

Padlet as a way of doing diary methods during a pandemic

A brief introduction to my PhD project

Research title:

Transcultural life stories in everyday nature: the case of Chinese international students in Manchester

Aim of research:

This PhD project aims to extend the understanding of human-nature transactions through a "thick description" of the social practices of Chinese international students in urban green spaces. Specifically, it explores multiple mechanisms of human-nature connection-making by making a non-representational account of place-based knowledge, attachment, and conceptualisations of the nearby nature.

It will then discuss the implications on health and wellbeing and on the overall nature-related life experiences in a foreign landscape. The research will also address topics of multiculturalism in relation to green space design and management, environmental education, the highly mobile and transient community, and transcultural sense-making of place and landscape.

Using Padlet as an online diary making platform

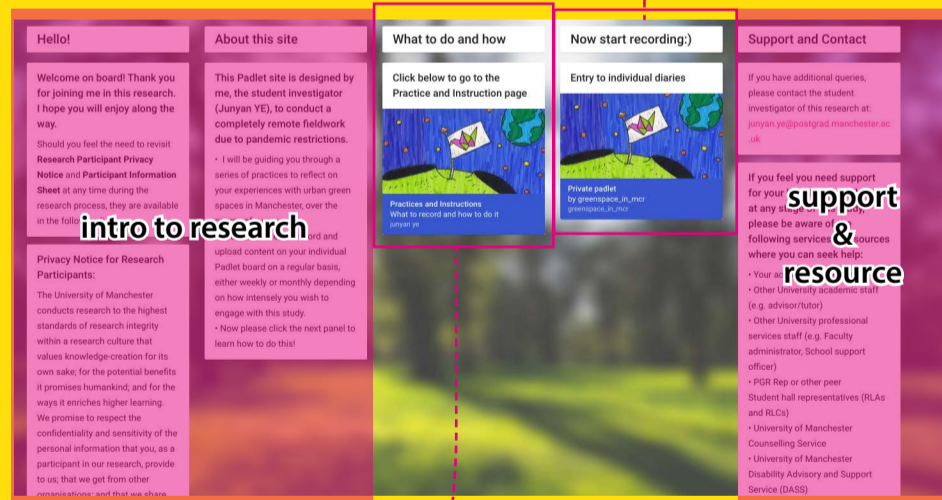
Research Design:

In this research, Padlet works alongside semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, to assist the recording of everyday social practices in green spaces. Specifically, participants are invited to do the following:

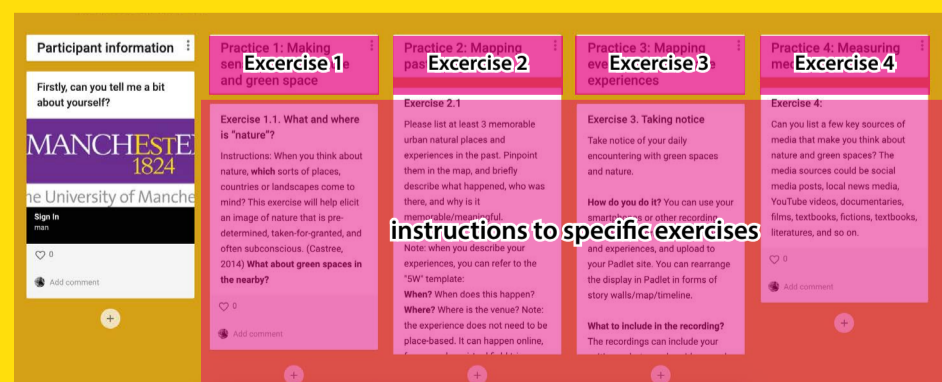
- to create a digital diary over the course of a year, on weekly or fortnightly basis. What to record and how are explained in the **instruction board**, as displayed on the bottom left part of this poster.
- to report mundane experiences with urban green spaces using multimedia forms, such as photographs, videos, audio recordings, and texts.
- to interpret in their own language of place-based stories and experiences in follow-up semi-structured interviews.
- to join recurrent meetings in 3 months, 6 months, and 9 months after the completion of the initial meeting.

Padlet UI Design:

Command board:



Instruction board:



What is Padlet?

Padlet has been developed and applied in practice as an interactive teaching tool since 2008. It has shown particular advancements in collaborative learning and teacher-student communication and interactivity (Dunbar, 2017; Kharis, Dameria & Ebner, 2020; Mehta, Miletich & Detyna, 2021). Despite its ease of use, creativity and flexibility, and robust function, the application and rationale of using Padlet in research is only in inception.

