



International Academy for
Research in Learning Disabilities

IARLD UPDATES



A Message from the President: Annmarie Urso

Dear Members of the Academy,

I hope this final letter of my presidency of the Academy finds you and yours safe and well. It has been an invigorating experience personally and professionally to serve the Academy the past three years. I would like to highlight several of the most important accomplishments of the Academy and the Executive Board the past three years:

1. Opportunities for renewed collaboration of our members at our annual conferences after a two-year pandemic hiatus in Oviedo, Spain, 2022, Gainesville, United States, 2023, and Kielce, Poland 2024. Each of these conferences provided rich scholarly discussions and moved forth our mission to advance international research in the field of learning disabilities. I wish to personally thank Dr. Monika Łodej and her planning committee for the wonderfully welcoming and academically stimulating experience we had in Kielce. I look forward to our 47th annual conference in Cyprus under the leadership of Dr. Timothy Papadopoulos and Dr. George Spanoudis. Please visit the [conference website](#) for information and the Call for Abstract Submissions (Due 16 March 2025). The conference will take place September 17-19, 2025, in Nicosia, Cyprus.

A newsletter of the
INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMY FOR RESEARCH
IN LEARNING DISABILITIES

December 2024
Issue No. 24 (2)

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President's Message, Continued

1. In the spirit of continued sharing of research, I invite you to participate in, or share widely, the Academy's sponsored international research project, the *Collaborative Orthographic-Impacts Reading-Writing Research Project*, under the leadership of Dr. Susan Galletly. Please see the Call to Research on our website and the call for submissions to a special issue of the IJRLD in this issue on this topic.
2. I wish to acknowledge and thank our dedicated executive board members for their service to the Academy. Under the guidance of our past and present IJRLD editors, Dr. David Scanlon, Dr. Matthias Grünke and Dr. Vincent J. Connelly, we have been able to see great strides in the visibility and impact of [IJRLD](#). Dr. Margy Pierce has provided organized effort in collating the many reports of the board and turning them into an informative and accessible IARLD *Updates* Newsletter twice a year. Thank you all!
3. I also wish to recognize two executive board members who have served the Academy for many years and will leave their offices at the end of this year - Dr. Angeliki Mouzaki our Secretary for six years, and Dr. Li-Yu Hung, member-at-large. Thank you both for your service. The Academy is most grateful and wishes you well on your future endeavors.

In closing, I wish to thank Prof. Jennifer Waddington, our Assistant to the President's Office and webmaster for her dedication to these positions the past three years. She was able to update many years of historical membership information and make sure our roster was current and up-to-date. Her work was efficient and allowed for seamless communication between the Office of the Treasurer and the Office of the President and timely communication with our members. She will continue on as webmaster.

Lastly, I wish to give a hearty welcome to the presidency of the Academy to Dr. Tino Rodriguez. I am confident that under Tino's leadership, the Academy will continue to thrive and expand. I will move to an ex-officio position as the past-president and serve Tino and future presidents of the Academy on the president's advisory group.

I wish you all a healthy, safe, and happy New Year!

With my deepest regards and gratitude in serving the Academy,

Sincerely,
Anmarie

(President's Message continued)



A Message from the President-Elect: Celestino Rodríguez

Dear Members of the IARLD,

I hope you are all well, and that this year 2024 has been productive both professionally and personally.

We will finish this exceptional year for the IARLD and next year I will go from being president-elect to president. I would like to thank the Academy and the Executive Board for their support in this transition year. Special thanks to President Annmarie Urso for all her help and advice.

Proud as I am of belonging to the Academy, I am really pleased with the position of President, a position I accept with responsibility and enthusiasm. It is time to work together within the Academy, to continue sharing views and improving research and professional practice on learning disabilities. To this aim, participation and collaboration from you all are required. I am confident that the challenges we face like next conference in Cyprus, publications, calls for research, etc. and new aims will help the Academy achieve this mission. We can do all this not only with your help, but also with your active participation, academic contributions and professional expertise.

I remain at your disposal and at the disposal of the Academy, looking to the future with excitement and hope.

I look forward to meeting all of you in the activities of the Academy during my time as president.

Kindest regards and all the best for the 2025,

Celestino Rodríguez, PhD
President-elect and Fellow
Full Professor
University of Oviedo

SAVE THE DATE

47th Annual IARLD Conference September 17-19, 2025

*Assessing Neurocognitive and Social-Cognitive Performance of
the Developing Brain in Learning Disabilities*

hosted by the Department of Psychology
University of Cyprus
Nicosia, Cyprus

The conference theme embraces innovative methods for evaluating neurocognitive and social-cognitive functioning in individuals with learning disabilities. Cognitive abilities, such as memory, attention, and problem-solving, are foundational to acquiring knowledge. Social skills, including communication, emotional regulation, and social interaction, shape how individuals engage with their learning environments. These aspects provide a comprehensive view of how learning disabilities manifest across different contexts. By studying both domains, we can identify early signs of learning disabilities, such as difficulties in processing information, engaging socially, or adapting to school settings.

