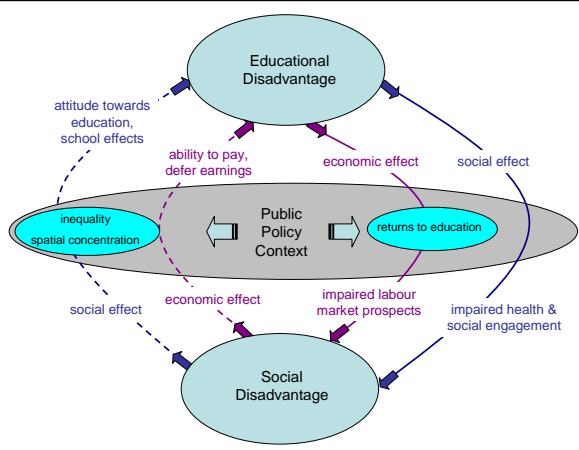
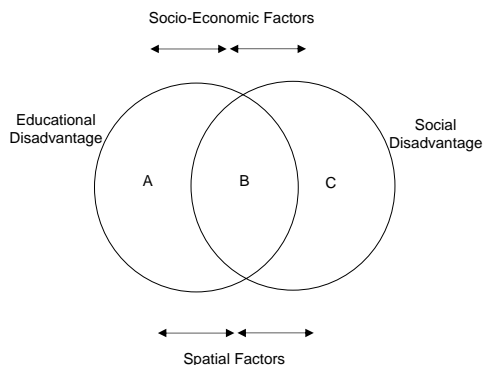


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- Process – Key learning**
- Partnership
  - Approachable / Accessibility
  - Consultative process
  - Capacity building
  - Support
  - Relationship building
  - Responsive
  - Sharing learning

- 
- Relationships – Key learning**
- Respect
  - Valuing
  - Listening
  - Validating
  - Recognition
  - Responding
  - Balance of power

## Educational Disadvantage in Limerick: The Socio-Economic and Spatial Context

Des McCafferty  
 Department of Geography  
 Angela Canny  
 Department of Education  
 Mary Immaculate College

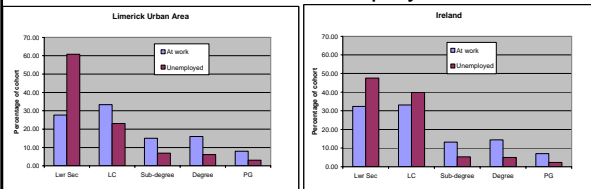


## Census Data

- Educational Disadvantage
  - Level of educational attainment
  - Early school leaving

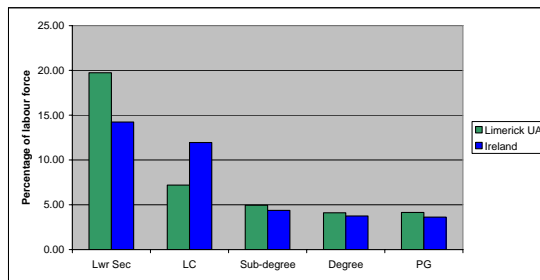
- Social Disadvantage
  - Unemployment
  - Economic dependency
  - Lone parent families
  - Restricted access to goods and services
  - Composite measures

## Level of Education and Employment Status



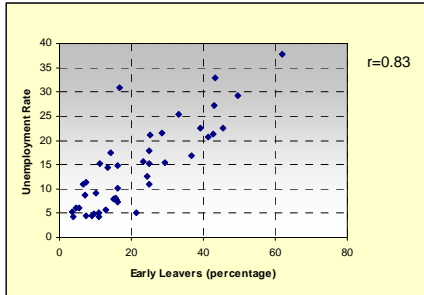
	Contingency Coefficient	Cramer's V
Limerick	0.214	0.219
Ireland	0.143	0.145

## Unemployment Rate by Level of Education

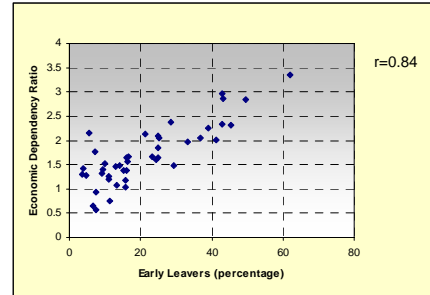




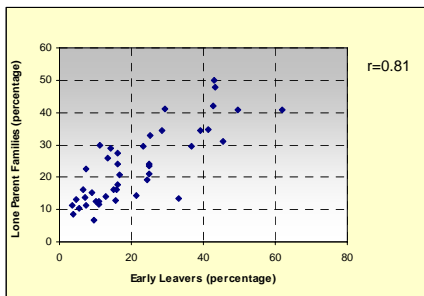
### Early School Leaving and Unemployment



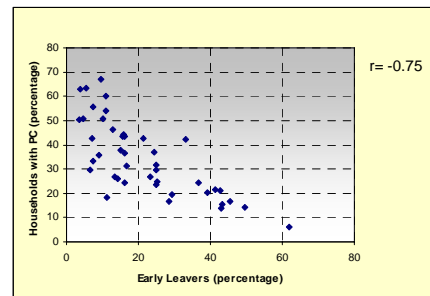
### Early School Leaving and Economic Dependency



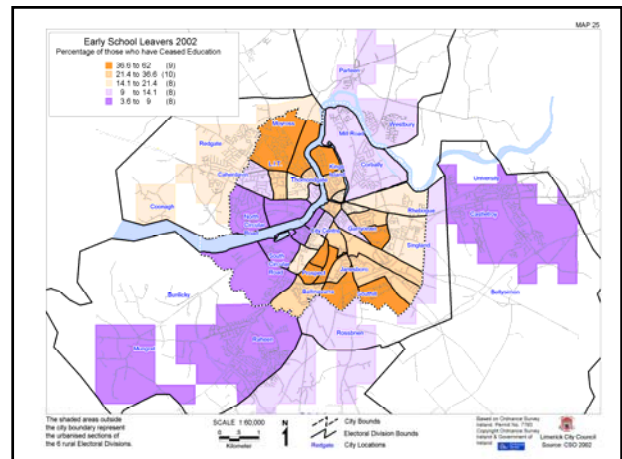
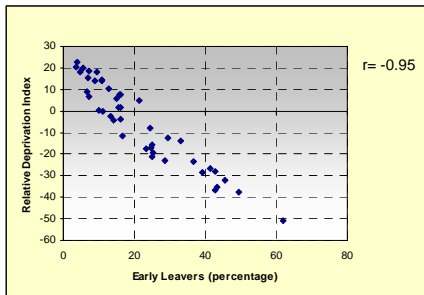
### Early School Leaving and Lone Parent Families

