

CURRICULUM VITAE



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○ PROFILE

I work as Special Teaching Staff (English language) at the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) Language Centre (LC). I have been involved in the teaching and in the curriculum design of undergraduate English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses for various university departments at CUT. At the LC, I have participated in the writing of Erasmus+ KA1 and KA2 research proposals, I have joined many Erasmus+ projects and I have also tested the pedagogical application of Virtual Reality (VR) as an educational tool. I have presented my research in conferences in Cyprus and abroad. I have also done small workshops and webinars to colleagues and to other universities abroad about the benefits of VR for undergraduate courses. I have used Oculus Rift, Oculus Go, Samsung Gear VR, HTC Vive and Meta Quest 2 in my courses and have tested the pedagogical affordances of many VR applications such as Sharecare VR (English for Nursing), Open Brush VR (former Tilt Brush) (English for Fine Arts), Micro Cosmic Worlds (English for Chemical Engineering) and AltSpaceVR. I am a PhD Candidate in the Department of Education at the University of Cyprus, and my research interests revolve around VRALL (Virtual Reality-Assisted Language Learning), immersive technologies research, and multimodality.

○ WORK EXPERIENCE

TERTIARY EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

- Sep 2020-present **Special Teaching Staff (English Language),
Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), Limassol**
- Jan 2012-May 2020 **Special Scientist (English Language)
Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), Limassol**

Designed the curriculum (13 weeks – 26 lessons), based on needs analysis and on the students' 4-year programme of study:

- English for Fine Arts I and II (1st-year students)
- English for Management Studies I and II (1st-year students)
- English for Chemical Engineering I and II (1st-year students)

-English for Multimedia & Graphic Design I and II (1st-year students)

Responsible for teaching:

- English for Academic Purposes (1st-year students)
- English for Mechanical Engineering II (1st-year students)
- English for Communication Studies II (1st-year students)
- English for Nursing II and II (1st-year students)
- English for Commerce, Finance & Shipping I and II (1st-year students)
- English for Hotel & Tourism Management I and II (1st-year students)
- English for Business Communication (2nd-year students)
- English for Finance (4th-year students)

All courses have followed modern teaching approaches supported by **CALL** (Computer-Assisted Language Learning), **TELL** (Technology-Assisted Language Learning), **Multimodality** and **VRALL** (Virtual Reality-Assisted Language Learning).

TECHNOLOGIES USED IN MY COURSES

- **Mixed Reality** hardware (Meta Quest 3)
- **Virtual Reality hardware** (Meta Quest 2, Oculus Rift, HTC VIVE, Samsung Gear VR, Oculus Go),
- **Virtual Reality applications** (Sharecare VR, The Body VR, Dreams of Dali, Open Brush (former Tilt Brush), Micro Cosmic Worlds, Mondly, Google Earth, AltSpaceVR, IMMERSE),
- **Personalised pages** (Weebly, Wix, Wordpress), **LinkedIn**
- **YouTube, websites, blogs, vlogs, SlideShare, TedTalks, Deviant Art** (art community online platform), **Mentimeter, Padlet, G Suite** (Google Drive, Gmail, Google sites, Google forms), **Kahoot, Moodle, Zoom, Skype, Facebook, iPad, smart phones, tablets**

- July 2022 -present **EuroCALL Cyprus Representative** (European Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning) – National contact of the Association in Cyprus
- June 2022 -present **Research partner** at **IMMERSE**, the world’s leading education metaverse platform for foreign language learning – CA, USA
- June 2021-present **Core Member of E-LaRA** Research Group (**European University of Technology (EUt+)**) – A common laboratory for pedagogical research and student-centred learning
- Sep 2019-Aug 2021 **Secretary of the EuroCALL Teacher Education Special Interest Group (SIG)**
- Jan 2020 **Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) Student Escort**
- Jun-Aug 2019 **Research Associate - CUT Language Centre**
- May 2018- Mar 2020 **English Instructor for Adult learners – appointed by the CUT LC**