Key topics will include behavioral and cognitive assessments, neurophysiological techniques, and social cognitive measures that advance our understanding of brain development and learning disorders. As learning disabilities often lead to social challenges, such as difficulty forming friendships or feelings of isolation in the classroom, submissions are encouraged to explore the impact of individual and environmental factors, performance profiles, early childhood interventions, and socio-emotional development.

We welcome contributions from interdisciplinary fields, including psychology, education, cognitive neuroscience, and healthcare. The primary goal of the conference is to foster collaboration between researchers and practitioners to deepen our understanding of learning disabilities and inform evidence-based approaches to assessment and treatment, addressing cognitive deficits and social challenges.

We invite you to participate in this vibrant exchange of knowledge and contribute to advancing the study of learning disabilities. We look forward to welcoming you to the University of Cyprus for this exciting event!

Timothy C. Papadopoulos and George Spanoudis
Department of Psychology
and Center for Applied Neuroscience
University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

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Chair of Conference Programs, Chair of the Conference By-Laws and Constitution Committee

TBD



Cyprus Conference Website:

<https://cyprusconferences.org/iarld2025/>

IMPORTANT DATES:

Abstract Submission Deadline: March 16, 2025

Notification of Acceptance: April 21, 2025

Early Bird Deadline: May 30, 2025

Registration Deadline: June 30, 2025

Executive Board Election Results

Thank you for your participation in the recent election for vacancies on the IARLD board.

Congratulations to:

Secretary: Dr. Haerin Park,
University of St. Joseph

In addition, there has been an appointment
by the Academy:

Member-at-Large: Dr. Mary Beth Calhoon,
University of Miami

IARLD Officers

Continued

Academy Historian

Michael Dunn
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Member At-Large

Karen Waldie
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Member At-Large

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Member At-Large

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46th Annual IARLD Conference

July 3-4, 2024
Hosted by the Jan Kochanowski University
Kielce, Poland



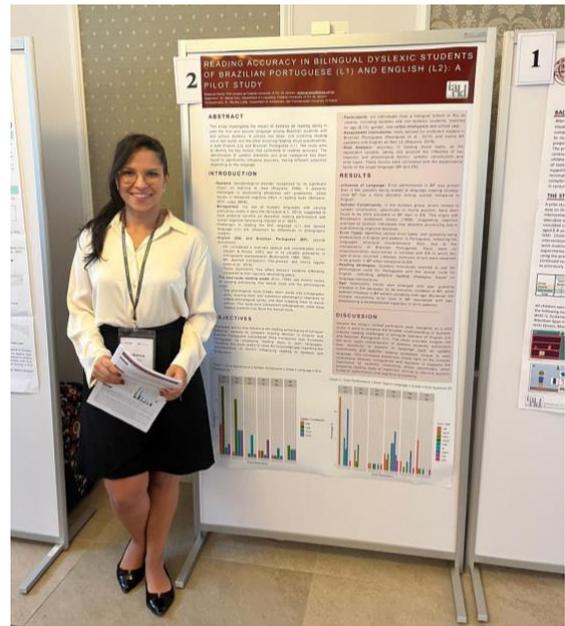
The 46th annual IARLD conference was held at the UJK Rectorate Building at Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Poland. Conference attendees came from five continents, from countries including, Italy, Cyprus, Brazil, Greece, India, the Netherlands, Estonia, Poland, Australia, Spain, Germany, Canada, and the United States.



Congratulations to Rachele Lievore, winner of the Marjorie Montague Award for Outstanding Doctoral Level Research. Rachele presented her research on how trait and state mathematics anxiety could affect performance among children with and without specific learning disorders at the Poster Session.



Thanks to Conference Chair, Monika Łodej; Senior Conference Advisor, Susan Galletly; and Organizing Committee Members, Sylwester Łodej, Aleksandra Matysiak, Shala (Dippman) Barczewska, and Lukasz Stolarski.



Congratulations to Rebecca Reina, winner of the 2024 Janette Klingner IARLD Conference Poster Award for her poster on reading accuracy in bilingual dyslexic students of Brazilian Portuguese (L1) and English (L2). Rebecca is a Ph.D. student at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.



Conference attendees were welcomed by Professor Beata Wojciechowska, Dean of the Department of Humanities at JKU.