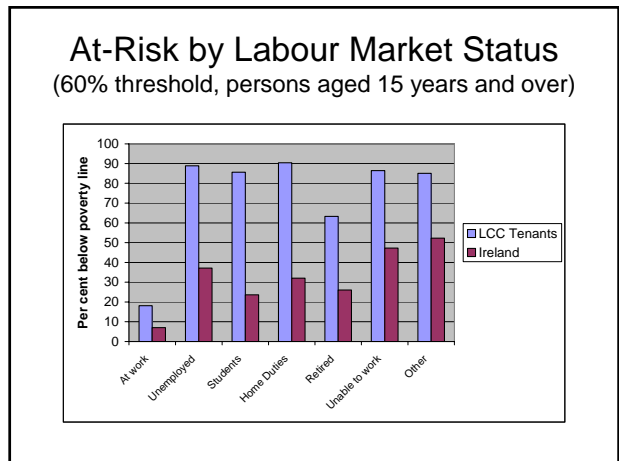
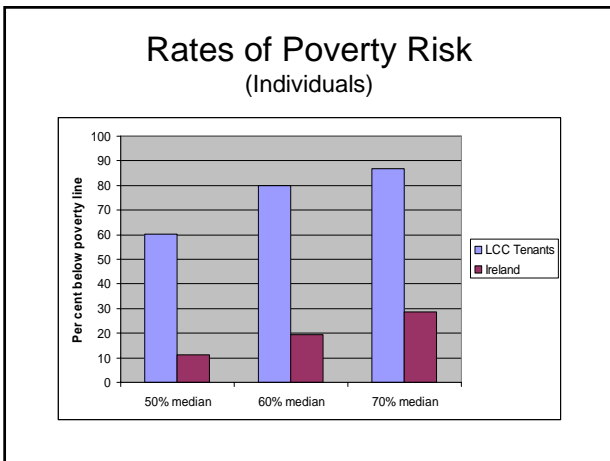
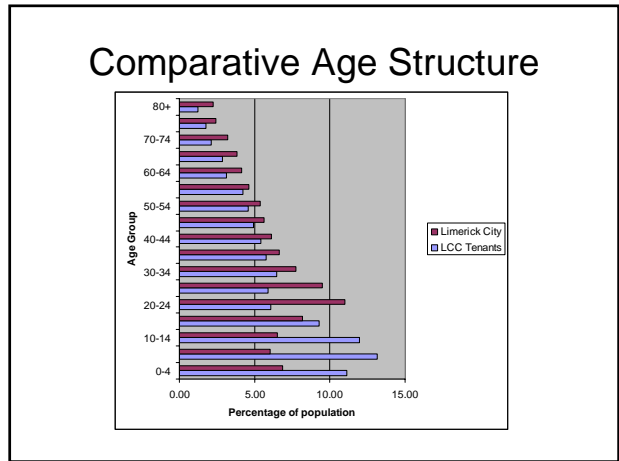
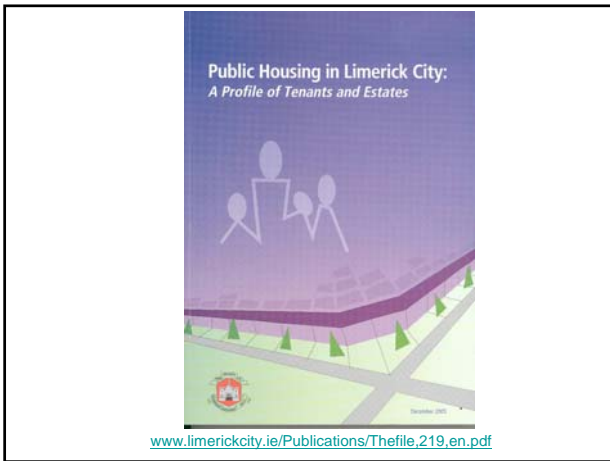
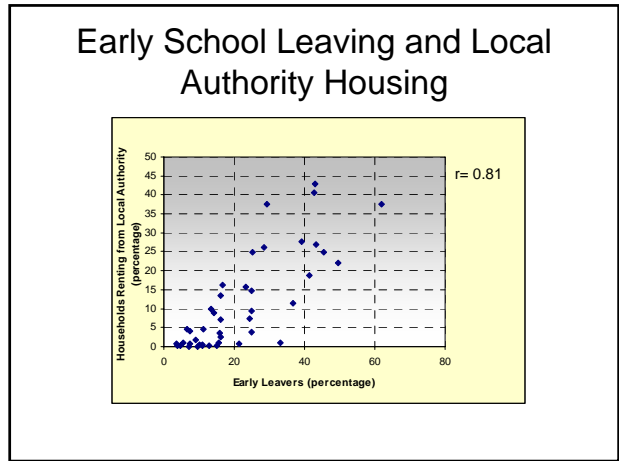
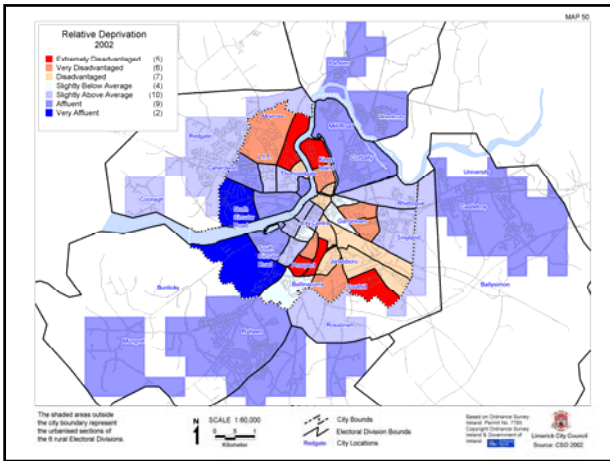


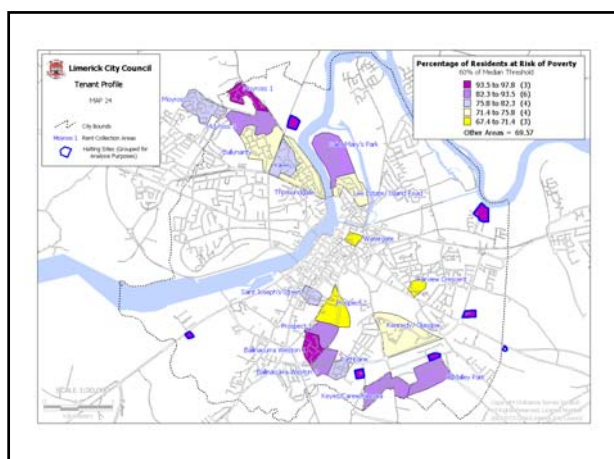
### Early School Leaving and Access to ICT



### Early School Leaving and Socio-Economic Well-Being







## Conclusions

- Relationship between educational and social disadvantage particularly strong in Limerick urban area
- As well as economic restructuring, this may be due to the spatial concentration of social disadvantage, and the depth of the problem in certain areas
- The strength of the relationship suggests a strong inter-generational (cycle of disadvantage) effect

## Policy Implications

- Education is a key policy lever for breaking the cycle of disadvantage
- Clear case for spatially targeted initiatives...
- ...including labour market interventions
- But measures to reduce residential segregation are also necessary

## Language Variation

From Difference to Disadvantage  
*Talking Posh!*  
Sociolinguistic Perspectives on the  
Context of Schooling in Ireland

Dr. Áine Cregan, CEDR, Mary  
Immaculate College, University of  
Limerick

## *"Talking Posh!"*

"We know that children's differences in language ability, more than any other observable factor, affect their potential for success in schooling...that **language is the central achievement necessary for success in schooling**" (emphasis added)

(Corson, 1985, p.1)

Dr. Áine Cregan, CEDR, Mary  
Immaculate College, University of  
Limerick

## *"Talking Posh!"*

- ⌘ Language Variation
- ⌘ Language Variation and School
- ⌘ Description of Study
- ⌘ Analysis of Data
- ⌘ Findings and Recommendations

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Immaculate College, University of  
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## *"Talking Posh!"* Language Variation

- ❖ "In language there are only differences"  
(Ferdinand de Saussure)
- ❖ Language and Social Class
- ❖ Standard English
- ❖ *Prescribed as Correct*
- ❖ *Accorded Prestige*

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## *"Talking Posh!"* Language Variation

- ❖ 'non-standard' varieties – highly structured, complex systems (e.g. Wardhaugh, 2006)
- ❖ 'Every speaker/hearer of ... English, regardless of dialect, has control of an equally complex and rule-governed grammar' (Gee, 2002, p.32)
- ❖ Variety through which schools function

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## Theories of Linguistic Difference

### History of Research

- ⌘ Labels
- ⌘ Characteristics
- ⌘ Deficient
- ⌘ Deprived
- ⌘ Restricted

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## Theories of Linguistic Difference

### Current Consensus

- ⌘ Not deficient
- ⌘ Not deprived
- ⌘ Not restricted
- ⌘ DIFFERENT

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## "Talking Posh!" Language Variation

### Culturally and linguistically different children

- Possess language but it may not be standard, middle-class English
- They come to school with perhaps as many experiences as other children but possibly not the experiences that appear to be critical in achieving academic success

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## Theories of Linguistic Difference *How?*

- ⌘ Complexity of linguistic structure
- ⌘ Range of complexity of linguistic structure
- ⌘ **All children can and do use a wide range of complex linguistic structures. Children of educationally disadvantaged parents, however, use them less frequently.**

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## Theories of Linguistic Difference *How?*

### PURPOSES - major and significant differences

- ⌘ Analyse and reflect
- ⌘ Reason and justify
- ⌘ Predict and consider alternatives
- ⌘ Talk about events in the future
- ⌘ Project into the lives and feelings of others
- ⌘ Build up scenes, events, stories in imagination

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## Theories of Linguistic Difference *Why?*

- ⌘ Nature of talk used by parents
- ⌘ Book Reading
- ⌘ Imaginative Play

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## Language Variation and School Language Demands of the Classroom

- ⌘ Getting a turn to talk
- ⌘ Acceptable topics for talk
- ⌘ Predetermined by someone else
- ⌘ Evaluate the acceptability of pupil talk
- ⌘ Purpose for speaking and listening
- ⌘ Audience

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### Language Variation and School Language Demands of the Classroom

- ⌘ Provide information that is structured in conventional ways
- ⌘ Talk explicitly grounded temporally and spatially
- ⌘ Minimal shared background knowledge or context
- ⌘ Literate Style

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### Language Variation and School Language Demands of the Classroom

- ⌘ Authoritative presentation of ideas
- ⌘ Using apt vocabulary
- ⌘ Complex grammatical structures
- ⌘ Expanded appropriately
- ⌘ High degree of organisation
- ⌘ High in new information
- ⌘ Adopt an impersonal stance

(e.g. Halliday & Hasan, 1989; Michaels, 1981; Schleppegrell, 2001,2004; Snow et al., 1989)

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### Language Variation and School Discontinuity

**Not all children come to school equally prepared to use language in the expected ways, nor do all share the same understanding that certain ways of using language are expected at school - evidenced in social class differences among kindergarten children**

(Schleppegrell, 2001, p.434).

