The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 1-9
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Connection and connectedness: Realizing the imperative for Indigenous Education

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ABSTRACT

This paper expands upon a keynote presentation delivered at the 42nd Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society in November 2014. The conference theme was International, Indigenous and Multicultural Imperatives for Education.

What is this imperative for Indigenous Education and how does it play out within learning environments? Education for, by and with Indigenous peoples has for many years been a contested space defined by more questions than answers. Consequently, the challenge lies in understanding the motivation for the imperative, its classification and the responsibilities contained therein. The practice of connection and connectedness can support the conditions in which learners, educators, policy makers, researchers and communities may meet this challenge.

Keywords: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Education Imperatives, Indigenous Knowledges*

INTRODUCTION

Allow me to preface my remarks by framing my position. I am an Aboriginal and South Sea Islander man, living and working within an urban environment. I do not profess to speak on behalf of all Indigenous peoples or all Indigenous educators. I do not speak on behalf of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I am going to share with you some thoughts borne of my own experience as an Indigenous Australian, having been a student, a teacher, a university executive and academic.

My current work involves supporting the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges within the curriculum here at QUT. I have a three-year agenda called the In2Knowledges project with four broad aims –

- To increase the opportunities for all students to experience Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges in the curriculum;
- To increase the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with the university as decision makers and deliverers,
- To increase understanding and capacity of QUT staff to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges; and
- To ensure our curriculum infrastructure including policy and process supports the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges.

This paper is presented in three parts: Firstly, *what is this imperative for Indigenous Education* and how does it play out within learning environments?

Education for, by and with Indigenous peoples continues to be a contested space often producing more questions than answers. This paper may prompt even more questions. I am conscious that presenting to the already converted may seem like redundancy but it is always good to consider motivations and affirmations for continuing commitment.

Secondly, I would like to deal with connections and the practice of connectedness as a mechanism supporting the conditions in which learners, educators, policy makers, researchers and communities may meet this challenge of the imperative. This paper presents current work occurring at the Queensland University of Technology as examples and finally, a different spin on the imperative and its potential for education.

THE IMPERATIVE for INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

When first asked to speak at this conference I was immediately drawn to the idea of this imperative - What is it? Who decreed it? Who is enacting it? And why does it exist?

What is this thing – the Imperative for Indigenous Education? Taken as an order or direction – an imperative has excitement attached to it. The imperative is authoritative *Do This Immediately* or someone could get hurt. Don't put your hand into fire / Come away from the bars of the Lion's cage. Immediate satisfaction of the imperative relies on the receiver understanding the danger. An imperative used in the context of education for Indigenous peoples is then fraught with challenges. What is the immediate danger and can everyone involved see it?

The imperative for Indigenous Education is tied to the participation and success by Indigenous peoples in education systems. As a vehicle of socialization education is a means to improving one's life socio-economic life chances. Statistics made available through national testing regimes indicate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not performing at similar rates as their non-Indigenous peers across all of the domains tested. The Australian government's recent report on Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage – Key Indicators 2014 provides some sobering material

> *Between 2008 and 2013, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 3 students achieving national minimum standards for reading increased slightly, but there was no change for numeracy. There was no change for reading or numeracy for those in Years 5 and 7, no change for reading in Year 9 and a decrease for numeracy in Year 9.*

> *The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 20–24 year olds completing year 12 or equivalent or above increased from 45 per cent in 2008 to 59 per cent in 2012-13. For non-Indigenous Australians, the proportion remained between 86 and 88 per cent. (COAG, 2008)*

As adults:

> *In 2012-13, 43 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 20–64 year olds had a Certificate level III or above or were studying, a 17 percentage point increase from 2002. The gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians remained steady around 24–25 percentage points over the period.*

> *In 2013, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians made up a much lower proportion of teachers than students (around 1 per cent of teachers and 5 per cent of students for both primary and secondary schools) (SCRGSP, 2014).*

In the Australian higher education sector:

> *In 2013 there were approximately 13,700 students were reported as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people studying at Australian universities. 10,300 of these were undergraduates with 6,200 students commencing higher education that year (Department of Education, 2014). If the danger requiring the imperative is failing to close the educational attainment gap between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people – our education process becomes training and inducting Indigenous people into a system so they might 'mind this gap'. This has been our direction for many years in Australia.*

As educational researchers, we know the pursuit of the fuller participation and success for those groups who have been traditionally marginalized by western (for the most part) education is not new. The socio-political, economic and organizational infrastructure that is Education in Australia exercises power to include or exclude. Activism by Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people against exclusion and towards greater inclusion has mobilized communities, public and private institutions, delivered change both small and large and been responsible for many careers (mine included - I would go as far to say and many others in this room.) This activism has resulted over time in specific policy agendas:

- National Aboriginal Education Policy (NAEP)[1]
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (2010 – 2014)[2]
- Closing the Gap – Literacy, Numeracy and Individual Learning Plans[3]
- National Curriculum – Cross Curriculum Perspective[4]
- Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership – AITSL professional standards[5]
- QLD – Solid partners, Solid Futures Plan[6]

The imperative then is to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' educational participation and performance with a view to producing greater economic status and consequently access to benefits of living in a wealthy first world nation.

A simple strategy on paper – there is a clear outcome sought; the action has a positive trajectory as its focus and overall it is altruistic in its intent. However – Culture eats strategy for breakfast – Peter Drucker[7]. Drucker's statement refers to internal organizational culture - a comment if you will on the best-laid plans or when the socio-cultural overcomes the economic. It can be expanded to characterize the external narrative due to such behaviour –praise and loyalty conversely negative criticism and loss. To take the culture of schooling, schools and systems as

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[1] http://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national_report_on_schooling_2009/aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_education/aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_education1.html (accessed 23/11/14)

[2] https://education.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-education-action-plan-2010-2014-0 (accessed 23/11/14)

[3] http://www.coag.gov.au/node/65 (accessed 23/11/14)

[4] http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/cross_curriculum_priorities.html (accessed 23/11/14)

[5] http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers/standards/list (accessed 23/11/14)

[6] https://indigenousportal.eq.edu.au/about/Pages/default.aspx (accessed 23/11/14)

[7] http://thoughtmanagement.org/tag/peter-drucker/ (accessed 23/11/14)

the focus requires a longer view than the immediate identification of the dangerous achievement gap. It has been a significant part of educational research and has resulted in positive change. The greatest challenge however, is for us as educators to remember our work occurs within and is shaped consciously and subconsciously by our own culture and the culture in which we perform this work.

A SHORT INTERLUDE

I come from a family of teachers. My brother and sister-in-law teach primary school in a private International school delivering British curriculum located in the United Arab Emirates. My sister is a Head of Department and teaches business studies and accounting in a very large regional state secondary school in North Queensland. My own school teaching experience was two large secondary schools in Far North Queensland where I taught music and English. Our extended family includes another 12 or so teachers – Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary, University Academics and VET teachers, there's a school principal and a couple of educational bureaucrats. One of the questions that is always asked when we see each other is How's School? The answers invariably provide a narrative on the culture of the school or institution – the behaviours particular to an individual site in relation broader educational, political and social agendas. We are highly conscious of the cultures at play in which we operate. As teachers, culture is at work on and in the work we do. To effect change within these cultural sites, we will need to change behaviours.

