

Laidlaw Scholarship Reflective Report

A reflective report is required after each summer period (by 20th September). Once submitted we will ask you to post onto the Laidlaw Network (without your supervisor comments if you wish).

This should be supplied as a Word document. Interesting photographs directly related to your research project or scholarship are encouraged and should be inserted into the body of the word document, not supplied separately.

There are six questions for you to complete. You are expected to write a detailed and thorough report; each section should be around 200-300 words.

Please note: This is NOT a technical research report. Scientific reports with a covering note cannot be accepted.

This report will need comments from your supervisor and is to be signed off by both you and your supervisor before submission.

If you have any problems or queries please contact the Laidlaw Scholarship Administrator, laidlawscholarship@leeds.ac.uk.

Scholar

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| Name: | Lilian Jaber |
| Faculty: | Management Department (LUBS) |
| Email address: | Bn20lj2@leeds.ac.uk |
| Title of Scholarship Project: | Are you really listening? A literature review of listening methodologies. |

Please describe the research you have conducted this period

Over the 6 week period, I conducted a literature review on a research methodology named 'Listening Rooms' which aims to capture genuine student voice at university. My research focused on the effectiveness of Listening Rooms, particularly in capturing the voice of marginalised/ underrepresented students. At the start of the project, I began to familiarise myself with the method itself, which involved looking at the toolkit my supervisor had created with instructions on how the process of Listening Rooms worked, and the ways in which other universities can implement it in their own institutions. I also analysed the original paper that proposed this methodology at Sheffield Hallam University (Heron,2019) and started mapping out the themes I would focus on for my literature review. I decided to look into the topics of online research (as some of the projects were conducted via Microsoft Teams), friendship between students, power dynamics within the method, the safety of the environment created and the authenticity of the conversations. I analysed articles within many different journals and used Research Rabbit to make connections between relevant papers. I organised all of this information thematically and systematically into a spreadsheet, and used this to write up my final literature review paper of the effectiveness of Listening Rooms as a research method.

How is the research work you have been undertaking impactful or important?

This methodology is important for institutions to recognise as it allows marginalised /underrepresented students the opportunity for their voices and stories to be heard. There are many issues associated with traditional research methods that capture student voice, like interviews, surveys and focus groups. The question and answer structure in some of these can often be unnerving for participants, particularly around sensitive topics. Focus groups also often cause members to hold back on their thoughts due to their

public nature - especially as many are conducted with participants all being strangers to one another. Listening Rooms can potentially combat these problems with a much safer, inclusive environment being created for the students, who are actually often friends/coursemates too. By removing the researcher from the data collection stage, it allows for more authentic conversations between students, who feel like they are being researched *with* and not *on*. This is impactful for the future of how research could be conducted. By establishing a reflective environment for participants without a researcher presence, there is the potential to provide deeper insights into many areas of our lives, not just university. Listening Rooms could be applied in workplaces as a way of giving employees a space to speak out about their experiences at their firm or even about more personal matters that they don't feel comfortable telling a manager or colleague about.

What impact has conducting research had on your degree course and university experience?

The experience has been really useful in teaching me how to organise a project and my workload the most effectively, especially because I was working to strict deadlines throughout my project and prepared presentations for given dates. I have also never conducted a literature review before this project, so I learnt about using different softwares like Research Rabbit and other journal databases to find meaningful connections between journal papers, which I will continue to use during the second year of my degree for my essays. My supervisor gave me many useful tips on organising my citations and research material, as well as teaching me about how she and her colleagues conduct research. Conducting research during the summer period which I would have usually had off, taught me to be much more disciplined and stay focused until my course starts again. It felt like my university experience was continued into the Summer, especially with being part of the larger community of Laidlaw Scholars, with whom I spoke with regularly about their research and made close friends with! I think conducting research has positively impacted my independence, because there were a lot of occasions where I had to make decisions on where I wanted to go with the research on my own, without strict guidelines set in place as there usually are with university essays.

What leadership skills do you believe you have gained from the research period? (please refer to the leadership attributes below)

I think I have really gained the ability to work and think independently, as well as lead without authority. My supervisor was very supportive, but she gave me the space to grow and make significant decisions about the research on my own. I also felt I managed to build important relationships and networks with the wider research team of my project, with them now asking me for ideas on how to conduct future projects because of my findings, but also providing me with information with conferences I could speak at and additional roles I could take on at university. I also believe I gained the ability to navigate

new and foreign situations, like presenting my work in front of a large audience (which I'd never done before) and taking a trip to Manchester to meet my supervisor's colleagues and discuss expectations. My ability to manage my time and organise effectively has definitely improved; I am now more confident in setting up schedules and prioritising the right tasks for myself, which also definitely comes with the improved honesty I have with myself of my preferred working/leadership style. I feel much more confidence in my own ideas and intellectual ability now; the feedback that my research team gave me on my report really improved the approach I take on evaluating my own knowledge and limitations.