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### Language Variation and School Discontinuity

“ Some children’s ways of making meaning with language enable them to readily respond to the school’s expectations, but the ways of using language of other students do not...many children lack experience in making the kinds of meanings that are expected at school, or with the kinds of written texts and spoken interaction that prepare some children for school-based language tasks. **This lack of experience makes it difficult for these students to learn and to demonstrate their learning**” (Emphasis added) (Schleppegrell, 2004, p.21-22)

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### Language Variation and School Discontinuity

“...part of the problem can be explained by the concept of **discontinuity**, that the culture of the school, predicated on middle class language style and behavioural norms, makes it appear an inhospitable place”. (emphasis added)

(Poverty and Educational Disadvantage, Breaking the Cycle; INTO 1994, pp.28,29)

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### Language Variation and School Discontinuity

***There may be a difference in style of interaction due to the different context that the school provides.***  
(Corson, 1988)

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## Language Variation and School Teacher Attitude

*There is a longstanding finding of researchers that teachers' perceptions of children's non-standard speech produces negative expectations about the children's personalities, social backgrounds, and academic abilities* (Giles, 1987)

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## Language Variation and School Literacy

"The use of a specific oral language register...literate language, is fundamental to becoming literate in school"

(Pellegrini, 2002, p.55)

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## Language Variation and School Literacy

- ❖ Being familiar with and able to use literate style oral language has been shown to be a developmental precursor to school-based literacy learning as well as
- ❖ A strong predictor of early literacy development

(e.g. Dickinson & Moreton, 1991; Olson, 1977; Pellegrini & Galda, 1998; Snow, 1983)

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## Language Variation Description of Study

Purpose

- ⌘ whether patterns of children's oral language use in school vary by social class
- ⌘ children's awareness of language variation
- ⌘ implications of such variation

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## Language Variation Description of Study

- ⌘ Interpretive Case Study Design
- ⌘ Exploratory
- ⌘ Elicited Production Techniques
- ⌘ Focus Group Discussions
- ⌘ Standardised Test Results

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## Language Variation Description of Study

Elicited Production Tasks

- ⌘ Factual
- ⌘ Narrative
- ⌘ Analytical
- ⌘ Imaginative

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Framework for Linguistic Analysis of Academic Language

In schooling contexts, the overriding features of the situational context are that students

- **Display knowledge**
  - **Authoritatively**
  - In highly **structured** texts
- (Schleppegrell, 2004, p.74)

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Framework for Linguistic Analysis of Academic Language

- ⌘ Presenting Ideas
- ⌘ Taking a Stance
- ⌘ Structuring Text

What are the linguistic elements that are functional for these purposes?

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Framework for Linguistic Analysis of Academic Language  
Presenting Ideas

"...*texts need to be rich in information*" (p.75)

- Lexical explicitness
- Presents information and constructs new understandings
- Includes relationships of time, consequence, comparison, addition
- Integrated relationships

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Framework for Linguistic Analysis of Academic Language  
Taking a Stance

"... *project a noninteracting and distanced relationship with the listener*" (p.58)

- **MOOD** – declarative, interrogative, imperative
- **MODALITY** – resource which enables the expression of degrees of probability, certainty, necessity

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Framework for Linguistic Analysis of Academic Language  
Taking a Stance

*"the expert, authoritative role of the student is typically realised in the choice of declarative mood and use of modality and attitudinal resources instead of intonation to convey speaker/writer stance toward what is said"* (p.75)

Dr. Áine Cregan, CEDR, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

Framework for Linguistic Analysis of Academic Language  
Structuring Text

"... *dense presentation of information*" (p.65)

- Internal conjunction
- Cohesion
- Clause-combining strategies of condensation and embedding
- Effective exploitation of thematic position
- Expanded noun phrases

Dr. Áine Cregan, CEDR, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

## Language Variation Focus Group Discussion: Children

- ⌘ Talk as a Learning Medium
- ⌘ Talking time in the Classroom
- ⌘ Talking Style in School
- ⌘ Teacher Talk
- ⌘ Literacy Activities

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Immaculate College, University of  
Limerick

## Language Variation Focus Group Discussion: Teachers

- ⌘ Importance of Oral Language
- ⌘ Pedagogic Responses to perceived oral language needs
- ⌘ Awareness of Variation
- ⌘ Support from the Revised Curriculum
- ⌘ Home-School Links
- ⌘ Literacy

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Limerick

## Standardised Test Data

### School A

- ⌘ 75% 3<sup>rd</sup> class children – ss below 50<sup>th</sup> percentile
- ⌘ 100% 6<sup>th</sup> class children – ss in the low-average range. All below chronological age.

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## Standardised Test Data

### School B

- ❖ 63% of children characterised as having reading difficulties – lacking interest, needing support, lacking confidence, fear of failure, poor reading and comprehension
- ❖ 100% 6<sup>th</sup> class children ss in the below average range

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Limerick

## Standardised Test Data

### School C

- ⌘ 88% of the children in senior infants and 3<sup>rd</sup> class had reading scores below their chronological age
- ⌘ Majority of children characterised as having reading difficulties

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## Findings

- ⌘ Evidence of *variation in patterns of language use* by children
- ⌘ *Variation* – associated with *social class*
- ⌘ *Differences* - related to facility in 'literate' or 'academic' style of language
- ⌘ *Style of language expected in the school context*

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## Findings

- ⌘ *Fewer features of this style of language use displayed*
- ⌘ *Differences - emerge in all categories of typical school-type talking tasks - factual, analytical, narrative, and imaginative*
- ⌘ *Differences evident across all age groups, across both genders, in single class groupings and in multi-class groupings, in both urban and rural schools, and in both big and small schools*

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## Findings

- ⌘ *Children - acutely aware of differences in patterns of language use*
- ⌘ *Teachers less so*
- ⌘ *Children – no awareness of talk as a legitimate learning medium in the classroom*
- ⌘ *Teachers – insufficient emphasis on formal Oral language learning*
- ⌘ *Children/Teachers – value development of literacy skills more than oracy skills – poor perception of literacy/oracy skills*

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## Findings

- ⌘ *Teachers – welcome emphasis on oral language development in Revised Curriculum – difficult to follow*
- ⌘ *Teachers – inadequately supported for change/challenge in disadvantaged contexts*
- ⌘ *Teachers – home/school partnership problematic*

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## Implications

Some children are entering and progressing through our school system poorly equipped to deal with the language demands of that system.

The 'different' language variety of these children compounds their 'disadvantage' when engaging with the school system and may impact on the successful development of their literacy skills

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## Implications

**Some children will continue to fail to achieve their potential while in school unless the existence of language variation is highlighted and its implications for success in school addressed.**

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Immaculate College, University of  
Limerick

## Recommendations

*All partners in education collectively must take responsibility to ensure that a child's language variety is not an obstacle to accessing effectively all that school has to offer*

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Limerick

### Recommendations

- ✓ Develop an awareness of the existence of language variation
- ✓ Establish that language variation does not imply inferiority, either linguistic or cognitive
- ✓ Embrace all children and their language variety equally
- ✓ Highlight implications of language variation for success in school
- ✓ Reach out to children and their parents in a supportive manner

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### Recommendations for Action Teachers

- ✓ PLAN – oral language development – in particular development of literate style language use
- ✓ TIME – balanced between oracy and literacy development
- ✓ ARTICULATE – expectations for patterns of language use

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### Recommendations for Action Schools


- ✓ HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP – promoted and developed
- ✓ EMPOWER – parents to share responsibility for their children's learning
- ✓ ACTIVELY INVOLVED – in partnership with the school

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### Recommendations for Action Department of Education and Science

- ✓ Highlight implications of Language Variation for learning
- ✓ Support teachers – implementing Revised Curriculum; continuing professional development
- ✓ Reduce pupil/teacher ratio
- ✓ Increase classroom support – classroom assistants
- ✓ Support schools to work in partnership with parents

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the dormant accounts fund  
disbursements board

---

## Developing Partnership between Families, Schools and Communities

Sandra Ryan, John Galvin, Jeanne O'Connor,  
Mary Maguire, Susan Williams, Katie Williams,  
Ann Burke

Mary Immaculate College, Limerick  
June 19, 2007



## Family-School-Community Educational Partnership (FSCEP)

- A partnership focused on five primary schools
  - 3 in RAPID designated areas of Limerick city and
  - 2 in CLÁR areas in West Clare
- Develop a series of intervention projects in collaboration with schools and communities
- Provide a basis for families, schools and communities to develop the capacities to work in partnership
- Overall aim to improve the participation and attainment of disadvantaged pupils

## Context of the Work

- Evidence of good practice from the Home-School-Community Liaison Scheme since 1989
- Early Start Preschool scheme (1998)
- Guidelines on Traveller Education in Primary Schools (2002)
- Urban and rural

## Partnership defined

“a working relationship that is characterised by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and the willingness to negotiate.”