- Jun-July 2018
Apr – May 2019 **Instructor of IELTS for the public – appointed by the CUT LC**
- Feb 09-Sep 2014
Sep 17-Jun 2020 **English Language Lecturer (HE)
The CTL Eurocollege, Limassol**
- Oct 07-Jan 2009 **English Language Lecturer (HE)
Intercollege, Limassol**

SECONDARY EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Sep 14-Jun 2018 **English Language Teacher
IMS Private School, Limassol**

PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS (PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION)

- Sep 03-Jun 2012 **English Language Teacher
ACT Private Institute, Limassol**
- Jan 11-May 2011 **Speaking Assessor for the Anglia Examinations Speaking
test in Cyprus appointed by Chichester College, UK
Chichester College, UK**
- Sep 02-Jun 2003 **English Language Teacher
Apostolos Andreas Institute, Limassol**

EDUCATION

2020-present **PhD Candidate – Department of Education
University of Cyprus, Nicosia**

2002-2005 **Masters of Arts in Education (Applied Linguistics)
The Open University, UK**

1998-2002 **Bachelor’s Degree on English, Language & Literature
University of Cyprus, Nicosia**

REVIEWING RESPONSIBILITIES

- Peer reviewer for the EuroCALL 2024 Short Papers (Dec 2024)
- Reviewer for the online, scientific journal *The EuroCALL Review* (Sep-Oct 2024)
- Peer reviewer for the edited book from EuroCALL 2022: <https://research-publishing.net/book?10.14705/rpnet.2022.61.9782383720157>

- **Peer reviewer for a book chapter:** Book: “Assessing virtual exchange in foreign language courses at tertiary level” (2022), Research-publishing.net: Anna Czura & Melinda Dooly (Eds). <https://research-publishing.net/book?10.14705/rpnet.2022.59.9782383720102>
- **Peer reviewer for the edited book from EuroCALL 2021:** <https://research-publishing.net/book?10.14705/rpnet.2021.54.9782490057979>
- **Peer reviewer for the EuroCALL 2021 proposal selection:** Member of the “Peer-reviewing committee” for the EuroCALL 2021 selection of abstracts for the virtual conference (March 2020)
- **Peer reviewer for the EuroCALL 2020 Gathering proposal selection:** Member of the “Peer-reviewing committee” for the EuroCALL 2020 selection of abstracts for the online gathering (August 2020)
- **Peer reviewer for the edited book from EuroCALL 2019:** <https://research-publishing.net/book?10.14705/rpnet.2019.38.9782490057542>

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECTS

- **Erasmus+ KA2 – Title: “Transformative Digital Pedagogies for Language Education” (TDP4HE)** – September 2022 - present
- **European University of Technology alliance (EUt+): Core Member of ELaRA Research Group: “A common laboratory for pedagogical research and student-centred learning”** – June 2021- present
- **Erasmus+ KA2 – Cooperation Partnerships: Title: “Digital Reality in foreign language education for medical professions” (DR FLEMP)** – January 2022 – February 2024
- **Erasmus+ KA3 European Policy Experimentation: Title: “Virtual Innovation and Support Networks for Teachers” (VALIANT):** March 2021 – February 2024
- **Erasmus+ research proposal KA201- Strategic Partnerships for school education- VRYou Training Secondary Education Teachers in creating subject-related lesson content through Virtual Reality** – written by Eftychia Xerou, Maria Christoforou, Dimitrios Boglou. Administered by Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous (March 2019)

RESEARCH GRANTS

- **Erasmus+ KA1 Learning Mobility of Individuals - granted proposal 2023 for a collaboration with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, USA** - Sep 2023 – present (aiming to expand intercultural relations among the two academic institutions, exchange of teaching practices, and research related to the pedagogical potential of Virtual Reality).
- **Erasmus+ KA1 Learning Mobility of Individuals - granted proposal 2020 for a collaboration with Taipei Medical University (TMU), Taiwan** - Jan 2020 - Jan 2022 (involving the exchange of teaching practices and training between Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) and Taipei Medical University (TMU)).