46th Annual Conference Symposia



International Issues in Inclusive Education
Allison Nannemann, Celestino Rodriguez Perez,
& David Scanlon
Discussant: Matthias Grünke

Neurophysiological Insights: Orthographic
Processing, Phonological or Executive Function
Deficits in Dyslexia, DLD, and ADHD Subtypes
Timothy Papadopoulos, Evgenia-Peristera Kouki,
Débora Areces, & Paloma González Castro
Discussant: George C. Spanoudis



News from the Front:
The Bare Essentials for Highly Effective Teachers
of Students with Learning Disabilities
Laurie Seder, Michael Rozalski, & Anmarie Urso
Discussant: Anmarie Urso



Mastering Bilingualism: Insights into Literacy and
Language Development of English Language
Learners
Ester Geva & Angela Massesy-Garrison,
Mattias Grünke & Janine Bracht, and Monika Łodej
Discussant: Ester Geva



Roundtable:
How sustainable are research-based practices
for students with learning disabilities
in today's schools?
Discussants: Vincent Connelly, Matthias Grünke,
Moritz Börnert-Ringleb, & Cameron McKenzie

Cruickshank Lecture
Georgios D. Sideridis, Ph.D.

Harvard Medical School/National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

“Investigating Types of Responding in Children with Learning Disabilities and Low Achievement When Evaluating Academic and Non-academic Skills: A Cause for Concern?”



Dr. Sideridis is Senior Survey Methodologist at Boston Children’s Hospital and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. He received his Ph.D. in Developmental and Child Psychology from the University of Kansas and did postdoctoral work at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He has published more than 100 papers in international journals such as the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *Journal of Applied Measurement*, and *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*. He has been a member of editorial boards in the journals *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *Exceptional Children*, *Remedial and Special Education*, *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, *Assessment for Effective Interventions*, *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, *Psicothema*, *European Journal of Education and Psychology*, and *Psychology* (in Greek).

In this year’s Cruickshank Lecture, Dr. Sideridis provided evidence on a relatively underexplored area in learning disabilities and low achievement – namely, an analysis of the way students respond on various cognitive, attitude, and behavioral measures. Dr. Sideridis argued that analyzing aberrant responding patterns and intra-individual response variability can tell us about motivation. He further argued that scores generated from such measures for low achieving students are not to be trusted.

Sharing results from multiple studies, Dr. Sideridis showed that high achieving and low achieving students show different patterns of intra-individual response variability, and that aberrant responding was more prevalent among children with LD. This observation highlights a particular concern about the validity of assessment results for this population. Look for Dr. Sideridis’s Cruickshank lecture in the upcoming issue of the *IJRLD*.

Conference Speaker

Werona Krol-Gierat, Ph.D.

University of the National Education Commission

“Creating a Positive and Inclusive EFL Learning Environment”



In her talk, Dr. Krol-Gierat discussed the potential factors contributing to the diverse linguistic attainment and attitude development of children learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in inclusive lower-primary classes in Poland. Results of a pilot study showed that students with Special Education Needs (SEN) showed lower attainment on measures of foreign language development, on average, as compared to non-SEN students. However, there was variability in the result, with some SEN students showing strong attainment. Diagnostic category was not a clear factor in determining FL success. The speaker speculated that severity of disability, weaknesses in specific psychological processes, attentional abilities, communication proficiency, social skills, motor skills, intellectual development, motivation, and presence of teaching assistants were additional factor influencing FL attainment. Dr. Krol-Gierat recommended that potential therapeutic effects should be considered in informing the practice of including students with SEN in foreign language learning.

Dr. Krol-Gierat also presented a unique educational initiative aimed at raising awareness among future EFL teachers and promoting inclusivity. This project involved an international book club, reading *Sitting Pretty* by Rebecca Taurig. Participants in the book club also participated in an accessibility challenge in Krakow City Centre, evaluating the accessibility of various locations around the city and recording observations on a common Padlet. Participants then generated conclusions and recommendations related to improving accessibility. Dr. Krol-Gierat suggested that a pedagogy of discomfort may be a powerful tool for building awareness and promoting inclusivity among pre-service teachers.

Guest Talk

Christine Xuereb

Specific Learning Difficulties Service,
Ministry of Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation
Government of Malta

“Dyslexia Friendly Schools Initiative in Malta”



In her talk, Ms. Xuereb shared work related to an initiative in Malta to create a network of dyslexia-friendly schools conducted by the Specific Learning Difficulties Service (SPLD), a division of the Ministry of Education devoted to supporting students with learning disabilities, including 2000 students with dyslexia.

Ms. Xuereb shared the DSFI's guiding principle, that all learners should be educated as if they are dyslexic, using a multisensory, mind-friendly approach. The vision of the DSFI is rooted in the following tenets:

- The ethos of schools must be welcoming and friendly
- All learners have strengths
- Multisensory teaching and learning techniques are essential for accommodating all learning styles
- Students must develop resilience and determination through positive and encouraging environments
- Parent involvement and friendly communication between parents and schools are critically important

In the DSFI, selected schools are supported in progressing through a series of phases, from earning a certificate (indicating demonstration of working knowledge of dyslexia and basic accommodations) to the full phase award, for schools that demonstrate knowledge of learning difference, the removal of barriers, and the implementation of supports.