**Sharing of:**

- information
- responsibility
- skills
- decision making
- accountability

(Pugh & De'Ath, 1989)

## What is Community Development?

1. Developing the capacity of local people to identify and address issues they consider to be important.
2. Building relationships with voluntary statutory, community and school groups.
3. Creating a structure which allows for genuine participation and involvement.
4. Working in partnership.

## Community & School Working Together

What is involved?

- About feeling welcome in the school setting.
- Teachers being open to suggestions about school - community projects.
- The Community supporting the school when faced with many challenges - e.g., lack of community spirit, and helping the school to understand better the local culture.



### Achievements

- **Art based projects** e.g., 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Project.
- **Community After School Projects** e.g., 4th Class Kids in the kitchen Club
- **Supporting Measures re Educational Disadvantage** e.g., work closely with home school community liaison.

### Community & School Working Together

- Promotes community spirit
- Breaks down the barriers between school and community
- Enhances children's experience of learning and education
- Brings the school out into the community – provides teachers with the lived reality of the community environment for their pupils
- The strength of our involvement with the local school is founded on the personalities and relationships that have been fostered over the years

### Challenges

- Good practices gets lost as little gets documented.
- Community involvement challenges schools to consider a broader frame of reference for their pupils.
- Community involvement challenges schools to consider other / alternative / community education initiatives.
- With the changes in society it is in the interest of all to be working in partnership

### Issues in Developing Educational Partnership

- Locus of control / power imbalance
- Democratic rights
- Managing change
- Parent-teacher relationships
- Practicalities of implementation
- Ethical issues

### Locus of Control

- Traditional role
- Autonomous / paternalistic attitude
- Power imbalance / institutional culture
- "Respectful ally" v "patronising expert"
- Social reproduction

### Democratic Rights

- Constitutional rights
- Rhetoric v Reality
- Meaningful partnership v tokenism
- Modelling democracy
  - parents' rights
  - teachers' rights
  - children's rights

### Managing Change

- School culture
- Why do we need to change?
- A changing professional identity
- Managerial professionalism
- Democratic professionalism

### Parent-Teacher Relationships

- Legacy from times past
- Quality relationships – informal/formal
- Time, energy, effort
- Reaching out to the community
- Differing values

### Practicalities of Implementation

- Facilities / Resources
- Time / organisation
- Assistance / support
- Transport, safety, the weather

### Ethical Issues

- Short-term interventions
- Pressurising parents
- Pressurising teachers
- Involving fathers

### Difficulties/Challenges

- Two-year funding structure – realistic targets and outcomes
  - Changing attitudes
  - Changing system-level practices
  - Genuine involvement of various stakeholders (community, children)
  - Breaking down barriers
  - Developing collaboration
- Impact on policy development



**My school, Your school, Our school,**  
The evolution of a designated disadvantaged school into a community learning centre 1985-2005.

Ann Higgins  
Ita Tobin  
Michelle Harte

## Introduction

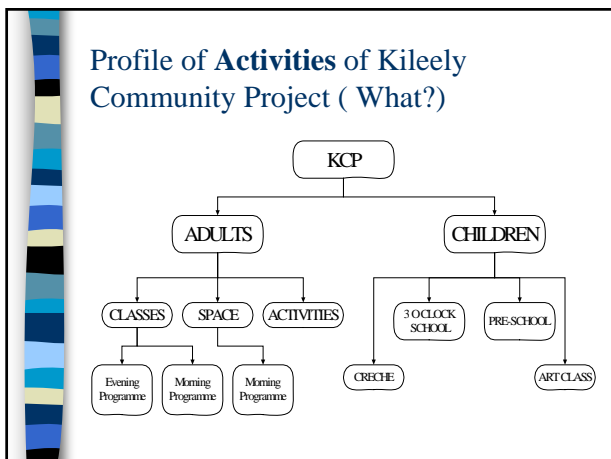
- **Declare myself**
  - Former pupil
  - Former teacher and principal
  - Founder of Kileely Community Project (KCP)
  - Director of Kileely Community Project
- **Data**
  - Case study design
  - Interviews: Fifty individual interviews and 6 focus groups
  - Field data: visual, audio, print
  - Informed by: Ecological model, Feminist emancipatory research principles, Narrative Inquiry, Grounded theory

## Journey of Transition

- **School**
  - Teachers and children
  - Curricula
- **School + Kileely Community Project**
  - Interaction/Dovetail of formal and informal learning
  - Outcomes
    - Individual context
    - School context
    - Family context
    - Community context


## Humble Beginnings

- Parent's programme
- Identification of need
- Local empowerment
- No resources
- Good will




## Profile of **Process** of Kileely Community Project ( Why did it work?)

- Vision, Passion, Commitment
- Needs Led
- Holistic growth process
- Local Empowerment and Decision Making
- Collaboration
- Sourcing funding – LCVEC
- Pedagogy
- Reflective practice – Nothing Carved in Stone!
- Respect



**Impact – Individual level**  
(How did it affect people's lives?)

- Children
  - Academic
  - Social
  - Emotional
  - Nutritional
  - Creative
  - FUN
- Adults
  - Social
  - Academic
  - Progression
  - Empowerment




**Personal level**

- Ita Tobin
- Michelle Harte
- Ann Higgins




**Key learnings**

- Transformative experience
- Intergenerational impact
- Sustainability
- Aspirations
- Collaborative practice
- Reflective practice




Thank You



# Working Together For Positive Behaviour

Claire W. Lyons, Ann Higgins, Ruth Bourke,  
Frank J. Howe, Denise McSweeney, Fiona O'Connor  
Administrative Support: Sharon Barry



## Working Together for Positive Behaviour

Or

### How can we help each other?

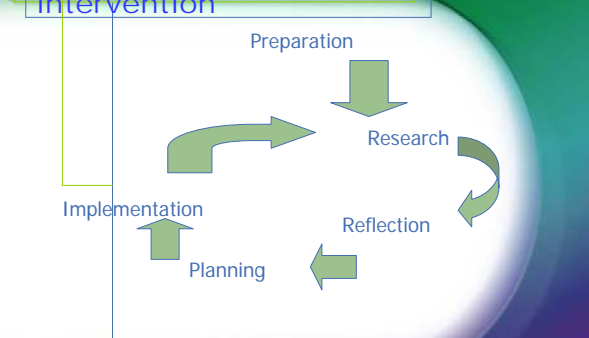
### How do Colleges and Schools work together?



### Creating time and space: The PLUS Network

- At MIC
  - Institutional commitment
  - Personal commitment, skills and knowledge
  - Funding
- At school level
  - Institutional commitment
  - Personal commitment, skills and knowledge
  - Practical need

### Working Together: 4 years research and intervention



```
graph TD; Preparation --> Research; Research --> Reflection; Reflection --> Planning; Planning --> Implementation; Implementation --> Preparation;
```

### Working Together

Year One	} School 1
Year Two	
Year Three	} Schools 1, 2 & 3
Year Four	

### Cycle of Work - School 1

- Year 1 – decision on participation, baseline research
- Year 2 – policy development, yard behaviour, training, research

### Cycle of Work - School 1

- Year Three - review policy, yard rules and activities, further training, research, behaviour resource
- Year Four – Incredible Years programme, research and evaluation, planning for the future

### Cycle of Work - Schools 2 & 3

- Year Three - decision on participation, baseline research, policy development, yard behaviour, training, research
- Year Four - finalise & implement policy, individual interventions, research and evaluation, planning for future


### Interventions

- Implementation
  - Identifying needs
  - Policy development
  - Reflecting on meaning of behaviour
  - Feedback sessions on research
  - Physical environment




### Interventions

- Training included:
  - classroom management;
  - communicating with parents;
  - managing difficult behaviour;
  - reality therapy & art therapy
  - behaviour contracts






### Challenges




- Expectations – what's this all about?
- 'like there is a major focus on reward and good behaviour and everything as well, but it just seems that ... when you talk about it the first thing that comes to mind is the boldest children, how will you handle them, rather than thinking how will it reward the good children.'

### Challenges



- Severe behavioural issues
- Right agency for the right job?
- Involving all staff
- Involving parents
- Time!