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION –CONNECTIONS, CONNECTEDNESS AND CULTURE

I am using terms of connection and connectedness within Indigenous Education and as principles for action more broadly. Connection may be described as those related and relatable states in which individuals, families, cohorts, professionals, communities, systems and societies come together. To make a connection takes effort and relies on defining responsibilities and enactment of reciprocity. They happen over time and rely on trust.

Connectedness is the current in which these relationships flow and then becomes both a practice and value of culture. As an example of a work in progress – I would like to speak about my current work here at QUT. The In2knowledges project at QUT seeks to affect a change in culture for the specific purpose of increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges in our curriculum at QUT.

This agenda is not new to QUT and has arisen from academic and professional staff reflecting on previous achievements and aspiring for greater inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the curriculum. Whilst this has been informed by recent government and sector developments QUT is seeking to articulate its unique position in this curriculum space.

THE OODGEROO UNIT – MINOR IN INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES[8]

The Oodgeroo Unit is responsible for student services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It is also a teaching and research unit of the university. This year the academics Dr Deb Duthie, Dr Julie McLaughlin and Dr Odette Best developed and submitted for approval one of the only university-wide minors here at QUT. This was approved through our curriculum committees and processes through to the University Academic Board. The OU minor in Indigenous Knowledges is aimed at building greater depth and experience with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and may be taken by any undergraduate student at the university.

[8] https://www.qut.edu.au/about/oodgeroo/indigenous-knowledges-minor

Defining Indigenous Knowledges is challenging. It is not an individual and discrete body of knowledge rather it is reflected in the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, traditions and narratives. For QUT, the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledges is contextualized by the university's learning, teaching and research. The opportunities for inclusion in the curriculum must be relevant and have impact for the benefit of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as well as our students and staff. As an institution we have not come to this position in isolation. The broader national and international agenda for Indigenous peoples' rights particularly education rights is informing the work.

The International Context

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)[9] articulates specific education rights related to access and participation, cultural preservation and knowledge protection through Articles 5, 13, 14, 31 and 36. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)[10] has a mandate to provide advice to the UN Economic and Social Council regarding the implementation and practice of the rights of Indigenous peoples. The inclusion and protection of Indigenous Knowledges within education, community development, biodiversity and socio-political action are pursued through recommendations made to nation states, UN agencies and other international bodies.

The Convention of Biodiversity through Article 8j[11] states that parties shall subject to national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge innovations and practices.

The International Labour Organization C169 - Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) Article 31[12].

> *Educational measures shall be taken among all sections of the national community, and particularly among those that are in most direct contact with the peoples concerned, with the object of eliminating prejudices that they may harbour in respect of these peoples. To this end, efforts shall be made to ensure that history textbooks and other educational materials provide a fair, accurate and informative portrayal of the societies and cultures of these peoples. The World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC)[13] gives pragmatic and collaborative effect to the rights contained within the UNDRIP. The WINHEC has implemented a quality assurance and accreditation process for institutions and programs with responsibilities for Indigenous peoples' education. The consortium has operated for over 12 years having been established during the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education held in Kananaskis, Canada. Indigenous peoples from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, mainland United States, Native Hawaiian, Samiland and Taiwan regularly contribute to its*

[9] The full text of the UNDRIP is available at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf (accessed 2/10/13)
[10] The UNPFII is an advisory body to the UN's Economic and Social Council. More information is available at: http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples.aspx (accessed 18/11/13)
[11] http://www.cbd.int/convention/articles/default.shtml?a=cbd-08 (accessed 2/10/13)
[12] http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169 (accessed 18/11/13)
[13] The WINHEC is made up of international Indigenous academics and leaders in Indigenous higher education. It established the World Indigenous Nations University and seeks to promote Indigenous Knowledges across the world.

> *operations. The WINHEC aims to share information and practices to ensure the best education is delivered to Indigenous peoples across the world. The consortium is also concerned with sharing Indigenous Knowledges with the broader human family so that the Earth may be protected.*

I refer to these international instruments because we recognize we are not alone in this space. It is vital to respect, appreciate and share information available through the work undertaken across the Pacific and further afield. The Indigenous Education movement is global.

The QUT Indigenous Knowledges Position

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and histories have been part of Australian university curricula for a considerable time. It is only relatively recently however through Indigenous and Non-Indigenous academics advocating for inclusion and developments within disciplines, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives have moved from the studies (about) through to engagement approaches (about and with) to impact and changing Knowledges (embedded, by and from). This progression in both content development and delivery requires institutions to articulate their position in the current Indigenous Knowledges movement to effect mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, institutions and communities; the engagement of existing and new university staff; recruitment of students attracted to the socio-political stance of an Australian university and the production of graduates who are skilled, knowledgeable and proud to have received an inclusive education.

Bringing Indigenous Knowledges into the western academic canon requires context. This context is provided through connections and connectedness. QUT articulates and encourages inclusion of Indigenous Knowledges across all of its faculties and courses. The university does not choose to limit its course offerings to any one category of Indigenous Knowledges inclusion. It will continue to support units and courses which are studies (about) and engagement (about and with) and promote greater development of opportunities for impact (embedded, by and from). The university does not view the range and types of inclusion as a linear progression but rather as diversity within its curriculum where the sum of the component parts is greater than the whole.

The QUT Indigenous Knowledges position moves toward a definition for the use by students, staff and the broader communities the university serves.

> Indigenous Knowledges are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences and world views; traditional and contemporary, affirmed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and cultures.
>
> Indigenous Knowledges are found within Indigenous peoples, their communities, their languages, their lands, waters and their bodies.
>
> QUT acknowledges the diversity of Indigenous peoples and their Knowledges and that these are ancient, contemporary and evolving.
>
> Indigenous Knowledges includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expressions of the intersection of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous societies.
>
> Indigenois Knowledges within the curriculum occurs through the inclusion and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices. (Thomas 2103)

THE QUT APPROACH

QUT recognizes that Australian society; its public and private sector institutions are grappling with the challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. The university is committed to producing graduates who can contribute as knowledgeable, focused and skilled professionals and understands that solutions are to be found through relationships – connections and connectedness based on respect, responsibility and partnership. Various Australian professional associations have determined their members will be better able to exercise their professional duties to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. They have introduced curriculum and learning experience requirements as part of course accreditation processes. The university will ensure students within its professional degrees will receive the training necessary to satisfy the requirements of the professional associations and accrediting authorities.

The intention to produce graduates better equipped to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and issues of importance is one part of the rationale for Indigenous Knowledges in the curriculum. The other and more significant part is producing graduates who are self-reflective human beings willing and able to take responsibility for their place and position in a global human family. Indigenous Knowledges in the curriculum is dependent on connectedness. The university will offer students the opportunity to extend their understanding and experience with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges through renewal of existing curriculum, concurrent or extension offerings and extra curricula opportunities.

In this way we are attempting to change the culture of the organization by influencing the education it delivers. Part of our rationale is providing an education to all of our students that is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges may go towards decreasing the gap or danger for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student attainment in the higher education space. This then requires Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to shape us, shape our institutional culture and shape the education we will deliver.

How are we doing this?

Connection and Connectedness requires the establishment of relationships built upon trust. It is a very human activity we are involved. Communication about the purpose through conversations has been a major characteristic of my work. Speaking to individuals at all levels of the communities and the institution: How to establish relationships between academics and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; relationships between academics themselves; and the staff and students.