At this point in the initiative, the DSFI has attained the following achievements:

- 11 schools awarded the full phase award
- 5 schools achieved foundational level certificate
- 19 applicant schools

Ms. Xuereb concluded her talk by discussing challenges that the DSFI continues to face. These include time constraints, staffing issues, reliance on key players and effective school leadership, and the need for research funding to evaluate who the model is working most effectively for. Read more about the DSFI [here](#).

Pre-Conference Session & Post-Conference Sight-Seeing



Susan Galletly leads a conversation with Pre-Conference attendees on the IARLD Collaborative Orthographic-Impacts Reading-Writing Research Project.

Rebecca Reina enjoys a conversation with new friends during the Post-Conference sight-seeing expedition.



Susan Galletly enjoys a meal with Laurie Seder, Ester Geva, and others during the Post-Conference sight-seeing expedition.

David Scanlon, Allison Nannemann, and Mary Beth Calhoon enjoy a meal in Kielce.



Committee Reports

Members and Associate Members Report

Chair: Anya Evmenova

The Members and Associate Members' Committee is comprised of Dr. Anya Evmenova (Chair), George Mason University; Dr. Kevin Chung, the Hong Kong Institute of Education; Dr. Irene Mammarella, University of Padova, Italy; and Dr. Michael Dunn, Washington State University Vancouver.

Between June 2024 and October 2024, the committee has accepted two new **Members**:

Sunaina Shenoy, University of New Mexico, USA - accepted July 2024 (nominated by Allison Nannemann)

Johny Daniel, Durham University, United Kingdom - accepted August 2024 (self-nomination)

The committee has accepted no new **Associate Members**.

Conference Committee Report

Chair: Monika Łodej

The 46th IARLD conference brought together a distinguished group of 40 researchers from 14 countries across five continents (North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia). The largest delegation hailed from the United States.

An integral part of the event at Jan Kochanowski University was the active involvement of students from the Department of English Philology and Collegium Medicum, who assisted with the organization and attended lectures. This hands-on experience allowed them to immerse themselves in the structure of an academic conference, explore diverse presentation formats such as panel discussions, roundtables, and poster sessions, and engage directly with renowned specialists whose works they had studied in their master's seminars on language acquisition.

The organizing committee, composed of members from the Department of Corpus English Linguistics—Dr. Sylwester Łodej, Dr. Łukasz Stolarski, Dr. Aleksandra Matysiak, and Dr. Shala Barczewska—ensured the conference was meticulously planned and executed. A highlight of the program was securing the keynote address by Prof. Georgios Sideridis from Harvard Medical School and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. The event also featured presentations by Dr. Weronia Król-Gierat from the University of the National Education Commission in Krakow and a guest lecture by Ms. Christine Xuereb, representing the Specific Learning Difficulties Service within Malta's Ministry of Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation.

Treasurer's Report

Allison Nannemann

As of October 2024, the balance in our business account is \$1,063.02; the President's account contains \$1,478.83. Funds from two Certificates of Deposit totaling \$22,715.22 are currently held in a separate account at Bank of America.

Between May and October 2024, \$186.23 in membership dues were paid (this includes prorated dues for new members). Membership in IARLD is based on a calendar year with dues paid each January. We appreciate your diligence in remitting your payments in a timely manner after the first of the year.

Membership fees can be paid on the Membership Dues page on the [IARLD website](#) via Paypal. Alternately, checks payable to IARLD can be mailed to:

Allison Nannemann
1135 Grace Street NE
Rio Rancho, NM 87144
USA

The annual dues structure is \$120 for members and fellows, \$30 for student members, and \$30 for retired and emeritus members.



Announcements:

Help IARLD achieve its goal:

To increase the visibility, impact, and sphere of influence of the Academy by:



1. Increasing our membership through ongoing membership drive initiatives. Please consider nominating students, members, associate members, and fellows who will contribute to our scholarly community.
2. Encouraging IARLD Fellows and Members to list the IARLD as an additional affiliation on all publications in journals, books, and newspapers.
3. Encouraging IARLD Fellows and Members to list the IARLD as an additional affiliation on all conference presentations.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH IN LEARNING DISABILITIES (IJRLD)

Manuscript Submissions

The co-editors of IJRLD are soliciting submissions for upcoming issues. Please consider submitting your manuscripts to our flagship journal and encourage your colleagues to do the same.

More information on the journal, as well as the journal's submission portal can be found on the journal's website:

<https://journals.ub.uni-koeln.de/index.php/IJRLD>

IARLD Award for Outstanding Doctoral Level Research

The International Academy for Research in Learning Disabilities (IARLD) announces our award cycle for outstanding doctoral level research in the field of learning disabilities. The award recognizes research that contributes in a significant way to our understanding of learning disabilities.