### Triumphs

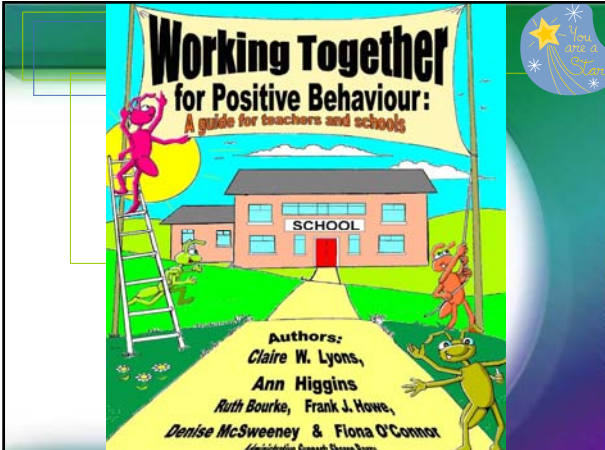


- Hearing voices – children & parents
- 'It was lovely actually, we were in the room down here and they asked us questions, ... but what was brilliant when they brought us in to the teachers and ... we were all sitting around and they really listened, the teachers listened to us. And then they were saying things back to us, and we were going "oh we never knew that now", that was brilliant.'

### Triumphs




- Skills for teachers – inservice
- Support for teachers
- Coherent policy
- Time for reflection
- Relationships
- Support for student teachers



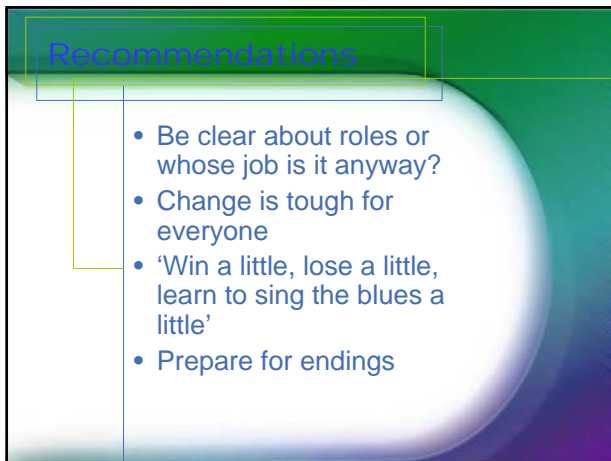
### Working Together for Positive Behaviour: A guide for teachers and schools

Authors:  
Claire W. Lyons,  
Ann Higgins,  
Ruth Bourke, Frank J. Rowe,  
Denise McSweeney & Fiona O'Connor  
Administrative Support: Sharon Barry

### Recommendations



- Constantly clarify expectations
- You need adequate resources
- What you do needs to fit with existing structures **Or** those structures need to be able to change
- You need key people involved
- Be clear about what can be done



### Recommendations

- Be clear about roles or whose job is it anyway?
- Change is tough for everyone
- 'Win a little, lose a little, learn to sing the blues a little'
- Prepare for endings

## Learning from Learner Support

James Binchy  
Learner Support Unit  
MIC



## The Learner Support Unit

- Set up in 1997 with HEA funding
- Aims
  - ...to improve quality of learning among students taking a degree at MIC
  - ...to provide academic support for MIC students
  - ... to increase participation among groups traditionally under-represented in third level in Ireland



## Personnel

Co-ordinator:	Anne O'Keeffe
Adult Learner Support Counsellor	Geraldine Brosnan
Research Officer	James Binchy
Project worker	Brian Clancy
Academic Tutors	Brona Murphy Elaine Vaughan



## Philosophy

- Rogerian – client centred/needs based/ unconditional positive regard
- Friirian- free dialogue
- Humanistic- potential
- Eclectic/ organic/ developmental



## Services, products & projects

- One-to-one tutoring (elective and referred). Essay writing support
- One-to-one academic guidance and counselling service (e.g. Subject choice/ study techniques and timetables/goal setting)
- Foundation studies courses in academic writing and research skills



## Services, products & projects

(cont'd)

- Learner Training seminars:
  - *essay writing clinics*
  - *giving oral presentations*
  - *exam techniques*
  - *setting up study groups*
  - *managing time*
  - *referencing*
  - *reading skills*
- Study skills handbook



## Services, products & projects

(cont'd)

- Academic support for students with specific learning difficulties
- FYP support
- Ongoing auditing of students' feedback and disseminating this information to staff and beyond.
- Website <http://www.mic.ul.ie/lisu/intro.htm>



## Services, products & projects

(cont'd)

- Foundation programme for adults returning to learning
- Access/minority group initiatives
- Peer-tutoring- Mathematics & Irish



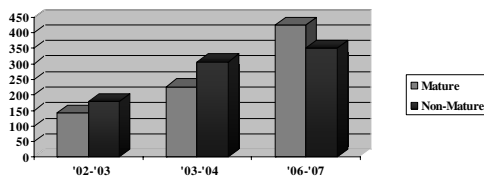
## Essay Writing

- One-to-one tutoring (elective and referred)
- Foundation studies courses in academic writing
- Learner Training seminars
- Study skills handbook
- FYP support

## One-to-One Consultations

- Not a grind service
- Not a long-term service
- But not a 'band-aid'
- Mediator between student and staff
- Role definition

## One-to-One Consultations



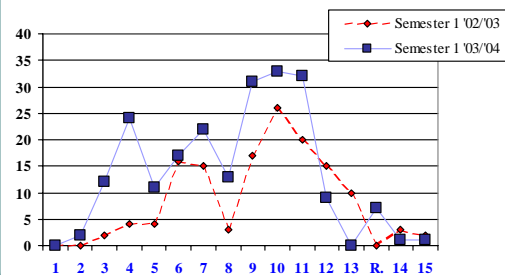
## Tutoring time breakdown per semester 1 2002

Mature students	Hours	Undergraduates	Hours
No. of students	41	No. of students	86
No. of visits	72	No. of visits	112
Tutor preparation time	24.5	Tutor preparation time	28.75
Total consultation time	48.3	Total consultation time	50
Average time per student	1.7	Average time per student	0.9

### One Year – 03-04

Semester One		Semester Two	
No. of visits	260	No. of visits	272
Breakdown of visits		Breakdown of visits	
Mature	147	Mature	79
Non-Mature	113	Non-Mature	193

### One-to-one visits over a semester



### Specific Needs

- **Style**

*General academic style: Repetition, illogical sentences, redundancy, academic register etc.*

*Punctuation: Use of the apostrophe and comma, academic connectors and discourse markers.*

*Spelling problems.*

### Specific Needs

- **Structure**

*Basic sentence structure: Both simple and complex sentences.*

*Paragraphing: Thesis statements and topic sentences.*

*Academic essay structure: Writing an introduction and conclusion.*

*Structure of a research project.*

### Specific Needs

- **Referencing**

*Referencing within the essay.*

*Writing a bibliography.*

- **Computer Skills**

*Word™ for academic purposes: indenting quotations, using the spell check, inserting footnotes, page numbers, drawing tables etc.*

### Specific Needs

Need	Percentage
Referencing	58%
Structure	42%
Style	41%
Computer	13%

## Issues

- Who attends?
- Who attends repeatedly?
- Do we do more than help with essays?



## Pathways to Third Level Education for Students of Different Backgrounds



Geraldine Brosnan & Dr Agata Vitale,  
MIC Learner Support Unit

## Outline

- Background
- Description of Foundation Certificate
- Research Methodology
- Results/Discussion
- Conclusion/Recommendations

## Background

- Recent economic success proves the need for greater investment in tertiary level education
- 'Massify' and 'diversify'
- Equity of access new area within higher education policy; attempts to widen participation dominated policy for last decade

- Large no of policy documents
  - Recommend increasing numbers of mature students (10%)
  - Advocate for wider range of alternative entry routes/flexible admissions systems (ladder; access courses; APEL; bridging courses) – in line with international experiences

- TI Funding -1996
- SI Funding -2003
- New fund 2007 called Strategic Innovation Fund
- Targeting 4 groups of students currently underrepresented in third level in Ireland - Adults are one of the 4 categories

- Adult access courses- Kogan et al (2001) means of increasing participation by providing opportunity to 'up skill' or fulfill 'bridging' function or 'cooling out'
- Research concentrated on local unpublished work or policy doc- Lack of systematic monitoring or data collection- ad-hoc nature of work

### Objective of research

- Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, this study documents a longitudinal research project which proposes to focus on the outcomes of this open access part-time evening programme which, subject to certain criteria, aims to create a direct entry route for mature students into an Irish higher education college
- Although the programme is local in nature and unique to one institution, it has wider implications for those involved in the field of Access who wish to assess the effectiveness of their access provision

### Aim of this phase one

The present research represents phase one:

- Create a profile of course participants so as to ascertain the effectiveness of the course, does this model of an access course improve third level participation for individuals who are generally underrepresented in Ireland?
- i.e., those who are working on full-time basis, those from disadvantage backgrounds, those from ethnic minorities & non-nationals