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Collaboration with: Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Name of project: Virtual Exchange through Spatial (VR & desktop VR) (VR Application: *Spatial*)
(Spring Semester 2023)

Aim of the project: a) to investigate how Social High-Immersion VR (SHiVR) and desktop VR can influence the learning of English as a foreign language, b) to raise intercultural awareness, c) to simulate authentic communication processes

Collaboration with: Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Name of project: Virtual Exchange through VR (VR Application: *AltSpace VR*)
(Spring Semester 2022)

Aim of the project: a) to investigate how Social High-Immersion VR (SHiVR) can influence the learning of English as a foreign language, b) to raise intercultural awareness, c) to simulate authentic communication processes

Collaboration with: Taipei Medical University (TMU), Taiwan

Name of project: Interdisciplinary project: designing websites: Virtual Exchange (VE) project
(Spring Semester 2021)

Aim of the project: a) to encourage students to design an artefact to promote intercultural awareness, b) to promote intercultural awareness within interdisciplinary contexts

Collaboration with: Taipei Medical University (TMU), Taiwan

Name of project: Reflecting Intercultural Communicative Competence in Foreign Language Class, funded by **EVOLVE** (Evidence Validated Online Learning Through Virtual Exchange)
(Spring Semester 2020)

Aim of the project: a) to examine the impact of VE on students and whether this form of learning helps develop specific learning outcomes, b) to promote intercultural awareness within interdisciplinary contexts

PUBLICATIONS

Christoforou, M.; Thrasher, T.; Ijiri, A. (2024). **Technology-mediated Task-Based Language Teaching in a Virtual Reality learning environment**. In Y. Choubsaz, P. Díez-Arcón, A. Gimeno-Sanz, J. Hrinák, X. Liashuk, S. Pokrivčáková & H. Vančová (Eds.), *CALL for Humanity - EUROCALL 2024 Short Papers*. <https://doi.org/10.4995/EuroCALL2024.2024.19028>

Athanasiou, A., Hadjiconstantinou, S. and Christoforou, M. (Eds.) (2024). **Innovative Language Teaching Practices in Higher Education in a Post-COVID Era**. Ubiquity Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/bdd>.

Jauregi-Ondarra, K., Meijerink, J., & Christoforou, M. (2024). **Using high-immersion social virtual reality environments for researching interculturality**. In Sadeghi, K. (Ed.). (2024). *Routledge Handbook of Technological Advances in Researching Language Learning* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003459088>

Soule, M., V., Antoniou, S., Christoforou, M., & Rogaten, J. (2024). **Impact of Virtual Exchange on teachers' and student teachers' motivation levels**. In: *Virtual Innovation and Support Networks: Exploring The Impact of Virtual Exchange in Teacher Education*. Peter Lang Publishing, pp. 63-85. ISBN 9783034349239

Thrasher, T., Christoforou, M. & Ijiri, A. (2024). **Virtual Reality-Mediated Language Learning: A Case Study of Immersive Learning in the Metaverse**. In Vurdien, R. & Chambers, W. (Eds.). *Technology-Mediated Language Learning and Teaching*. IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2687-9>

Christoforou, M., Efthimiou, F. (2023). **Introducing *Dreams of Dalí* in a Tertiary Education ESP Course: Technological and Pedagogical Implementations**. In: Zaphiris, P., Ioannou, A. (eds) *Learning and Collaboration Technologies. HCI 2023. Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, vol 14041. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-34550-0_4

Christoforou, M. (2022). **University students' transformation of meanings within an ESP digital context**. *Professional & Academic English*, 29(2), 23-45.

Jauregi-Ondarra, K., Christoforou, M., Boglou, D. (2022b). **Initiating Meaningful Social Interactions in a High-Immersion Self-Access Language Learning Space**. *JASAL Journal*, 3(2), 86-102.