This Award provides:

1. A travel stipend of up to US\$1000 (with discretion to increase depending on the circumstances of the recipient);
2. Free registration for the next IARLD Annual IARLD Conference, and
3. One-year membership to the IARLD.

Timeline: To be announced.

Eligibility: The competition is open to individuals who have completed a dissertation and received their doctoral degree within two years prior to the application deadline.

Application: Each applicant must submit an application including:

1. Application form.
2. One copy of an abstract, not to exceed more than 150 words.
3. One copy of a manuscript, not to exceed 35 pages, outlining and summarizing research, using APA guidelines. Manuscripts submitted for this competition may already have been submitted/accepted for publication. If submitted or accepted, appropriate references and acknowledgments must be provided.

Email application to:

Dr. Georgios Sideridis, Chair
Georgios.Sideridis@childrens.harvard.edu

Meet Our New Members



**Johny Daniel,
Ph.D.**

Dr. Johny Daniel, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at Durham University in the United Kingdom. Dr. Daniel's research broadly centers on teacher professional development, inclusive education, and the development and evaluation of reading programs tailored to students, including those at risk of learning difficulties such as dyslexia. His work aims to enhance reading comprehension, inference-making skills, and address factors like anxiety management that affect student outcomes.

Dr. Daniel is the primary investigator in a British Academy-funded study on Taiwanese teachers' knowledge of foundational Mandarin reading instruction. Additionally, he is leading the development of open educational reading programs for primary and secondary students with learning difficulties that are hosted at <https://www.readingresourcecentre.org>.

Recent Publication:

Daniel, J., Clucas, L. & Wang, HH. (2024). Identifying students with dyslexia: exploration of current assessment methods. *Annals of Dyslexia*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11881-024-00313-y>

Dr. Sunaina Shenoy, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Special Education in the College of Education & Human Sciences at the University of Mexico (USA). Her research focuses on three related interests: (a) reading assessment and intervention, particularly as it relates to identifying and working with students who are at-risk for and/or diagnosed with dyslexia; (b) developing reliable and valid assessment tools for culturally and linguistically diverse students with dyslexia; (c) reading trajectory in English and other languages and dyslexia markers across languages.

Dr. Shenoy is currently involved in five research projects: (a) implementing Multi-Layer System of Support (MLSS) models in reading, math and behavior in schools serving culturally and linguistically diverse students in New Mexico; (b) developing valid and reliable screeners in oral language, reading, math and writing for Native American students; (c) developing and validating a reading progress-monitoring tool for elementary grades in the Indian context; (d) measuring the efficacy of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) models in reading in the Indian context; and (e) text readability in the Indian context.



**Sunaina Shenoy,
Ph.D.**

Recent Publication:

Shenoy, S., Boateng, T., & Nannemann, A. (2024). Comparing Istation and easyCBM as progress-monitoring tools in a rural school in New Mexico. *International Journal for Research in Learning Disabilities*, 7(1), 34-46. <https://doi.org/10.28987/ijrld.7.1.34>

Update: Call to Research

IARLD Collaborative Orthographic-Impacts Reading-Writing Research Project

Susan Galletly s.galletly@cqu.edu.au & Rebecca Reina rebeccareina@letras.ufrj.br

It was wonderful to meet with so many of you in Poland at our Kielce Pre-Conference Day and Conference. Colleagues from Australia, Brazil, Estonia, India, Poland, Spain, and Taiwan contributed writing samples for both tasks, for exploration at the Pre-Conference Day.

Writing Task 1 (*Animals & Numbers* 16 word writing task) and Writing Task 2 (*Things I Like About School* 10 min writing sample) have been much explored, with more samples now to be gathered until end of July 2025.

At Kielce, we explored the *Call to Research*, and colleagues asked for an IARLD letter to accompany the Call when forwarding it on.

New colleagues joined the writing project there: it was a great meeting of minds.

We realised the need for the writing task project to develop in multiple directions, for now including:

- (a) a language-skills-linguistics arm,
- (b) a reading-writing-accuracy arm, and
- (c) a survey-plus-discussion-group arm.

We reflected on what form the Special Issue of IJRLD focused on crosslinguistic differences, orthographic impacts, the Call to Research, and associated topics might take: it's nicely inclusive.

We discussed leadership: while additional leaders are also much needed, for now, Rebecca and Susan are our project leaders.

We also saw the need for tools to encourage reflection on orthographic impacts and crosslinguistic differences. So, we're also actioning a survey and an action-research discussion-group model. We're using it first all with a small group of IARLD members and their colleagues - do join us. Then a few of us will trial that survey/discussion group model with other small groups, e.g., of colleagues, students, and others.