### Foundation Certificate for Higher Education: Adult Learners

- Aim:
  - Increase adult learner enrolments to MIC
  - Improve participation of categories of adults underrepresented in higher ed. Such as socio-economically disadvantaged and those from ethnic minority background

### Achieved by...

- A range of innovative institutional policies and teaching strategies

### Institutional Policies

- Open access: no entry requirements/selection procedures,
  - enrolment criteria: Completion of an application form and supply two references
- Timing of course: run on part-time basis, 2 evenings a week over one academic year

- Progression: on successful completion guaranteed a place on the BA (Liberal Arts) at MIC, creating an alternative direct entry route to MIC for adults
- Fee Structure: ensuring the course attractive to those socio-economically disadvantaged by charging a nominal fee for medical card holders
- Strong support and commitment among college staff, management and administration

### The MIC Foundation Certificate Strategies

- Highly qualified staff (MIC lecturers)
- High quality academic programme different in content from what many other universities offer
- High level of academic, pastoral and educational guidance support

- A variety of academic modules that can create the basis for further third level education (e.g.,...)
- The heterogeneity of the modules aims also to engage students with different interests and goals in education

### The MIC Foundation Certificate Teaching Strategies

- Varied range of teaching methodologies used
  - Interactive lectures based on group activities and discussions
  - Workshops, & use of on-line material

### The MIC Foundation Certificate Teaching Strategies

- Challenging number of assignments
- Optional English language tuition for non-native English speakers
- Substantial student support; Presence of LSU 1:1 tutoring as well as formal seminars on all aspects of learning at third level

### Empirical work

- A total of 108 students who enrolled on the **MIC Foundation Certificate** during the academic years 2002-2005, participated in the study
- At the end of the academic year, once the data was available, the sample was divided in 3 subgroups (progressors, completers & non completers)
- The main aims of this study was to individuate specific personal/ dispositional and/or socio-economical differences within the 3 subgroups that could interfere with both, access & final achievement on the course

### The Enrolment Form

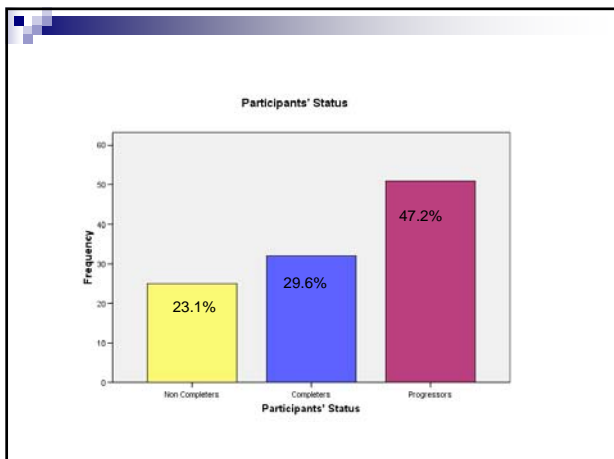
- All students were required to complete an enrolment form which contained questions about the following:
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Address
  - Education History
  - Participation in other programmes of study
  - Students were also asked to write a brief statement to outline their reasons for doing the course
- This study is based on students responses.
- This aimed to gain information about participants' socio-economic background & to investigate specific differences within 3 subgroups (i.e., completers, non-completers & progressors)

### The Sample

Participants:	Gender:	Age:	Residence:
108 MIC FC Students	76 % female & 24% male	35 years old average age  (range 21-68 years, Std. Dev. 10.74)	64.5 % Urban - 35.5% Rural areas

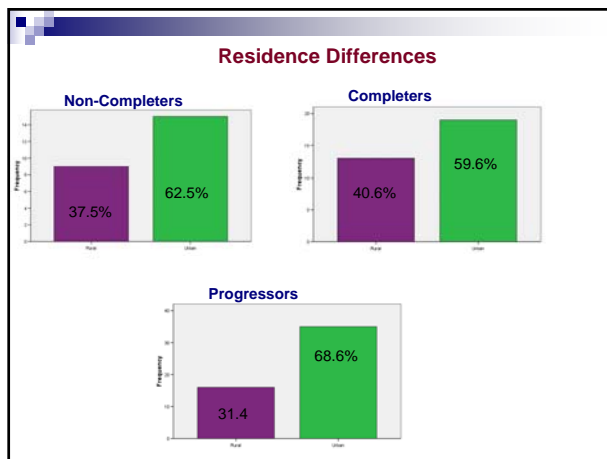
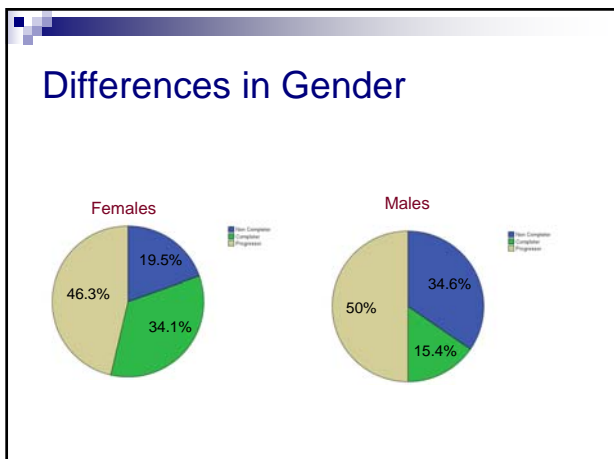
### The Sample

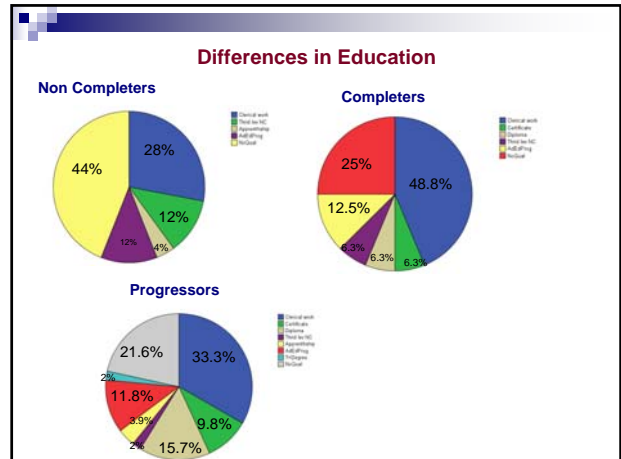
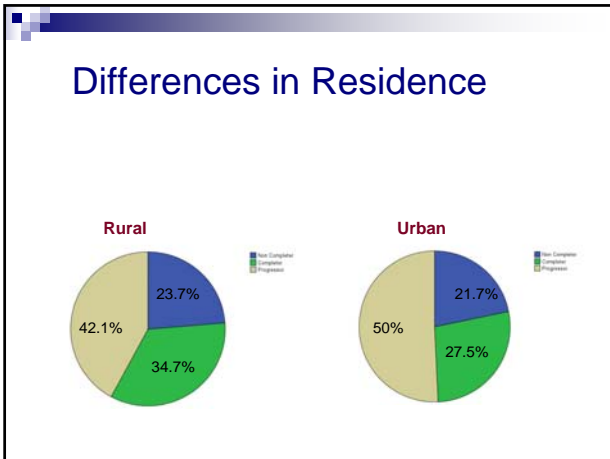
Socio-Econ. Background	Education	LC Points	Motivation
Non Manual: 56.5%	Clerical: 35.2% No Qual.: 27.8%	135.65 on average	Access: 36.2% Preparatory: 29.5% Self Fulfill.: 28.6%
Other: 14.8% Unskilled: 10.2% Managerial and Technical: 8.3% Missing: 7.4% Skilled Manual: 1.9% Semi-Skilled: 0.9%	Ad. Ed. Pro 12% Diploma: 9.2% Certificate: 6.5% TL Non C: 5.6% Appred: 2.8% T. Degree: 0.9%	Range: 0-450 Std. Dev: 136.81	Sec. Chance: 2.9% Social: 1.0% Stepping Stone: 1.0% Imp. Engl.: 1.0%