Jauregi-Ondarra, K., Christoforou, M., & Boglou, D. (2022a). **Learning episodes in an intercultural virtual exchange: the case of social high-immersion virtual reality**. In Arnbjörnsdóttir, Birna; Bédi, Branislav; Bradley, Linda; Friðriksdóttir, Kolbrún; Garðarsdóttir, Hólmfríður; Thouësny, Sylvie; Whelpton, Matthew James (Eds), *Intelligent CALL, granular systems and learner data: short papers from EUROCALL 2022* (pp. 191-196). Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2022.61.1457>

Christoforou, M. (2022). **Enhancing the ESP lesson with IMMERSE: a Pedagogical Example of a Metaverse Language Learning Platform**. In Pixel (Ed.), *15th International Conference on Innovation in Language Learning: hybrid edition* (pp. 140-145). Filodiritto Publisher.

Christoforou, M., & Xerou, E. (2021). **A Qualitative Study on Technology-Mediated TBLT for Soft Skill Development in an ESAP Course**. In 14th International Conference Innovation in Language Learning Virtual Edition.

Christoforou, M. (2021). **Language Teaching Through The 'Black Screen': Implications of an Emergency Remote Teaching Context in Higher Education**. In 13th annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies: [doi: doi.org/10.21125/edulearn.2021](https://doi.org/10.21125/edulearn.2021)

Christoforou, M. (2020). **Evaluating Deviant Art as an Educational Tool for Collaborative Learning**. In *13th International Conference Innovation in Language Learning Virtual Edition* (p. 169-174).

Christoforou, Maria; Xerou, Eftychia; Papadima-Sophocleous, Salomi. (2019). **Integrating a virtual reality application to simulate situated learning experiences in a foreign language course**. In Meunier, Fanny; Van de Vyver, Julie; Bradley, Linda; Thouësny, Sylvie (Eds), *CALL and complexity – short papers from EUROCALL 2019* (pp. 82-87). Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2019.38.990>

6th Panhellenic Scientific Conference 2019 - **Integration and Use of ICT in the Educational Process - Using the TESOL Technology Standards Framework to evaluate students' technological knowledge in an undergraduate Italian course**, Eftychia Xerou & Maria Christoforou, Cyprus University of Technology. <https://www.etpe.gr/conf/?cid=36>

Educational blogs:

The practical challenge of integrating innovative technological tools into a theoretical ESP course
- Published by IATEFL Learning Technologies SIG - January, 2019
<https://ltsig.iatefl.org/the-practical-challenge-of-integrating-innovative-technological-tools-into-a-theoretical-esp-course/>

Articles in Social Networking Sites (SNS):

English for Specific Purposes through the Lens of VR – July 2020
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/english-specific-purposes-through-lens-vr-maria-christoforou/?trackingId=SR6i8mFJTJigu4ZY20k5ww%3D%3D>

INVITED SPEAKER

Event name (online): Open Languages Research Group seminar by the Open University, UK

Date: 25th April 2024

Speech title: *Exploring meaning-making practices in an ESP higher education context*

Event name: Webinar series organised by The Laboratory of Language Teacher Education and Digital Technologies (LabLinguas/GLE - UFF) of the Modern Foreign Languages Department at Universidade Federal Fluminense, Brazil

Date: 22nd June 2021

Speech title: *Exploring the Educational Possibilities of Virtual Reality Applications* (with Dimitrios Boglou)

Event name: Webinar series organised by The Laboratory of Language Teacher Education and Digital Technologies (LabLinguas/GLE - UFF) of the Modern Foreign Languages Department at Universidade Federal Fluminense, Brazil

Date: 27th April 2021

Speech title: *VR Webinar: Exploring the use of Innovative Digital Technologies for Educational Purposes* (with Dimitrios Boglou)