With the project now going beyond writing, we gave it a new name.

Currently, we're organising, getting ready to action our research activities across 2025.

And the 2025 Conference is in Cyprus! We're very much looking forward to meeting there for the Pre-Conference Day, then the Conference. Some of us will then stay on in Europe, to work on IJRLD articles we'll be writing together, and then attend the *6th Baltic Sea Conference on Literacy*, from 4-7 October, 2025, in Tallin, Estonia, where we've been invited to present.

We'll now give a brief run-down of each of our IARLD happenings ...

And please, in reading this, if you would like to join any aspects of the project, or expand your involvement, do get in touch with Susan or Rebecca.

You're invited! IARLD Special Issue Invitation

Our invitation to contribute to the Special Issue is included in this edition of IARLD Updates. You'll see it's not all 'crosslinguistic', e.g., we'd love reviews of key areas impacting literacy development, extent of literacy learning difficulties an article on literacy levels and instructional practices in your nation. You can also download that invitation from the website. Do consider articles you might contribute, and please do forward the invitation on to relevant others.

Do pass it on! IARLD Letter re Call to Research.

Please do forward the *Call to Research* to relevant colleagues, departments and organisations. We've now an official IARLD letter to accompany the Call. You can read it in this edition of IARLD Updates. You can also download it from the website.

It's on the Website! Visit the Writing Project page

IARLD is busily setting up an information page about our writing project. It uses our new name, the **IARLD Collaborative Orthographic-Impacts Reading-Writing Research Project**.

Please Encourage Masters and Doctoral Studies

You'll see in our research arms, there are many and varied topics, which are ideal for Masters and Doctoral Studies. Do encourage your students to consider doing studies in these areas.

Funding Advice and Support

Please offer your support and advice to help us achieve funding, for admin hours, etc., e.g., for the hours it takes to type children's handwritten writing responses so we've digitalised texts. Many of our researchers are quite new in the field, with little knowledge of funding grants, etc. We'd love your help.

OUR RESEARCH ARMS

The current arms of our research project are as follows:

Arm 1 Exploring the range of writing development

Two key aims of our 2024-25 gathering of Task 1 and Task 2 writing samples are to

1. Establish typical and atypical writing development for each nation involved.
2. Compare typical and atypical writing development across nations.

We want to go beyond Means and Standard Deviations, to consider ranges (5°-95°), decile achievement, and explore the weakest 10% of readers across nations in depth. That way we can build deep understanding of how well current reading instruction works for children at different achievement levels across nations.

We're needing larger Task 1 and Task 2 sample numbers. Towards this end, we'd love whole-school and whole-class samples of approximately n=50 for each yearlevel, approximately 350 in total for K to 6, 50 children in Kindergarten, 50 in Grade 1, and so on. Using whole schools or whole yearlevels is useful in enabling a more typical spread of skills in each yearlevel.

We'd also love wider representation of nations, and different states within nations. Do join us.

Arm 2 Linguistics-Vocabulary-Topics Exploration of Task 2 Writing Samples

Łukasz (Luke) Stolarski, Professor of Linguistics at Jan Kochanowski University, Kielce, has joined us, and one key arm of our research will use linguistics and its software techniques to explore the range and diversity of language features (vocabulary, topics, etc) that children use, initially with English writing samples, then later exploring samples in other languages.

To do this computer processing most effectively we need a very large number of writing samples.

Task 2 writing responses are now being typed up (digitalised) towards computerised data processing. Lots of samples are needed, so we'd love your involvement.

We're also interested in children's typed Task 2 responses. Thus far we've gathered handwritten samples and find it very time-consuming to computerise children's texts. Typed responses are therefore very welcome, e.g., of older primary school and high school children. Perhaps cognitive load might be explored, using similar topics, by gathering three writing samples: a speech-to-text sample (lowest load), a typed sample and a hand-written sample.

Arm 3. Exploring word-reading and spelling development.

By having children complete Task 1 and Task 2, plus also complete standardised spelling and word-reading tests, we gain deeper insights on normal development, and how we differ across nations. By also linking in children's school data including results on school, state and national testing, we gain deeper insights still.

We've volunteers to do this with Australian and US children, and would LOVE other nations to be part of it.

Arm 4. Replicating key older studies

When one is already testing children's word-reading, e.g., by gathering the TOWRE-2's two 45sec samples of real-word and unfamiliar-word reading, it's doesn't take much extra time to assess reading of brief word-reading lists.

Multiple crosslinguistic studies conducted from the mid-1990s used simple word lists, e.g., Spencer & Hanley's English-Welsh comparison, Landerl, Wimmer & Frith's German-English comparison, Seymour, Aro & Erskine's comparison of 15 European nations.

By using their lists and replicating these studies, we bring them forward into current relevance.

We're planning to include this with Arm 3.