The greatest inhibitor of the development of connections and connectedness is fear. Fear of the political, economic, theoretical and social can waylay the best intentions. Culture eats Strategy for Breakfast. To move people into the connectedness space relies on open, consistent and constant engagement. Articulation of the benefit more broadly to communities, academics and students supports this level of engagement. This brings me to the final element of my presentation – with a re-positioning of the words. Not the Imperative for Indigenous Education but the Indigenous Imperative for Education.

THE INDIGENOUS IMPERATIVE FOR EDCUATION

What would the Indigenous Imperative for Education look like? Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through their cultures; knowledges and practices demonstrate and meet the human need for connection. Knowing and understanding that people are connected to each other,

to land, water, animals, plants, the air and sky underpins behaviour. There are rules that govern the interaction of these elements to produce the good life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and can give effect to the good life for other peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continuing survival despite the devastation enacted upon them through government policy, social attitudes and exploitation is determined through connection. Connectedness is the underlying principle of reciprocity. Without the knowledge, recognition and practice of connectedness it is not possible to perform the responsibilities as determined by the relationship. (Thomas, 2015, p.215)

The Indigenous Imperative for Education would be for all people to understand and respect their relationships to each other and the planet. That they would be able to walk gently on country and recognize they're part of the human family. That education for everyone is respectful of the rights and responsibilities of these relationships. This education is vital if we as human beings are to deal with the major challenges facing the world.

Poverty and Food Security

Access to Clean Water

Leveraging the increases in Technology and the proposed Economic Growth for the betterment of all peoples

Improving the Status of Women

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR EDUCATION?

We talk a lot about what is the future of higher education here at QUT. How will we teach? What will students want and how will they want it? We consider how just enough and just in time and the role of the student as curator of their educational journey will act as driver for how we deliver. Underpinning these discussions however is the understanding education is a human activity designed and supported by human beings.

What can you do?

As members of the ANZ Comparative and International Education Society, you are in a unique position. Your research can shift thinking; encourage the maverick ideas, evaluate and support risk taking and of most import it has the potential to change the culture of our educational institutions and the bureaucracies they exist within. You can promote cultural change where behaviour changes and the Indigenous Imperative for Education may be realized. Most of all, you can research and support research that fosters connections and connectedness. You can carry on conversations throughout this conference and at your home institutions.

The Indigenous peoples' imperative for Education is for everyone – it is hope. It is for the pursuit of a good life in which all are fed, all are quenched, all songs are sung and the Earth our mother is respected.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 10-21
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Transcultural and postcolonial explorations: unsettling education

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ABSTRACT

This article is based upon my keynote presentation to the 42nd ANZCIES Conference held at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane from November 26 – 28, 2014. It explores the ways in which an assemblage of transcultural and postcolonial theories allow us to productively unsettle Education at a time when dominant neoliberal discourses risk driving us back to conservative, monocultural, Westernized educational policies. Based on my recent book (Manathunga, 2014), this article summarizes the ways in which I drew upon a bricolage of postcolonial, Indigenous, feminist, social and cultural geography theories (which I have loosely categorized as 'Southern' theories) about time, place and knowledge to reimagine intercultural doctoral supervision. It demonstrates how I found that assimilationist approaches to supervision are based upon the absence of history, geography and other cultural knowledge, while transcultural pedagogies are founded upon the centrality of place, the presence of past, present and future time and a deep respect for diverse cultural knowledges.

Keywords: Southern theory; doctoral education; postgraduate supervision; assimilation; transcultural pedagogies

INTRODUCTION

I have chosen to write this article as I delivered it during my keynote presentation. There are two reasons for adopting this approach. Firstly, I would like to engage the reader in a conversation because that is how I wanted to pitch my keynote for this conference. Secondly, as those who attended the conference would clearly remember, my keynote was forcefully interrupted by one of the worst hailstorms sub-tropical Brisbane city has experienced in quite a few decades. I recall calmly pacing along through my presentation, explaining the theories I had drawn upon to reimagine time and place in the context of intercultural doctoral education. I was aware of the sounds of a tropical storm brewing outside the large windows to the side of the lecture theatre. As the rain, wind and thunder increased and we began to hear a few crashes of hail, I was thinking about how much I had missed these tropical storms now that I live in Melbourne. I even cracked a few jokes about the time I delivered my one and only lecture on the environment in Aotearoa/New Zealand and we were interrupted by an earthquake.

As I began my summary about pedagogically re-reading theories about knowledge, I realized that my audience could no longer hear me over the crescendo of hail. I paused and noticed that the guys filming the keynote had turned their camera to the windows. Deafening sounds of hail the size of cricket balls smashing into the windows now filled the auditorium. A few people drifted towards the window to watch the display nature had turned on for us. I called the audience over to watch the storm as massive hailstones ricocheted off the windows and the view of the Brisbane

River was blanketed out by the white grey wash of torrential rain. Once the storm blew over we were able to continue with a shortened version of my presentation, although question time was again interrupted by alarms going off because the storm had damaged the electrical system. So readers of this article will be able to explore the full text of the presentation I had planned to deliver before place and the weather intervened.

And so my presentation began like this … It is indeed an honour to be asked to address you this afternoon. I am especially aware that many of you have dedicated your whole careers to making transcultural pedagogies possible across all sectors of Education and are experts in postcolonial and other theories. I am wondering what I might add to the conversations that have sustained this conference series and association since the 1970s. I am aware that you are likely to be a much more receptive audience than some of whom I have addressed in my recent speaking tour of Sweden where one German academic asked me 'what exactly is your problem with stereotypes'? So it is with a deep sense of humility and a desire to enter into your conversations that I speak with you this afternoon.

Brisbane will always remain my home town and it is wonderful to return to QUT where I had my first postdoctoral job. I am especially aware that we are standing today on Turrbal land on the North side of the Brisbane River here at QUT Gardens Point campus. I would like to acknowledge the Turrbal, Jagera/Yuggera, Kabi Kabi and Jinibara Peoples as the Traditional Owners of the lands where QUT now stands, and recognize that these have always been places of teaching and learning and research. I hope that this rich history will infuse our discussions today.

Today I am seeking to unsettle dominant educational discourses through an exploration of a range of transcultural and postcolonial theories about time, place and knowledge. I will provide a synopsis of my recent book (Manathunga, 2014), which focused on intercultural doctoral education and sought to reimagine the ways in which history, geography and epistemology play out in intercultural postgraduate supervision. In this book, I argued that decades of postcolonial, Indigenous and feminist research have been largely ignored in contemporary geopolitical power struggles over knowledge. Western/Northern knowledge continues to claim universality across time and space in many social science and science disciplines as many theorists have demonstrated (e.g. Chakrabarty, 2007; Connell, 2007; Alatas, 2006; Cortini & Jin, 2013). The forces of globalisation and neoliberalism that continue to dominate current educational discourses have only further entrenched Northern epistemological hegemony. In this keynote, I will briefly outline my pedagogical re-readings of an eclectic collection of postcolonial, Indigenous, feminist, social and cultural geography theories about time, place and knowledge in order to reimagine intercultural doctoral education. I have adopted the shorthand of 'Southern' theories here to emphasize the ways in which these perspectives capture non-dominant understandings of Education. I will then briefly describe the empirical study that I did of intercultural supervision at an Australian university, which found evidence of assimilationist and transcultural supervision pedagogies and experiences of unhomeliness among doctoral students and supervisors. Due to a lack of time, I will only briefly outline my findings about assimilationist pedagogies and will instead focus on instances of transcultural pedagogies. I will conclude with an invitation. However, before I begin I think it is important to be clear about my own cultural, historical and geographical positioning and about why I have chosen the problematic language of Northern/Southern, Western/Eastern and Indigenous/non-Indigenous.

