

## HDR Researcher Profile

**Name:** Ms. Thilinka Wijesinghe

**Research degree:** PhD in Education

**Thesis title:** An exploration of how Speculative Drama can be engaged to understand children and young people's future worldviews on Climate Change



**Research interest(s):** Drama and Theatre, Speculative Drama, Arts-Based Educational Research, Environmental Education; Climate change education; Child-Framed Research Methodologies

### Thesis description:

This PhD study aims to understand how Speculative Drama, a relatively new field of study, can be engaged to understand children and young people's future worldviews regarding Climate Change. The research will focus on children's agency and explore the importance of children and young people engaging as critical participants in their own future. In the present era of the Anthropocene, the fast depletion of natural resources and disastrous environmental damage are causing harm to the entire ecosystem. Children enter a world established by others, which they have no real choice but to accept. According to Levin (2004), children are absent from any vision of the future because the vocabulary of classical liberal and libertarian thinking leaves little room for them.

Children's worldviews as well as their voices and participation will be crucial to achieving sustainable action. A Posthuman theoretical framework underpins this participatory study. Working with young people as co-researchers in mobilizing educational practices that operate outside of anthropocentric and scientific frameworks (Rousell, Cutter-Mackenzie, & Foster, 2017, p. 657) aims to enable children and young people to understand the dynamics of research as well as empowering them. This cross disciplinary research study is at an early stage and seeks to provide an analysis through literature and theory on how the medium of speculative drama would serve as both a critical and creative platform for research studies.

### Research Strengths:

Thilinka is currently enrolled as a PhD Candidate in the School of Education and focusses on children and young people's future worldviews in terms of climate change. She works in a relatively new field of study, Speculative Drama, where she explores the worldviews of children and young people using a newly researched child-framed research methodology where she will be working with children and young people as co-researchers.

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**Southern Cross  
University**

School of Education

**Short bio:**

Thilinka has completed her Bachelor's Degree from the Bangalore University, India where she developed a passion towards the combination of the subjects of English Literature and Psychology. She obtained her Master of Arts Degree from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka where she gained an understanding on Foreign Policy, International Education and Politics. She has taught in Sri Lanka for over 10 years in secondary and tertiary schools and as a specialist teacher in drama and theatre. She has also taught Speech and Drama in Sri Lanka for the Secondary and Tertiary Students in Sri Lanka while also directing four English Stage Plays with/for children and young people. She takes great pride in sharing her knowledge in the fields of drama education where she is much passionate about and currently enjoys her PhD Candidature at the Southern Cross University School of Education.

**Researcher profile:** [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Thilinka\\_Wijesinghe](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Thilinka_Wijesinghe)

**Supervisors:**

Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Alexandra Lasczik

Co-supervisor: Professor Amy Cutter-MacKenzie-Kowles

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