CONFERENCE / SYMPOSIA PRESENTATIONS

- **EuroCALL 2024** – Theme: **Call for Humanity**, 26-29 August 2024. Title of the online presentation: **Technology-mediated Task-Based Language Teaching in a Virtual Reality learning environment** (with Tricia Thrasher, Immerse, & Amelia Ijiri, Kyoto Institute of Technology).
- **American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) 2024** – 16-19 March 2024 – Title of the online presentation: **Enhancing Language Learning through Collaborative VR Environments: Insights from Japanese English Learners** (with Tricia Thrasher, Immerse, & Amelia Ijiri, Kyoto Institute of Technology).
- **17th International Conference on e-Learning & Innovative Pedagogies 2024** – 7-8 March 2024. Title of the online presentation: **Multimodal Literacy as a Pedagogical Shift for English for Specific Purposes**.
- **Literacy and Contemporary Society: Creativity, Equity, Social Action 2023** international conference – 4th-6th December 2023, Nicosia, Cyprus - organised by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport & Youth, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute & the University of Cyprus. Title of presentation: **Multimodal Literacy in an English-for-Specific-Purposes Course: Meanings from the Redesigned**.
- **CyTEA 2022 Annual Conference** – Theme: Development of Transversal Competencies: Current Educational Realities – 12th-13th November 2022, Limassol, Cyprus. Presented: **Enhancing transversal skills through virtual exchange: the VALIANT project**, with Anna Nicolaou, Maria Victoria Soule, Savvi Antoniou.

- International Conference on Innovation in Language Learning 2022 15th Edition – 10-11 November 2022 - Presenting: **“Enhancing the ESP lesson with IMMERSE: a pedagogical example of a metaverse language learning platform”**
- IVEC 2022 (4th International Virtual Exchange Conference) – 26-28 October 2022 – Presenting: **“Immersion, interactivity and co-presence to enhance intercultural communicative competences in a virtual reality setting”** with Kristi Jauregi-Ondarra & Dimitrios Boglou
- EuroCALL 2022 – Theme: Intelligent CALL, granular systems, and learner data – 16th-19th August 2022 – Presenting: **“Learning episodes in intercultural virtual exchanges: the case of social high-immersion virtual reality”** with Kristi Jauregi-Ondarra & Dimitrios Boglou
- E-LaRA Autumn Symposium (Task 3.4 of EUt+) – 21st & 22nd November 2021 – Presented: **“Online exams and guarantee of academic integrity”**, with Fotini Efthimiou
- International Conference on Innovation in Language Learning 2021 14th Edition – 11-12 November 2021 – Presented: **“A qualitative study on Technology-mediated TBLT for Soft Skill Development in an ESAP course”**
- EuroCALL 2021 – Theme: CALL & Professionalisation – 25-27 August 2021 – Presented: **“Exploring 3D Artistry with the Virtual Reality application Tilt Brush: Student Perceptions”**
- EDULEARN21 13th annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies – 5-6 July 2021 – Presented: **Language Teaching Through The ‘Black Screen’: Implications of an Emergency Remote Teaching Context in Higher Education**
- International Virtual Conference on Innovation in Language Learning 2020 13th Edition – 12-13 November 2020 – Presented: **Evaluating Deviant Art as an Educational Tool for Language Learning**
- CyTEA 2019 Annual Conference – Theme: **Foreign Language Learning: Inspiring teachers, transforming learners** – 23-24 November 2019, Nicosia, Cyprus – Presented: **First-year undergraduate ESP students Virtual Reality User Experience**, with Dimitrios Boglou and Eftychia Xerou
- EuroCALL 2019 - Theme: **CALL and Complexity** - 28th - 31st August 2019, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium – Presented: **Integrating a Virtual Reality application to simulate Situated Learning experiences in a Foreign Language course**, with Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous
- IESPTA Conference 2019 - Theme: **Embracing ESP as "World Citizens" across Disciplines and Cultures** - 26th & 27th April 2019, Liverpool, UK – Presented: **Perceptions of tertiary ESP Fine Arts students towards Virtual Reality in Education**, with Dimitrios Boglou and Eftychia Xerou

WORKSHOP ORGANISATION & PRESENTATION

- E-camp “Digital Literacy in Emerging Technology and Online Tools for Educators” – Presented: **“VR: the educational tool for the future classroom”** (Workshop)– 23rd October 2021, CUTing Edge, Limassol, Cyprus
- EuroCALL Teacher Education SIG Workshop: **Practical Implementation of digital technologies: a day of professional development** – 7th March 2020, Limassol – Presenting

Exploring different Virtual Reality (VR) systems as innovative educational tools: A reflection of practice, with Dimitrios Boglou.