MY CULTURE, HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

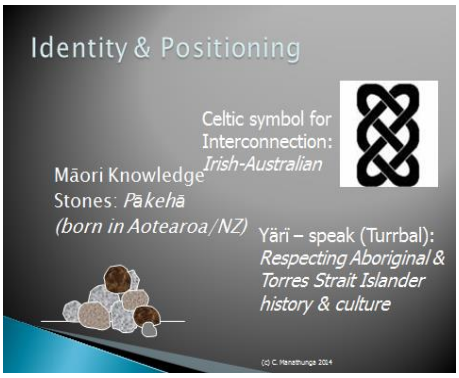

Figure 1: Cultural symbols illustrating my culture, history and geography.

I always begin my keynote presentations by referring to these 3 cultural symbols illustrated above (see Figure 1). I do this not only to culturally, geographically and politically locate myself but also to symbolize the ways in which I would like to interact with my audience. First of all, I am an Irish-Australian woman. Some of my ancestors came by boat to Melbourne in the 1850s as survivors of the Irish potato famine. I am proud to say my ancestors were boat people. Although I am 5th generation Australian, I grew up in Brisbane in a family that had retained a very strong sense of its Irishness. This included a vivid folk memory of colonisation and dispossession. As an Irish Australian I would like to draw on the meaning of this Celtic knot that symbolizes the interconnectedness of human experience and stories. I am hoping today that what I share with you all will resonate with you and create a space of understanding. As a Pākehā born in Aotearoa/New Zealand, I draw on the Māori metaphor of the knowledge stones which we each collect from people we meet on our life's journey to think about how in our intellectual and social work as academics we give and receive knowledge and ideas and as an Australian with a deep respect for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples I draw on the word Yärï or speak, which comes with permission from the Turrbal people one of the Murri (Indigenous) clan groups from the Brisbane region where I used to live.

Figure 2: Daniel, Catherine and Rory Manathunga at book launch in Melbourne

Secondly, I would like to draw your attention to more of the person reasons why I became interested in intercultural education in the first place. As I explained in detail in my book, my first marriage was to a Sri Lankan Australian man, which is why my family name is Manathunga. I have two Sri Lankan-Irish-Australian sons (see Figure 2) and have learnt a great deal about intercultural experiences and identities by watching them grow up.

CULTURES AND IDENTITIES: THE PROBLEM WITH LANGUAGE

Before beginning to examine these 'Southern' theories about time, place and knowledge, I need to explain why I have chosen to rely on quite problematic and binarising language like Northern/Southern, Western/Eastern, Indigenous/non-Indigenous. I am seeking to explore large-scale and abstract conceptions of culture and identity in order to link the broad macro historical, social, political and cultural context within which we supervise to the micro of supervision pedagogies. I fully appreciate the work of postcolonial and other theories in re-presenting identity as a hybrid, fluid notion especially in terms of the multiple migrations and roots and routes that we travel today. However, I have chosen to use these broad terms for culture and identity because I am trying to foreground the colonial relations of power that continue to shape the geo-political realities of our contemporary world. I am drawing upon our imagined constructs of categories like 'Northern', 'Southern', 'Western' and 'Eastern', 'Indigenous' in the way that Chakrabarty (2007) draws upon the ways we imagine and position the idea of 'Europe'. I am seeking to investigate how these relations of power condition the political, historical, social and cultural context within which we enact our pedagogies. In this way I am following the lead of Connell (2007) and postcolonial scholars like Chakrabarty (2007), Al-e Ahmad (1984) and Chen (2010).

I draw on Trowler's (2013) argument for the need for what he calls moderate essentialism in social science research. Trowler (2013: 6) suggests that we need to incorporate some form of essentialism 'for reasons of clarity' so that we can describe and investigate particular phenomena and 'for reasons of explanatory power' in order to show how different categories are related to each other in some way. Trowler recommends we draw on Wittgenstein's (1953) idea of family resemblances, where family members will share some, but not all, of the same features and characteristics making them recognisable as a group (Trowler, 2013). He argues that moderate essentialism acknowledges that these resemblances are contingent on contexts and change over time and in different places (Trowler, 2013). So I hope that what I have displayed in this presentation is a moderate type of essentialism that tries to capture the complexities, blurriness and messiness of categories like Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern and Indigenous.

Time, histories and supervision

As an historian, I believe that as supervisors and students we do not leave our histories at the door when we engage in supervision. Southern theories allow us to think critically about the sense of multiple and contested histories that we bring into supervision. There is also a multi-layered operation of history present in supervision which includes own our personal intellectual histories, the cultural histories of the many different cultural groups and sub-groups supervisors and students each belong to, and the histories of the country in which the supervision takes place. Therefore I believe it makes a difference when I, as an Irish-Australian working in Aotearoa/New Zealand work with a student from Tanzania at this particular moment in time and in this particular place.

'Southern' theories also challenge Western chronologies which are linear, measured units of time and Eurocentric ideas of history, time and space, where space is a surface to be journeyed across and conquered (Adams, 2004; Chakrabarty, 2007; Massey, 2005). Coevalness is an important concept that recurs throughout these theorists' discussions of both time and place, coeval meaning 'originating or existing during the same period', 'one of the same era or period, or a contemporary', according to an online dictionary (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/coeval, accessed 31/1/13). Applying this term to notions of history, Fabian (1983) was one of the first to emphasize that different societies around the globe each have their own unique past, present and future trajectories and grapple with each other at precisely the same time. As Massey (2005) powerfully outlines, indigenous people around the world were not simply sitting around waiting

for the arrival of European 'discoverers'. They were immersed in their own historical trajectories, their own pasts, presents and futures that may have been interrupted by Europeans but have continued on despite these ruptures. Therefore, these theories challenge historicist readings of history that construct time as 'single, homogeneous and secular' (Chakrabarty, 2007, p. 15) inexorably leading to 'development' or European modernisation over time. Instead they show how time is not a series of linear events leading inevitably to the Western project of modernity, rationality and progress, but as a 'contemporaneity between the non-modern and the modern, a shared constant now' (Chakrabarty, 2004, p. 240). Drawing on the work of Guha, Chakrabarty (2007) demonstrates how subordinate groups in India make their own destiny and the ways in which political action involves the 'agency of gods and spirits' (Chakrabarty, 2002, p. 22). In these ways, these theorists suggest we need to rethink time as secular and religious, rational and mythical; as a kind of a meeting-up of multiple histories; 'a constellation of social relations' (Massey, 1997, p. 322).