Why Padlet?

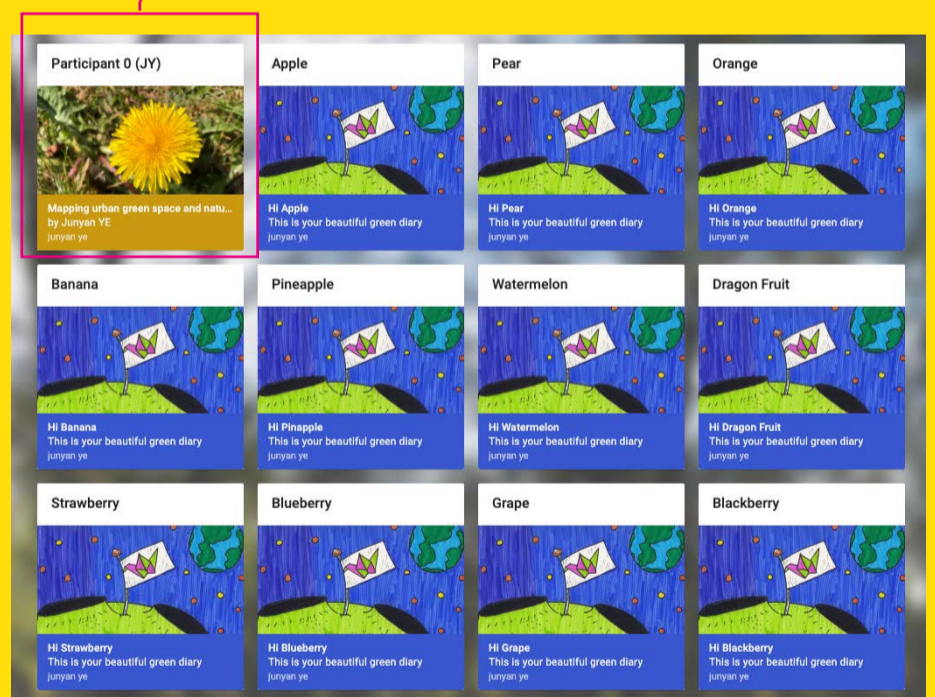
Due to the pandemic influences, conventional ethnography methods such as walking with participants in the field; talking to them in person; participant observation etc., became less practical. In addition, the digital generation's acquaintance with the digital media and mobile technologies makes it plausible to conduct a remote ethnography amid the pandemic restrictions.

How does it work?

Padlet works as a curation board which allows the upload of multimedia data types, including photographs, videos, audio recordings, and texts. Visuo-audio media can be downloaded in their original files. Texts and geolocal data can be exported into PDF and excel files, which then could be imported into data analysis softwares.

With a university backpack license, Padlet extends the data storage volume and number of boards one can create, plus extra security. Students do not need a license to access or contribute to the boards. The board manager can customise privacy settings to allow university account holders' access only. If needed boards can be secured by passwords or hidden from public.

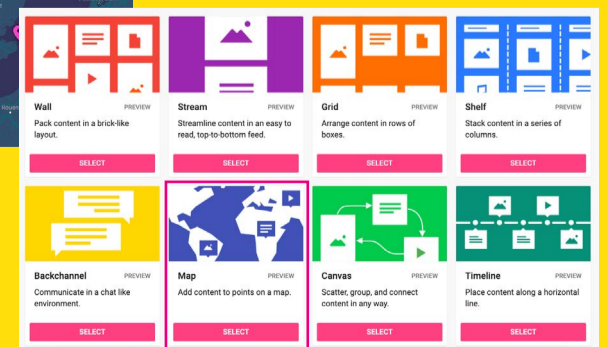
Individual diary entry (password protected):



Digital diary displayed in the format of world map (left)

Digital diary can be also organised by timeline, etc (bottom)

which adds an important temporal scale to recording day-to-day practices



References:
 Dunbar, L. (2017). Using Padlet to Increase Student Interaction With Music Concepts. *General music today*, 30(3), pp.26–29.
 Kharis, K., Dameria, C. N. and Ebner, M. (2020). Perception and Acceptance of Padlet as a Microblogging Platform for Writing Skills. *International journal of interactive mobile technologies*, 14(13), pp.213–220.
 Mehta, K. J., Miletich, I. and Detyna, M. (2021). Content-specific differences in Padlet perception for collaborative learning amongst undergraduate students. *Research in learning technology*, 29, pp.1–19.