Arm 5. Reflecting & Learning Together: Awareness of Orthographic Impacts

Orthographic impacts and crosslinguistic differences are important - hugely important, in fact, e.g., it's likely that Anglophone children's most significant risk factor increasing likelihood of severely delayed early-literacy development, and learning difficulties, is ... being born in the USA ... or Australia ... UK ... etc.

Those cross-national differences are exciting too, offering strong potential for easing and speeding early-literacy development, with difficulties overwhelmingly reduced: as the *Call to Research* emphasises, researching these is hugely needed!

Orthographic impacts are thus well worth considering, reflecting on, and discussing with others, including our colleagues, our students - the list is endless (education department heads, state treasurers, journalists, ... etc.

We're starting small, very small, but in doing so, building a model and tools with potential for very wide use.

Commencing early February 2025, this project explores and builds research tools plus a model for future research by trialling them. Do consider joining the project: we're determined to ensure that involvement and workload will not be onerous: as low as you choose.

The project has two phases. Most of us will be solely Phase 1 participants, while a few will also action Phase 2.

PHASE 1.

Phase 1 IARLD members (You're invited!), and others they invite, will

- Step 1. (Required) Evaluate/trial our draft Main Survey, providing data for honing it, as a future research tool.
- Step 2. (Optional, plus you choose your involvement level, from 0 to max): Discussion group sessions:
Engage in 1 to 6 Zoom discussion groups on orthographic impacts, and how to build awareness of crosslinguistic gaps towards optimising early-literacy development.
- Step 3. (Required) Complete an End Survey on learning experienced, ideas and suggestions.

PHASE 2.

Midway through Phase 1, once the survey is honed, a few (≥ 2) Phase 1 volunteers will trial the survey and discussion groups in wider areas, e.g., an undergraduate student-teacher group, a teacher group. The requirements are minimal, e.g., group size is as ≥ 2 .

In building tools for future research, while researching, this exciting project will have long-lasting impacts.

Arms 6+. Choose your own adventure 😊

As you'll see from the above, and as discussed in the *Call to Research*, there are a vast number of research areas worthy of and needing investigation.

Please let us know if there are other areas you'd like to explore, e.g., we'd love investigation of cross-national differences in the impacts on and of executive-function skills across early-literacy development, child and teacher workload, and the extent of cognitive load children experience in learning.

Research is needed!

Many thanks for reading this report. As you can see, we'd love your support and involvement.

Research is needed, and, learning from and with each other across nations, the future can be hugely exciting and one of enormous success, including, not least, the easing and speeding of early-literacy development across Anglophone nations.

And it's research, the research that we encourage, support and conduct, that will move us there, to that bright, exciting future.

Thank you for reading this report.



IARLD Member News

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Michael Dunn

Yuan, W., **Dunn, M.** (Accepted/In press; published online June 29, 2024). The impact of parent-mediated naturalistic interventions with the addition of speech-generating devices on vocalizations of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and complex communication needs. *Advances in Neurodevelopmental Disorders*. <https://rdcu.be/dMrYt>

Yuan, W., Kennedy, J., **Dunn, M.**, Hsiao, Y. J., & Poppen, M. (2024). Impact of Speech Generating Device Interventions on Vocalizations of Individuals with Autism and Severe Communication Impairment: A Systematic Review of the Research. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 59(3), 233-256.

Caroline Fitzpatrick & Gabrielle Garon-Carrier

Bérubé-Deschênes, N., Smith, J., Cinar, E., Lemieux, A., Roy, M., Cloutier, G., & **Garon-Carrier, G.** (2024). Profiles of basic psychological needs satisfaction and sociodemographic and school-associated factors. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 1(1), 1-14.

Binet, M-A., Couture, M., Chevrier, J., Pagani, L., **Garon-Carrier, G.**, & **Fitzpatrick, C.** (2024). Preschooler screen time during the pandemic is prospectively associated with lower achievement of developmental milestones. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics* 45(3), e243-e250, <https://doi.org/10.1097/DBP.0000000000001263>

Fitzpatrick, C., Pan, P.M., Lemieux, A., Harvey, E., Andrade Rocha, F., **Garon-Carrier, G.** (2024). Early-Childhood Tablet Use and Outbursts of Anger. *JAMA Pediatrics*. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2024.2511

Konok, V., Binet, M-A., Korom, A., Pogány, A., Miklósi, A., **Fitzpatrick, C.** Cure for tantrums? (2024). Longitudinal relationship between parental digital emotion regulation and children's self-regulatory skills. *Frontiers in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*.

Surprenant, R., Cabot, I., & **Fitzpatrick, C.** (2024). Motivation to move as a key determinant of sedentary behavior among postsecondary students. *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing*.