Social and feminist theorists like Adams and Groves (2007) and Clegg (2010) have also grappled with temporality in useful ways. Adams and Groves (2007) have written about contemporary notions of 'present future' time, where instant digital communication gives us a sense of timelessness as if time floats freely without being connected to the past or the future, which suggests little respect for multiple historical and future trajectories beyond the West (Adams & Groves, 2007). Clegg (2010, p. 346) applied these ideas to higher education pedagogy, arguing that they focus problematically only on the 'future life of the individual' and goals such as 'social mobility' and 'employability'. (Clegg, 2010, p. 346)

In re-reading these 'Southern' theories about time pedagogically in the context of doctoral supervision, I argue that we need to broaden legitimate forms of evidence that can be used in research. This would involve including myths, literary and visual representations, proverbs and oral histories as well as documentary and 'scientific' evidence. This already occurs in intriguing examples of Indigenous supervision (McKinley et al., 2011; Ford, 2012) and Cambodian supervision (Devos & Somerville, 2012). It would involve encouraging our students to investigate the multiple histories of phenomenon being studied and the histories of our disciplines. It would also include interrogating how key theorists' work has been shaped by their own histories, geographies and gender (e.g. Connell, 2007; Singh & Huang, 2012). This would not only apply to the humanities and social sciences but also to the sciences as recent postcolonial, Indigenous and feminist challenges to Western science's claims of universality have argued (Sillitoe, 2007; Nakata, 2006; Harding, 1991).

Place and supervision

I also argue that we need to locate place and geography at the heart of research and intercultural supervision and challenge the absence or universality of place in Northern knowledge construction. We also need to challenge recent arguments about time-space compression for, as Massey (2005) argues, contemporary experiences of time and space are very diverse depending upon gender, ethnicity and class. As 'Southern' theorists grappling with place-based pedagogies have suggested, places are multiply constructed and contested, social and relational and entangled with time (Massey, 2005; Somerville, 2010; Rose, 1996; Pratt, 2008; Ruitenberg, 2005; Penetito, 2009). If we recognize place as a productive space of difference, we have an opportunity to foreground hospitality and generosity rather than engaging in assimilation and suppression (Martin, 2000; Somerville et al., 2011).

There is no time to explore these arguments in detail but I would like to foreground Somerville's conceptual framework; Ruitenberg's ideas about a radical pedagogy of place and a few Indigenous understandings of place. Somerville (2010) suggests a three-part conceptual framework for place-based pedagogies that includes a focus on dominant and alternative

storylines, on the body and body/place learning and on place as a contact zone where difference is entered deeply. Ruitenberg (2005, pp. 214-215) argues that 'where we learn becomes part of what we learn …[because] I am undeniably influenced by my geographic location as well as by the traces of the geographic locations in which I have found myself in the past'. I also find Rose's (1996) description of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' notions of country evocative:

People talk about country in the same way they would talk about a person: they speak to country, sing to country, visit country, worry about country, feel for country, and long for country. Country is not a generalized or undifferentiated type of place… country is a living entity with a yesterday, today and tomorrow, with a consciousness, and a will toward life.

Māori scholar, Penetito (2009) also argues that Indigenous place-based education acknowledges that a sense of place is fundamental to being truly human; there is a formal relationship between people and their environments and that this pedagogy needs to embody ways of being that provide for the 'conscious union of mind and spirit' or wānanga (Penetito, 2009, p. 20).

If we apply these 'Southern' theorists' perspectives about place to intercultural supervision, I argue that this means we need to locate place at the centre of intercultural supervision and explore with our students how our multiple geographies shaped our thinking and our supervision interactions. We need to perceive supervision spaces as social and relational and as a potential place of generosity and hospitality rather than assimilation.

Cultural knowledge and supervision

In reimagining epistemology it is important to remember the history of the creation of Western/Northern knowledge and its intimate connection with colonisation. Colonisation involved not only physical, military and economic invasion, but was also accompanied and justified by attempts to export Western knowledge, technologies and cultural beliefs to the world. Western learned societies and universities were heavily implicated in this process. Writing from a Māori perspective, Smith (1999) argues that the key features of Western knowledge include a focus on the individual; racial and gender hierarchies; rationality and 'hard' work; privileging written over oral texts; linear constructions of time and space and a binary either/or logic. In the process of knowledge production, the North was the location of knowledge and theory, whereas the South functioned as a giant laboratory (Smith, 1999). As several authors have argued, these patterns continue into the present through globalisation (Connell, 2007; Al-e Ahmad, 1984; Alatas, 2006) despite decades of postcolonial, Indigenous and feminist research. An important consequence of this Northern dominance of knowledge production is what Al-e Ahmad (1984) describes as 'gharbzadegi', which has been variously translated as 'Westoxication' or 'Occidentialosis'. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1986) calls the 'colonisation of the mind'. Essentially each of these terms seeks to capture the self-doubt and dependency on the North produced by such one-way, powerful and ongoing practices of epistemological hegemony. As Al-e Ahmad (1984, p. 43) argues, there has always been historic rivalry of East and West but with age of Enlightenment/Imperialism there was a change from competition to a 'spirit of helplessness' (Al-e Ahmad, 1984, pp. 43 & 98) to the point where the westoxicated person regards only Western writings as proper sources and criteria. This is how he comes to know even himself in terms of the language of the orientalist. With his own hands he has reduced himself to the status of an object to be scrutinized under the microscope of the orientalist. Then he relies on the orientalist's observations not on what he himself feels, sees and experiences.

If we apply these ideas to supervision then firstly, supervisors would need to acknowledge colonial legacies in Western knowledge and work with our students to position Western theorists in terms of culture, gender, time, location and so on (Chakrabarty, 2007; Connell, 2007). This would also mean learning from our culturally diverse students and learning from the theorists

from their contexts and regions. It would also involve a both-ways transculturation where Southern and Northern theory are brought into dialogue in supervision and where Northern theorists (including ourselves and our Western students) engage respectfully with Southern knowledge. It would also involve seeking to go beyond simplistic dualities and cultural essentialism, as the work of Nakata (2006, p. 9) does on the 'cultural interface' and Hountondji (1996) does on African diversity. As a Western scholar located in the South, thinking through these theoretical resources about knowledge means that we have a particular responsibility to facilitate South-South dialogue and to decolonize knowledge, theory and education. Indeed, 'the success of decolonisation of education depends upon the efforts of non-Indigenous peoples to re-examine their positions and the control they exert over curriculum decision-making and reform' (McLaughlin & Whatman, 2011, p. 365). There would also be times where we need to encourage our students to respect rather than integrate knowledge systems. Pākehā academic, Alison Jones (1999, pp. 315-316) reminds us, we must at times 'to embrace positively a "politics of disappointment" that includes a productive acceptance of the ignorance of the other' and a 'gracious acceptance of not having to know the other'. Finally, we would need to encourage our students to engage in respectful and rigorous critique of Southern Knowledge and Theory (Hountondji, 1996; Nakata, 2007). Some of these practices are already evident in Indigenous and Māori supervision (for example Ford, 2012; McKinley et al., 2011) and in Devos and Somerville's (2012) insightful article on the doctoral examination of a Cambodian student.

EMPIRICAL STUDY OF INTERCULTURAL SUPERVISION

However, theoretical work on its own is never enough so I conducted an empirical study of intercultural supervision at an Australian university. This was partly funded by an ALTC grant led by colleagues at Macquarie University. Having gained ethical clearance, I conducted separate semi-structured interviews with 18 students and 15 supervisors (matched where possible) across the Humanities, Social Sciences, Engineering and the Sciences. I sought to understand more about how time, place and knowledge operated in these instances of intercultural supervision. I also attempted to investigate more about two pedagogies I had previously observed operating in intercultural supervision - assimilation and transculturation - and the experience of unhomeliness (Manathunga, 2007; 2011). There is no time in this presentation to cover unhomeliness and I will only briefly comment on assimilationist pedagogies today because I especially want to focus on the transcultural pedagogies I found evidence of.