### Age Difference

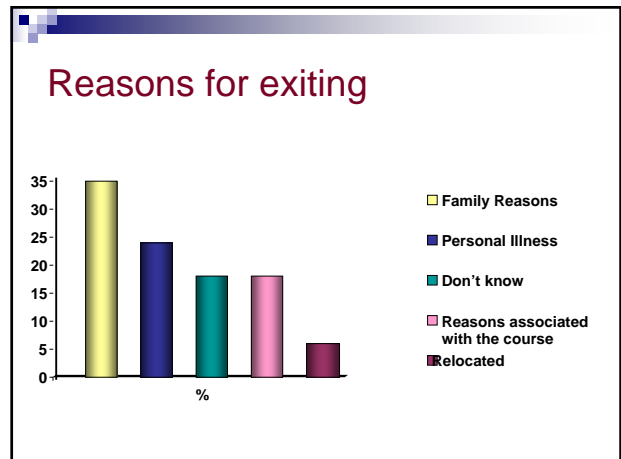
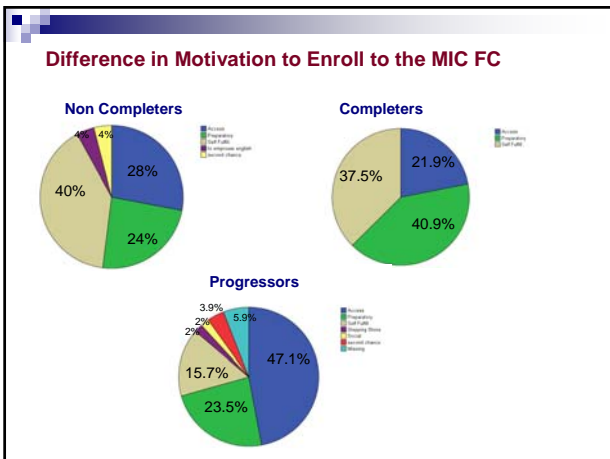
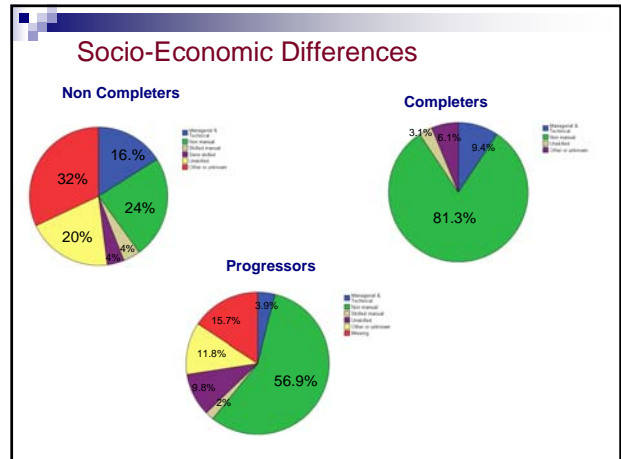
Non-Completers	Completers	Progressors
<b>Age at registration:</b> 36.68 years	<b>Age at registration:</b> 37.47 years	<b>Age at registration:</b> 33.09 years
St Dev 10.695 Age Range 23-62	St Dev 12.02 Age Range 22-68	St Dev 9.589 Age Range 21-61





### LC Points

Non-Completers	Completers	Progressors
<b>Aver. LCP: 108.54</b>	<b>Aver. LCP: 155.47</b>	<b>Aver. LCP: 168.52</b>
St Dev: 115.094	St Dev :133.953	St Dev :135.52
Range:0-315	Range : 0-360	Range: 0-450



## Discussion

- Presence of the course -Diverse student body
- Broader institutional policy as a result
- The research findings clearly indicated differences between the 3 sub-groups

## Discussion- Age

- HEFCE (2006) typical access student in their 20s or early thirties
- Progressors tend to be in the same age bracket
- confirmed by most other available research (Aontas, 2002; McGivney, 1999; Morgan et al, 2000)

## Discussion- Gender

- More females enroll on access courses and the rates of progression for females is higher (HEFCE, 2006)
- Aontas (2002) argue that there is a conflict of evidence regarding participation rates between M + F

## Residence

- HEFCE (2006) Not too far away; our study supports this.

## Differences in formal schooling attainment

- Progressors highest points (168.52)
- Non-completers lowest (108.54)
- Consistent with international research findings (Morgan et al, 2000; McGivney, 1996,1999; Belanger et al, 1997) show a high correlation between level of education one has and the likelihood of progressing onto tertiary level studies.

## Conclusion

- Participation can not be reduced to a single variable rather it results form the combination and interaction of diverse factors (Darkenwald and Valentine, 1985)
- OECD point out that there is a certain amount of crossover between the variables, the least education are often unemployed or in unskilled occupations and have low incomes; people on the lowest incomes are likely to be found among the elderly, immigrant groups and women. Therefore it seems non-participants share one characteristic i.e. they are in the main those who suffer social and economic deprivation

- Non-completers have the highest level of non qualifications (44%)
- &, on average the lowest LC Points (108.68)
- & are more likely to list occupation as other/ unknown (32%)
- Overall the FC does achieve its aims

### Further research study

- More analysis on each of the subgroups
- Phase two: hear what participants have to say about the course
- Explore issue of part-time provision



## MOVING ON: ACHIEVING EQUITY OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN IRELAND - THE CASE OF TRAVELLERS



Dr Caroline Healy

### Outline of Presentation

- Overview of policy developments at national level
- Overview of policy developments at MIC
- Outline of Moving On Project
- Issues of Traveller education arising from research & intervention initiatives

### Legislation: Universities Act (1997)

- This Act states universities are required to 'promote access to the university and to university education by economically or socially disadvantaged people and by people from sections of society significantly under-represented'.

### National Office Established (2003)

- In 2003 the Higher Education Authority formed the National Office of Equity of Access to Higher Education
- An Action Plan 2005 – 2007 was launched in 2004
- Travellers and ethnic minorities are target groups in this Action Plan (but no percentages were set).

### Traveller Education Strategy (2006)

- The publication of a 'Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy' (2006) is very timely
- The implementation of a holistic strategy will place Traveller education higher on the government's priorities
- Acknowledges recommendations of Traveller groups

### MIC's Special Access Policy (2005)

- In 2005 Mary Immaculate College, as part of its commitment to equality and inclusion, developed a Special Access Policy which contains targets for Traveller, Refugee and Ethnic Minority access to college programmes
- Up to 5% of places on these programmes are reserved.



### Positive Discrimination

- The College is committed to providing access to people from minority backgrounds who have faced restricted opportunity, principally as members of the Traveller and refugee communities and other ethnic minorities who often contend with discrimination as well as disadvantage (MIC, Access Policy 5.1)

### Indicators of Disadvantage

- Membership of low income household
- Family structure under pressure
- Area-based disadvantage

### The Moving On Project at MIC

- Through the Higher Education Authority's Strategic Initiative funding, the Moving On project was created in 2002 at Mary Immaculate College (MIC) to promote access and progression by Travellers and ethnic minorities in third level education.

### The Moving On Project

- Liaises with local and national Traveller organisations, community groups, community education providers, Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers and voluntary groups
- The first phase of the project involved conducting research on the small number of Travellers who had participated in higher education to examine their experiences and needs (published in 2005).

### The current situation of Travellers participating in Third Level

- However, participation by Travellers in third level remains low and increased participation will only take place with financial resources and additional educational supports
- At the present time, third level education is not a possibility for the vast majority of Travellers

### Available statistics of Travellers accessing the education system

- The Census 2002 included a self ethnic identification for Travellers for the first time
- An exact evaluation of Traveller participation in education is hampered by a lack of up-to-date statistical data

### Available statistics of Travellers accessing the education system

- Currently, no statistics are compiled by higher education institutions, the Higher Education Authority or the Department of Education and Science on the ethnic background of entrants to higher education.
- This is changing.

### Traveller participation at Third Level

- Traveller participation in third level is believed to be just over 1% according to the 2002 Census
- This compares to 21% of the general population
- CSO data shows that only 2% of Travellers have completed senior cycle at second level, compared to 23% of the general population for all age groups

### Issue 1: Data Collection

- For Travellers not to remain invisible to policymakers, accurate data must be gathered by HEIs and the CAO
- This is also Recommendation 7 put forward by the Traveller Education Strategy
- This data must be collected and evaluated if targets are to be realistically set and met

### Issue 2: Supporting Families

- Assist families to be more supportive and open to the idea of Traveller children going on to higher education
- Cultural issues often conflict with academic issues for Travellers

### Issue 3: Promoting Access

- Obtain access to higher education through:
  - i) the conventional school leaver route
  - ii) the mature student route
  - iii) the further education route
  - iv) the positive action route(TES: Recommendation 2)

### Moving On Initiatives

- Traveller Mentoring Programme for Adult Travellers and Ethnic Minorities
- Traveller Mentoring Programme for School-Leavers
- Traveller Mentoring Programme at Second Level
- Mentoring Programme for Ethnic Minority Second Level Students

### Access and Moving On Project

- The Moving On Project has focused on all routes to higher education. Pre-entry mentoring and information has been provided
- One school-leaver has gained entry to the B.Ed (2006/07) and an individual tutor/mentor has been appointed
- One mature student has completed the college's pre-entry Foundation Programme (2006/07) and has applied for the B.A. (2007/08)

### Issue 4: Financial Barriers

- The financial costs of further and higher education are prohibitive for most Traveller families
- 'One of the hardships is around the whole financial cost. The fees are fairly substantial.'
- 'I think the idea of colleges having some form of scholarship for Travellers is good. Whilst the cost of some courses might be free, they are still quite costly so a scholarship on particular courses would encourage Travellers into those courses.'