Ayse Yakut

Yakut, A. D., Akgul, S., & Sengul-Erdem, H. (2024). Handwriting speed, visual-motor skills, and attitudes toward writing in the context of handwriting legibility of students with learning disabilities. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2024.2423786>

Akgul, S., & **Yakut, A. D.** (2024). Gender disproportionality in special education: An analysis of odd ratios and trends. *European Journal of Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12679>

Karen Waldie

Walker, C. G., Marks, E., Fletcher, B., Thayer, Z., Cha, J. E., Teng, Y., . . . **Waldie, K. E.** (2024). Prenatal determinants of anxiety symptoms in middle childhood. Evidence from Growing Up in New Zealand. *Journal of affective disorders*, 363, 653-661. doi:[10.1016/j.jad.2024.07.114](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2024.07.114)

Gillies, N. A., Lovell, A. L., **Waldie, K. E.**, & Wall, C. R. (2024). The effect of fruits and vegetables on children's mental and cognitive health: A systematic review of intervention studies and perspective for future research. *Nutrition*, 112615. doi:[10.1016/j.nut.2024.112615](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nut.2024.112615)

Pigatto, F., Grant, C., Marks, E., Walker, C., Fletcher, B., & **Waldie, K. E.** (2024). Perinatal cumulative risk scores for depression symptoms in young people from the Growing Up in New Zealand longitudinal study. *Journal of affective disorders*, 369, 303-311. doi:[10.1016/j.jad.2024.09.143](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2024.09.143)



IARLD Member News

Karen Waldie (Continued)

Neumann, D., Peterson, E. R., Underwood, L., Morton, S. M. B., & **Waldie, K. E.** (2024). The Association Between Persistence and Change in Behavioral Difficulties During Early to Middle Childhood and Cognitive Abilities at Age 8. *Child psychiatry and human development*, 55(4), 1031-1043. doi:[10.1007/s10578-022-01453-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-022-01453-1)

Walker, C. G., Thayer, Z. M., Marks, E. J., Ly, K. N., Pillai, A., **Waldie, K.**, . . . Morton, S. M. B. (2024). Association between maternal depression symptoms and child telomere length. *Journal of psychiatric research*, 174, 319-325. doi:[10.1016/j.jpsychires.2024.04.037](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2024.04.037)

Russell, S., Bird, A. L., Waldie, K., Peterson, E., Morton, S. M. B., Atatoa Carr, P. E., . . . Reese, E. (2024). From infancy to eight: How early maternal mental health, emotion reminiscing, and language shape children's mental health. *Development and psychopathology*, 1-15. doi:[10.1017/s0954579424000919](https://doi.org/10.1017/s0954579424000919)

Zhang, Q., Underwood, L., Peterson, E. R., Fenaughty, J., & **Waldie, K. E.** (2024). Psychometric Properties and Factor Structure of the Aggressive Student Culture Scale Administered to the Age 8 Growing Up in NZ Cohort. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 42(2), 131-146. doi:[10.1177/07342829231218036](https://doi.org/10.1177/07342829231218036)

Bird, A., Reese, E., Schaughency, E., Waldie, K., Atatoa-Carr, P., Morton, S., & Grant, C. (2024). Talking, praising and teaching: How parent interaction during a learning task relates to children's early learning. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 66, 255-268. doi:[10.1016/j.ecresq.2023.10.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2023.10.001)

Yanga, R., Underwood, L., Schoeps, A., **Waldie, K. E.**, Morton, S. M. B., & Peterson, E. R. (2024). Retrospective analysis of the challenges and highlights of parenting two-year-old children who were subsequently recognised as autistic. *Advances in Autism, ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print). doi:[10.1108/aia-02-2024-0012](https://doi.org/10.1108/aia-02-2024-0012)

Zheng, Y., Kirk, I., & **Waldie, K.** (2024). Oscillatory features of German-English sentence processing: Evidence from an EEG study. *International Journal of Bilingualism*. doi:[10.1177/13670069241285332](https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069241285332)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Michael Dunn



Dr. Michael Dunn was awarded two Washington State University internal grants:

- Equity and inclusion: Writing topics and activity ideas for the SkribaTools website. WSU College of Education Equity and Inclusion Minigrant, \$742.
- Literacy researchers' perspectives about SkribaTools: Making writing tools accessible via an open-source web hub. College of Education Faculty Funding Award 2024-25, \$4,989.



David Scanlon

Executive board Member-At-Large and former editor of the IJRLD **Dr. David Scanlon** has been invited to serve a second term as Editor of *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*.



James Chapman

Longtime IARLD Fellow, Executive Board Member, and Former President **Dr. James Chapman** recently received the [Eminent Researcher Award for 2024](#) from the *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties/Learning Difficulties Australia*. This award is designed to recognize significant contributions by eminent researchers in the field of learning difficulties. James is Professor Emeritus of Educational Psychology at Massey University, New Zealand.