Assimilationist pedagogies operating in intercultural supervision appeared to be characterized by an absence of place. Supervisors adopting an assimilationist pedagogy seemed to indicate that there was no time to discuss the places students had come from or how these geographies had shaped their thinking. There was also evidence of deficit views of Other cultures and places and an absence of the personal and the relational in supervision with an overwhelming focus on research only. Supervision was, therefore, not relational, but a mere business transaction; research to be managed, accounted for and ticked off, publications to be written.

There was also a focus on present time in assimilationist approaches to supervision. This was evident through the disregarding of students' prior professional and cultural knowledge and little attempt was made to prepare students for a future as intercultural citizens and workers. There was often also a deficit focus on the present characterized by low expectations and an emphasis on 'getting students through their studies'. So too, Northern knowledge and research and publication practices perceived as universal and there was very little recognition of the cultural knowledge brought by students. Instead it was expected that students would abandon and discount their cultural knowledge in favour of Northern knowledge and research practices.

TRANSCULTURAL PEDAGOGIES

In the presentation I had planned several illustrative examples from my data for each point but there is only space in this article for a few of the most convincing quotes. By contrast, supervisors adopting transcultural supervision pedagogies sought to situate place, time and diverse cultural knowledge at the heart of supervision. For example they were inherently curious about their students' geographies:

> if I've got a student from another culture I would want to know about that culture ... So I think it's beneficial for the supervisor to somehow learn about the culture … go and have lunch with them or watch a … film with them [from their country] and ask questions … Or talk about the politics back home or something so that they can … see that the supervisor is making an effort (Australian humanities supervisor 2).

They sought to understand their students' intellectual and professional histories and to provide students with structured opportunities to develop a range of academic career skills that would be important to their futures:

> All the way through we plan their studies so that they will acquire some supervision experience, some conference experience and some publication experience so that when they leave us they've got as much as we can give them, which will make them employable and so these things involve forward planning as well as familiarisation (Australian humanities supervisor 3).

They regarded supervision as a relational pedagogy and recognized the ways in which the personal and social issues are intimately intertwined with academic matters and that students will not necessarily make good progress in their studies until they have sorted out the myriad of issues involved in living in a new country and culture and have begun to establish new social support networks. As one European science supervisor emphasized, it was important to 'check with [students] … that they are doing fine … because I am human'. They also encouraged students to have a positive study-life balance rather than working all the time.

In some cases, these supervisors adopted forms of group supervision in order to provide broader support to students. For example, two social science supervisors set up a 'thesis family' group for their Asian students:

> we've actually tried to set them up as an extended family to support each other and also for us to interact. So, what we want them to be is kind of a social network and that seems to be working well. But also a network for sharing ideas around the thesis to each other and be encouraging for each other and have somebody else to talk to about the thesis … it stops us from having to repeat the same things four times. Because they're coming in together, they're all dealing with literature reviews or research questions and opening chapters and setting a context (Australian social science supervisor 2)

These supervisors also understood different cultural patterns in polite communication and sought to adopt supportive and flexible communication styles and patterns. In some cases, supervisors who were themselves were from different cultures, or who were particularly familiar with different cultural styles of thinking and being, were also able to adopt what Aspland (1999) has called 'both-ways' supervision. One Asian engineering student suggested that:

> Two of my supervisors are [Asian]… . They will give you, well, sort of another way to communicate with them. If you want to do like all the other guys … they will treat you just like an Australian student. If you want to treat them in [Asian] way, then they also maybe can do it in [Asian] way, so it depends on you (Asian engineering student 2).

They also sought to build inclusive research cultures. For example, some engineering students in an interdisciplinary research centre confirmed how much they valued all of the strategies the centre used to include them in an active research culture. Indeed, one Asian student spoke how participating in the research culture was simply expected behaviour:

> I feel a part of the research culture because it is our centre policy as well. Not only to gain knowledge or get something for the research you have to know what other people are doing. This is the motto of research for our centre … You have to know what is happening, what other people are doing and what you're doing and share that. That's what the seminars, you have to present your things, share that and discuss (Asian engineering student 1).

Transcultural supervision pedagogies also involved helping students build bridges into Western knowledge and research practices by:

- Providing structured help with the literature review and other research tasks
- Providing oral and written feedback
- Encouraging students even when early drafts required a lot of work
- Encouraging students to use tape recorders in meetings
- Guiding and supporting writing for publication
- Providing career mentoring about what it means to be a researcher
- Helping students to develop their own voice.

These supervisors appeared to be strongly aware of the many different cultural ways in which knowledge can be constructed. They were also not expecting that their students would abandon or move away from their own forms of cultural knowledge. Instead they recognized that Western knowledge and research practices were merely an additional set of theoretical and methodological resources that students sought to add to their repertoire. For example, one Australian humanities supervisor argued that:

> [I am] constantly reminded the way I look at things is not the only way … I've come to understand much more … how intellectual activity looks when you start from different cultural positions … and in some cases different gendered positions …I've learnt heaps from them about cultural practices … cultural taboos … about intercultural sensitivity … the validity of different ways of doing intellectual things (Australian humanities supervisor).

He also spoke passionately about the need to understand from his international students 'the steps it takes … to accommodate to working in an Australian cultural and intellectual framework' and also the steps that he could 'take towards them which will help to narrow the gap' (Australian humanities supervisor). However, he was conscious that he should 'help students not give up the sorts of intellectual values they have at home'. He also sought to avoid imposing his view on students' research but to help students build and justify their own views instead.

In particular, these supervisors encouraged students to create transcultural knowledge by blending aspects of Western knowledge that they found useful and relevant with their own cultural knowledge to create unique, new knowledge. For example, one Asian humanities supervisor described her own difficulties as a PhD student in reconciling her values about collectivity, reciprocity and holistic connections between her mind, body and spirit, with Western individualistic and rational approaches to research. She was able to adapt largely Western postmodernist theories about identity and subjectivity, and blend them with her values to produce her original contribution to knowledge. In writing her thesis, she had huge difficulties seeing these

people as my subjects, feeling instead that 'it was a real intrusion and exploitation' (Asian humanities supervisor). After meeting an anthropologist who introduced her to some new ways to see subjectivity, she was able to recast her thesis as 'my own journey … questioning of my own identity'. This ensured that it was a 'kind of collaborative project' and she laughingly explained that 'so long as it's a collaboration and reciprocal relationship, then it's ok [laughs]'. This has also shaped her philosophy as a supervisor - 'now I'm asking students "what you think" or "what you feel is the important thing"'. She now finds that students respond really well to her encouragement to find 'something that you can only say' (Asian humanities supervisor).