Please talk about activities you've been involved in to disseminate your research, including but not limited to attending conferences, producing research posters, and promotion of the scholarship

I have written a literature review paper that is due to be published as part of a wider journal article that looks at evaluating Listening Rooms as a method for data collection. I have also produced a research poster that is due to be posted onto the Laidlaw Scholars Network, so that everyone who is a part of our research community can view it and potentially even apply their own Listening Rooms projects. I was also accepted to present at ICUR 2022 about my research, and have been preparing my presentation for a practise run with the panelists to make sure everything is ready for the real conference. I am also planning to promote the Laidlaw Scholarship at a stall at the 2022 Freshers Fair and would love to speak about my experiences of the research and the residential to new students starting at the University of Leeds. My supervisor has also contacted me about another online global conference in November I could speak at called World Access to Higher Education Day (WAHED), which I am currently preparing a tweaked abstract for, with her guidance. This conference is more specific to the topic of my research and would involve more experienced academics than me, so it would be a brilliant opportunity to learn more about the topic I have researched and get brilliant feedback on my presentation and Listening Rooms as a method.

What are your future career or educational plans?

Even though I am quite a nervous public speaker, I have always had the aspiration to be a lecturer. I have always loved the idea of explaining topics to students who are really passionate and interested in what you're telling them. After finishing my research project, it gave me more confidence of the fact that I would love to be an academic. I hope to undertake a masters and a PhD both in the topic areas of English Language or Linguistics. I would consider doing research projects whilst also teaching, so I could continue learning about the topic I specialise in and hopefully publish more papers that can make a difference to many people. I have also considered specialising in speech therapy or conducting research into speech disorders, because both the human brain and language really fascinate me. I would like to take on another summer research internship, if possible, in my second/third year to gain more knowledge on research and writing/publishing academic work. I

also plan to shadow some lecturers and participate in as many presentations as I can, in order to gain more confidence and experience in public speaking. I would also like to liaise with more university staff and potentially take a part-time university role, assisting staff with administrative/curriculum work.

Supervisor

Please comment on your scholar's research period, what you consider to be your scholars' strengths and which leadership attributes (please refer to the leadership attributes below) you feel your scholar has demonstrated and is particularly skilled in. You could also identify areas which your scholar can develop further.


Lilian has produced work that will be invaluable to the development of our research on Listening Rooms and, if published (as planned), will influence qualitative methods research across the higher education sector and beyond. Her approach to the project was exceptional. She listened carefully, asked questions as needed and demonstrated a strong ability to work and think independently.

Lilian demonstrated the ability to honestly assess her own knowledge. As the project evolved, I could see that she was absorbed in the work, and our weekly meetings clearly evidenced continual learning. Her ability to speak and write clearly and confidently was commended by each member of the research team. Lilian listened carefully to feedback and comments on her mid-term presentation and her final report demonstrated an exceptional ability to synthesise and present a large volume of complex literature.

I was particularly impressed with Lilian's ability to navigate new and foreign situations. Many first-year students would struggle with the scale and autonomy of this particular project, whereas she embraced the challenge, and seemed to genuinely enjoy the work, even submitting a (successful) abstract to the Undergraduate Research Conference!

In terms of areas development, there really is very little I can offer. I hope that Lilian can take the positive experience of the Laidlaw internship and continue to build on this throughout her degree programme and beyond. She has been a genuine pleasure to work with, and I wish her every future success.

Signature of Scholar



Date: 20/09/22

Signature of Project Leader



Date: 13/09/22

Leadership Attributes

Able to lead without authority

Able to convey purpose and build coalitions

Cultural intelligence and capacity for empathy

Honestly assess own knowledge/leadership style/preferences

Knows own limitations and acts accordingly

Learns continually

Speaks and writes clearly and confidently

Able to listen with understanding

Uses digital connectivity

Makes effective decisions in complex environments

Seeks out and fosters innovation and creativity

Strong intellectual ability

Turns ideas into action

Builds relationships and networks

Works collaboratively and across boundaries

Uses emotional intelligence to achieve this

Capitalises on the power of diversity

Able to navigate new and foreign situations

Uses this to build relationships and networks

Has energy and impact

Makes things happen

Able to analyse data and interpret results

Able to work and think independently

Prioritises activities and manages own time