- **Erasmus+ Workshop – How to write a KA201 research proposal** - part of the CUT Language Centre In-Service Training Programme) – June 2019 – Dimitrios Boglou, Eftychia Xerou, Maria Christoforou
- **Opening new learning opportunities with Virtual Reality** (part of the CUT Language Centre In-Service Training Programme) – June 2019 – Dimitrios Boglou, Eftychia Xerou, Maria Christoforou

CONFERENCES / SYMPOSIA / WEBINARS ATTENDED

- AERA Semiotics SIG Panel (webinar): Title: **“The Impact of Gunther Kress on Social Semiotics”** – by Jeff Bezemer, Carey Jewitt, Jennifer Rowsell & Theo Van Leeuwen, 28th June 2022
- Multimodality Series (webinar) Title: **“What Can Multimodality Offer For Education?”** by Fei Victor Lim, 25th February 2022
- AERA Professional Development course: Title: **“Multimodal Analysis and Social Semiotics for Qualitative Analysis in Educational Research”** by Mary McVee, Ryan Rish, Angel Lin & Qinghua Chen, 8th July 2021
- **4th International Conference Literacy and Contemporary Society: Transitions in Digital Learning** (May 12th-13th 2021) (virtual) - organised by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport & Youth, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute & the University of Cyprus
- **EuroCALL 2020 Gathering** (virtual) – 20th-21st August 2020
- **ReDesign Conference – The Implementation of Technology in Second/Foreign Language Learning: Past, Current and Future Ventures** – organised by KIOS Research and Innovation Centre of Excellence and the Language Centre, University of Cyprus, 5th June 2019, Nicosia, Cyprus
- **ICAT-EGVE 2018 Artificial Reality and Virtual Environments** organized by RISE Research Centre, 7th-9th November 2018, Limassol, Cyprus
- **EuroCALL 2016**, 24th-27th August, 2016, Limassol, Cyprus
- **Educational Management**, October 2002, Limassol - organised by the University of Luton, Apostolos Andreas Private Institute and the Human Resources Development Authority of Cyprus
- **18th International Conference in Literature and Psychology**, May 2001, University of Cyprus, Nicosia.

TRAINING

- **EVOLVE Advanced Training** (Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange): Online advanced training for HE educators who wish to set up an online telecollaboration project with a partner university of institution.

- **TEP Basic Training** (Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange): Online basic training for HE educators who wish to set up an online telecollaboration project with a partner university of institution.
- **Preparation of Proposals and Management of European Education Projects under ERASMUS+ (PPMEEP)**, 16th-19th November 2018, Larnaca, Cyprus
- **Google+ as a means of integrating technology in language learning** – CUT Language Centre, December 2014, Limassol, Cyprus
- **IGCSE (as a Second Language) Workshop**, organised by Peter Lucantoni (Cambridge University Press), March 2004, Limassol

HONOURS

Honored with the title **Student representative** to represent Ayios Ioannis Lyceum in the **Synaxis International Conference**, 1998, Limassol, Cyprus.

The title was given as the student with the highest marks in English and French in the whole school.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS

- **Session Chair in the VALIANT Conference 2024** – February 2024
- **Session Chair in *Human Computer Interaction International (HCII) conference 2023: Session “Technology Enhanced Learning”*** – July 2023
- **Member of the Organising Committee** for the conference **“Technologies and Techniques to Support Sustainable Education in the Academic Sphere”** – 14th-15th December 2022 – Sofia, Bulgaria

Member of:

IESPTA (International English for Specific Purposes Teacher Association) – Member of the Scientific Committee

EuroCALL (European Association of Computer-Assisted Language Learning)

CALICO Immersive Realities SIG

CyTEA (Cyprus Teachers of English Association)

IALLT (International Association for Language Learning Technology)