AN INVITATION

I always feel that conclusion is the wrong word for the ending of a presentation and for the last section of a book. It suggests a firm closing-off, a tying up of loose ends, a definitive end to the argument. So rather than end with a 'conclusion', I would like to finish this presentation with an invitation. If we are to wrestle effectively with the serious global problems facing our world, then we need to draw together the vast array of knowledge systems that all of our cultures have produced. This means creating space for Southern, Eastern and Indigenous knowledges in universities and a key site where we can make this happen (and where it is already happening in some disciplines) is in the postcolonial contact zone of intercultural supervision. In order to achieve this, supervisors need to situate place, time and Other cultural knowledges at the centre of their supervision pedagogy. This would involve adopting transcultural supervision pedagogies and seeking to understand the unhomeliness that this might involve for students and for supervisors. It would also involve attempting to move beyond assimilationist supervision pedagogies. The papers in your conference series and at this conference demonstrate clearly how transcultural pedagogies are possible in many areas. I have tried to show how I have sought to use 'Southern' theories to unsettle doctoral education. I encourage you to continue your work to unsettle dominant Western/Northern educational discourses and look forward to learning from you over the next few days. I invite you to think about how this is possible.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp.22-29
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Solidarity and competitiveness in a global context: Comparable concepts in global citizenship education?

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Abstract

Any study linking terms such as global education, internationalization, and global citizenship facing the dilemmas of local and global tensions, invariably has to address the questions of globalizations and neoliberalism, two concepts and two global movements that define our time and age, the age of interdependence. Neoliberal globalization, as I have analyzed in other places defines the top down model of global hegemonic dominance, resting on the power of corporations, bilateral and multilateral organisms, and the global and regional power of nations who exercise control over people, territories, capital and resources of all kinds, including the environment.

Neoliberalism has utterly failed as a viable model of economic development, yet the politics of culture associated with neoliberalism is still in force, and has become the new common sense shaping the role of government and education. This 'common sense' has become an ideology playing a major role in constructing hegemony as moral and intellectual leadership in contemporary societies. Universities play a major role in knowledge production and teaching of comparative education. How to cope with these challenges of globalization in the universities is a central concern of this keynote in which I address the challenges of global education for social transformation, focusing on frontiers and boundaries of citizenship. Three themes are central for this conversation namely a) how multiple globalizations are impacting global life and academics b) how networks have become privileged sites for global education collaboration, and c) what are the implications of globalization and networks for global citizenship, global universities and comparative education. Looming in the shadows of this conversation is an important question: What should be the goals of global citizenship education in a decade marked by the UN Education First Initiative with a special focus on the question of furthering global citizenship and the responsibilities of universities and governments?

LIMINAL: EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Learned and leisurely hospitality is the only antidote to the stance of deadline cleverness that is acquired in the professional pursuit of objectively secured knowledge.

(Illich, The Cultivation of Conspiracy, cited in Torres, 2013, p. 468).

Education has in modern times been part and parcel in the construction of the nation-state, and if one were to take a classical Durkheimian sociological perspective, in the socialization of the new generations in the culture(s), mores, knowledge, and experience of the older generations. It has been shaped by the demands within the state to prepare the labor force for participation in the economy and to prepare citizens to participate in the polity. It is supposed to create conditions for social cohesion and conflict resolution.

Lester Thurow, one of the best political economists of our time, put it boldly: 'The invention of universal compulsory publicly funded education was mankind's greatest social invention' (1999, p. 130). This approximate congruence of nation-state and formalized education becomes problematic as globalization blurs national sovereignty and puts limits on state autonomy. We are now forced to move beyond assumptions about national boundaries and goals internal to national agendas.

Discussions on citizenship must address straightforward questions: Will globalization make human rights and democratic participation more universal, or will globalization redefine human enterprise as market exchanges invulnerable to traditional civic forms of democratic governance? Whether education as a publicly shared invention, contributing to civic life and human rights, can thrive depends on the future of globalization—a future that may offer the internationalization of the ideals of a democratic education or may reduce education, and civic participation, to narrow instruments of remote and seemingly ungovernable market forces.

In several works (Torres, 2009a, 2009b; 2013, in press), I have suggested that multiple and intersecting globalization processes do place limits on state autonomy and national sovereignty. These limits are expressed in tensions between global and local dynamics in virtually every decision and policy domain in the social, cultural, and economic spheres.

These limits, however, do not mean that the State has withered away and the regulatory power of the state has vanished completely. Most politicians believe, and a great deal of the general public concur, that politics is mostly if not always local. The problem for this point of view which has a great deal of persuasiveness, particularly if one tries to understand the tensions and dynamics of the national, the regional, the provincial, the municipal and the community level, is that the political economy constraining and enabling politics is built in the translational interpenetration of global forces vis a vis local forces, stake holders, and agents. Put it simply, wealth accumulation, production, distribution, and all sorts of commodity exchanges (from price levels to currency value) are subject to the globalization of economies and markets.

Multiple globalization therefore not only blurs national boundaries but also shifts solidarities within and outside the national state. Globalization cannot be defined exclusively by the post-Fordist organization of production, but emerges as a major characteristic of a global world economy.

Issues of human rights, regional states, and cosmopolitan democracy will play a major role affecting civic minimums at the state level, the performance of capital and labor in different domains, and particularly the dynamics of citizenship, democracy, and multiculturalism in the modern state (Torres, 1998, Torres in press). To understand the issues at stake in education, we have to consider these tensions within globalization and their implications for reshaping the limits and potentials for civil society.

In my publications I have defended the following theoretical principles: It is imperative to consider the connections of globalization with the concerns about worldwide markets and free trade, and how market competition in the context of neoliberalism affects the notion of citizenship and democracy at national, regional, and global level. In the same vein but from the very different

political-ideological standpoint of universal human rights, we should understand the limits of national citizenship and sovereignty.

Two principles become antagonistic, namely, national sovereignty and universal human rights (Torres, in press). For Nuhoglu Soysal (1994), '…these two global precepts simultaneously constrain and enhance the nation-state's scope of action' (pp. 7–8). This creates an incongruity between the normative and the organizational bases of rights, as well as between constitutional prescriptions and laws. Nuhoglu Soysal (1994, pp. 164–165) has argued that:

> *The state is no longer an autonomous and independent organization closed over a nationally defined population. Instead, we have a system of constitutionally interconnected states with a multiplicity of membership. [Hence] . . . the logic of personhood supersedes the logic of national citizenship, [and] individual rights and obligations, which were historically located in the nation-state, have increasingly moved to a universalistic plane, transcending the boundaries of particular nation-states.*

Nuhoglu Soysal's analysis has multiple implications. First at the level of citizenship, where notions of identity and rights are decoupled. Second at the level of the politics of identity and multiculturalism, where the emergence of membership in the polity, he argues, 'is multiple in the sense of spanning local, regional, and global identities, and . . . accommodates intersecting complexes of rights, duties and loyalties (p. 166). Third at the level of what could be termed *cosmopolitan democracies,* which Soysal highlights as emerging from the importance of the international system for the attainment of democracy worldwide. Cosmopolitan democracies constitute a system relatively divorced in its origins and constitutive dynamics from codes of the nation-states. The recent inception in the world system of the Education First Initiative produced by the U.N. Secretary Ban Ki-Moon in 2012 is an example of these global dynamics affecting local realities.

In neoliberal times the main questions are how globalization is affecting organized solidarity and how citizenship is being checked by market forces and globalization dynamics. This is so because the unstable linkage between democracy and capitalism has been blurred to levels rarely seen before.