### Issue 5: Role Models

- Traveller role models are needed to encourage Traveller pupils in primary and post-primary and for adult Travellers considering further and higher education (also Recommendation 6: TES)
- However, this should be up to the individual concerned whether to self-identify

### Issue 6: Awareness Training

- The college trains pre-service teachers in issues of Traveller Education through its Sociology of Education and Special Pedagogical Option course. Such training has recently become a higher priority for the DES.
- Limerick Travellers Development Group has linked with the college to deliver this training

### Issue 7: Mentoring & Academic Supports

- Provision of mentoring and academic supports in higher education to encourage the pursuit of education and progression in education by Travellers
- The National Office of Equity of Access to Higher Education should support such initiatives (Recommendation 5: TES)

### Review: Issues in Traveller Education

- Issue 1: Need for data collection
- Issue 2: Need to support families
- Issue 3: Need to promote access
- Issue 4: Remove financial barriers
- Issue 5: Need for role models
- Issue 6: Need for awareness training
- Issue 7: Need for mentoring and academic support

### Outcomes for the future

- Number of Traveller school-leavers and mature Travellers to increase in higher education
- HEIs should continue to mainstream equality and diversity
- HEIs should actively facilitate and encourage Travellers to enrol in the course of their choice and graduate

### Moving On: Next Steps

- HEA's New Strategic Innovation Fund
- New emphasis on working collaboratively in partnership through the Regional Shannon Consortium (UL, LIT, ITTralee and MIC)
- Aims for wider impact than individual HEI working alone

### Perspectives on going to third level

- 'It's a great feeling and I'm delighted I'm doing it and I hope that I will continue my education even after this course is finished.'
- 'I was actually very unsure at first... I said no I'm not doing it and then I came back a month later and said right I'm doing it so it was a struggle to start but I got through it.'

## Same difference? Exploring the discourse of Irish Traveller and settled families

Brian Clancy  
Learner Support Unit  
MIC



## Corpus linguistics

- A corpus is a collection of texts (either spoken or written), usually stored in computer-readable form.
- Corpora can provide considerable insights into discourse but these must be corpus 'informed', not 'driven'.

## The data

	SettCorp	TravCorp
Length of recording	60 minutes	45 minutes
Number of speakers	6	6+
Number of words	12531	3466

## Linguistic politeness

- Refers to speakers'/listeners' sense of social and linguistic identity
- Can be **positive** or **negative** (but these aren't the same thing as *good* or *bad*)

## Linguistic politeness

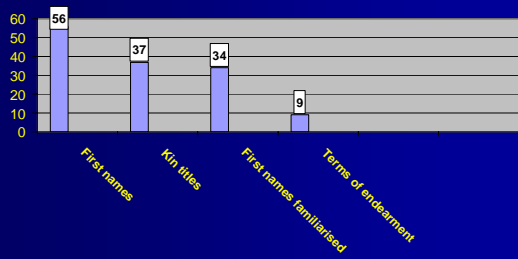
- **Positive politeness**: Positive politeness is how we are polite to the people we feel closest to.
- **Negative politeness**: Negative politeness is how we behave linguistically around people like our boss. It is 'external', respect behaviour.

## What's a vocative?

- A vocative is a noun or noun phrase used to directly address the listener or reader, normally in the form of a personal name (Jane), kinship term (mum), title (Dr. Watkins) or term of endearment (honey).

(Carter and McCarthy, 2006)

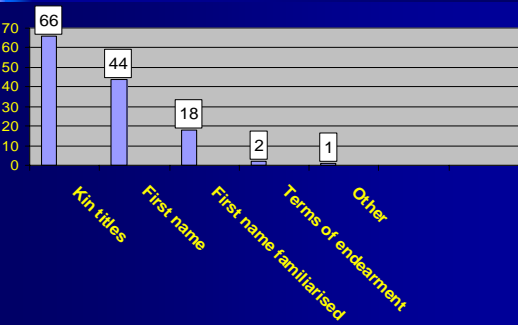
### Vocative Form (SettCorp)



### Let's hear from the settled family...

<Father> No no Bath is inland.  
 <Mother> Tisn't.  
 <Son> It is yeah it <\$O> is but it's <\\$O> not far inland.  
 <Father> <\$O> It is inland <\\$O>. It is it's in beside near Bristol **John**.  
 <Son> Bristol I don't know my <\$O> geography at all <\\$O>.  
 <Mother> <\$O> Didn't they go to <\\$O> Bath to take the spa waters?  
 <Father> It is yeah but that's not by the sea **Jenny**.  
 <Mother> How can you have a spa if it isn't by the sea?

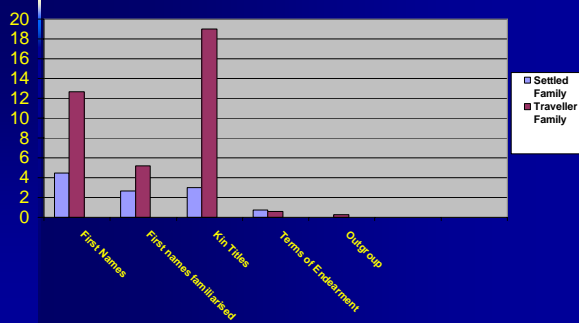
### Vocative form (TravCorp)



### Let's hear from the Traveller family...

<Father> Hurry up **baby son** all the boys is finished their breakfast.  
 <Baby Talk>  
 <Father> Here look there's David and Lawrence goin out now and Stephen they're all they're all finished. Do not go outside the gate now **boys** there's trouble down play no outside for ye play around there.

### Comparative distribution (normalised per 1000 words)



### Frequency count (kin titles)

	TravCorp	SettCorp
<b>Father</b>	19	16
<b>Mother</b>	23	21
<b>Children</b>	24	0

*son, fella, lad(s), children, baby, boy(s)*

## 'Kinship' versus 'Individuality'

- Traveller 'kinship culture'.
- Settled community place more value on the child's individuality.
- Community versus family.

## What's a hedge?

- Hedging is a linguistic strategy used to avoid sounding too authoritative or direct.

**Well, I mean, I have, you know never actually really** liked her as a teacher.

(Carter and McCarthy, 1997; 2006)

## Number of hedges in the corpora

Hedge	SettCorp	TravCorp
<i>I think*</i>	23	0
<i>like</i>	19	0
<i>you know</i>	4	0
<i>kind of/sort of</i>	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0</b>

## Let's hear from the settled family...

<Son> **I'd say** it's **hard enough even** to find Zinfandel here. <S0> **I'd say** it is <\\$0>.

<Mother> <S0> You can get <\\$0> the Blossom Hill am in Dunnes **like** and it's like Blossom Hill is the one you'll get but the other one is **actually** nicer. <S\\$H> God **I think** <\\$H> that one is very fruity.

<Son> The Ernest and Julio Gallo is very fruity? <S0> Or is the <\\$0> +

<Mother> <S0> No the <\\$0> Blossom Hill is very fruity.

<Son> **I think** it's the Blossom Hill I had before.

<Mother> The other one isn't **quite** as fruity **you know**.

## Let's hear from the Traveller family...

<Father> Where's your mother gone now?  
 <Son 1> Dunno.  
 <Father> What're you doin now Stephen?  
 <Son 1> Drivin <S\\$H> us <\\$H> into the village.  
 <Father> That's short drivin for you now.  
 <Son 1> I am as long as I remember it it's only fifteen mile an hour in and out of it.  
 <Father> <S\\$H> ? <\\$H> now here she comes.  
 <Son 1> See you bowsie.  
 <Father> Good luck Stephen <S\\$H> down the carnival <\\$H>.  
 <Son 2> Daddy?

## Let's hear from the Traveller family...

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 <Son 2> Daddy?

### SettCorp and TravCorp: Same difference?

- Settled culture and Traveller culture
  - The family unit
  - The 'home' (Miller and Weinert, 1995)
  - Accommodative phenomena (O' Sullivan, 2004)

### SettCorp and TravCorp: Same difference?

- The 'community of practice' of being a family
  - Speaker roles and relationships
  - Rituals etc.
- Irish-English
  - Low level of hedges in family discourse?

### In conclusion...

- Dailey-O' Cain (2000)
  - *Like* heavily sociolinguistically marked.
  - *The use of like* tends to be associated with 'solidarity traits' such as attractiveness, cheerfulness and friendliness.
  - Non-use of *like* is associated with 'status traits' such as educatedness.