What follows is an analysis of the concept of global citizenship education caught in the web of proposals to instill solidarity at a global level to support our common humanity, and proposals that global citizenship education will propel more competitiveness of the labor forces in the global markets. Clearly one may question whether both concepts—solidarity and competitiveness—are comparable concepts in global citizenship education.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: COMPETITIVENESS VERSUS SOLIDARITY

> *To achieve the expansive possibilities of global citizenship, particularly as a social justice endeavor, and to avoid the being caught in the neoliberal trap of proclaiming globalized equity while creating its opposite [we need to understand] global citizenship in diverse ways, from an ancient commitment of interconnectivity to a hyper capitalist and globalized mobile individualized citizen.*
>
> *(Shultz, Abdi, & Richardson, 2011. p.3)*

The main thesis of this paper is that solidarity versus competitiveness is an irresolvable tension in the world system. They could be seen in its more generic form as two extremes of a continuum. There are comparable concepts in global citizenship education only because in their most extreme definition they are antagonist concepts. Together they confront us with several conundrums.

First, to assume that human nature will be fully tamed by cultural nurturing is a wonderful assumption that we inherited from the Enlightenment. It is a goal and a dream that justifies our educational efforts. Yet, is not reflected in reality because there are plenty of political conflicts related to local and global identities, some are nationalistic in nature, other are ethnic or religious, or a mixture of all three undermining all forms of citizenship. Moreover, everywhere there are deep fractures between goals of political unity versus goals of cultural unity. Solidarity rather than competition may help cultural nurturing.

Second, to assume that oppressors and oppressed can co-exist (compete and have degrees of solidarity) harmoniously in the World System is also a wonderful hope, but, unfortunately, not represented in actual data and theoretical analyses. Consider for instance the analysis provided by post-colonialist traditions, those provided by critical traditions in gender studies or race/and ethnic studies or class analyses, or consider the growing bibliography signalling that there are too many inequalities within and among nations for this co-existence to work in the long run.

Third, competition is the essence of sports. Is the impetus for global citizenship education comparable to the Soccer World Cup or the Olympics Games? An assumption in the Olympic Games or World Soccer competition is that people and countries conduct themselves within a code of fair play not cheating in their desires to win. 'Let the best win,' is the motto of any competition. This aphorism could be translated into global citizenship education. Some argue that furthering global citizenship education we can create a better world where we all can win, since all of us may recognize the wonders of our own shared humanity!

There are many examples in the breakdown of the fallacy of a level playing field in sports, contradicting a falsified image of the prevalence of honesty in athletics. For example, cycling is particular problematic because since 1988 more than one third of the top finishers have been busted for doping, with the most egregious case being the seven times winner of the Tour de France, Lance Armstrong.[1]

Conceivably, if we want to implement world citizenship education in a world system built on profit taking, like in world sports, we may face similar problems. Let us take an example from mass media. In the 1987 movie *Wall Street*, Michael Douglas playing the role of a Wall Street Tycoon Gordon Gekko provides us the answer of how economic competitiveness may not dovetail nicely with human solidarity, particularly when competition is based solely on greed.

Gordon Gekko speaking to stockholders of a company he bought shares argues: "I am not a destroyer of companies. I am a liberator of them! The point is, ladies and gentleman, that greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right, greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms; greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge has marked the upward surge of mankind."[2]

Fourth, assuming that solidarity and competitiveness can live together harmoniously implies that there is no incommensurability of political, scientific, or ideological discourses.

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1 http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/08/24/sports/top-finishers-of-the-tour-de-france-tainted-by-doping.html?_r=0

2 From the script of the movie, Wall Street. (1987).

Solidarity speaks of cooperation and collaboration. This can be done at the level of distributional and humanitarian policies. Competition in the economic extreme speaks of contest and survival of the fittest, eventually creating conflict. Competition in the economic arena refers to production, accumulation, and profit-taking in wealth creation. Growing levels of solidarity may enhance the legitimacy of systems, but in a cutthroat neoliberal capitalist society, though monopolies thwarting competition exist, market competition is seen as one of the keys to productivity, profit-taking and success.

In fact, we may argue that the two terms that work more closely and should be key in the construction of global identities in global citizenship education are coordination that leads to cooperation. Yet, the problem is how to coordinate divergent interests. Obviously all participants in processes of coordination try to have an agreeable rule or convention in place. But, as Offe (Offe, 2006, p.59) argues:

> *…the typical case of cooperation, however, is one in which preferences differ as to what the rule should be, and also the cost and efforts required for complying with that rule are not the same for all players involved, as some may have to make more painful adjustments than others.*

Solidarity, Competition and Global Citizenship Education

> *Alienation is the constant and essential element of identity, the objective side of the subject—and not as it is made to appear today, a disease, a psychological condition.*
>
> *(Marcuse, in Feeberg and Leiss 2007, p. 53).*

There are more complications to this continuum between solidarity and competition. First, there is world inequality. From 2000 to 2007, incomes for the bottom 90 percent of earners rose only about 4 percent, once adjusted for inflation. For the top 0.1 percent, incomes climbed about 94 percent (Saenz & Piketty). For instance, OECD reports the growing inequality in the UK, where the top 10 percent have incomes that are12 times greater than bottom 10 percent, and this is up from eight times greater in 1985.

Second, competition for jobs undermines forms of solidarity.[3] The crisis of 2008 has made even more evident the importance of the growing inequality that has deeply affected market democracies. A casualty of these crises in the global economy has been the loss of jobs, which has in turn increased inequality and poverty. Jim Clifton, (2011) Chairman of Gallup Corporation argues that of the 7 billion people in the world, 5 billion are over 15 years old. Three billion said they currently worked or wanted to work, yet only 1.2 billion have full-time formal jobs. Hence there is a shortfall of 1.8 billon jobs worldwide. This does not include those that currently underemployed, working in jobs below their skill levels.

Third, in the last century, the principal source of institutional and organized solidarity in the world has been the presence of various of forms of the welfare state, which guarantees individuals minimum levels of welfare, education, income, health care, and affordable housing and transportation as a political right and not as charity. As Offe declares, ‘The welfare state is an

[3] Most analysts document that the gap between the U.S. rich (1 percent of the population) has been growing markedly by any measure for the last three decades. There are a number of “teach ins” on the matter, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIKgApqgGgU (retrieved May 5, 2012). The press has also indicated several reasons for this growing disparity, see Dave Gibson and Carolyn Perot, It’s the Inequality, Stupid: Eleven Charts That Explain What’s Wrong with America, http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2011/02/income-inequality-in-america-chart- graph (March/April, 2011).

accumulation of rights that the worker doesn't not have to earn, but which come as an original endowment of 'social citizenship'(Offe, 2006, p. 44).

Clearly the inception of neoliberalism in the early eighties and the working of neoliberal globalization have led to a decline of the welfare state and organized forms of solidarity (Torres, in press). With neoliberalism, we find a drive towards privatization, marketization, performativity and the enterprising individual exemplified by Canadian political scientist Macpherson's concept of 'possessive individualism' in which individuals are conceived as sole proprietors of their own skills and owe nothing to society. In the political philosophy of possessive individualism there are multiple reasons for competition and virtually no reason for solidarity or collaboration with less fortunate people, communities or countries.

Fourth, war is a public policy option for the state more so in the geopolitics of powerful nation-states in the global system. War could be advanced to pursue the goals of competition more often than solidarity. The global defense budget (in 2012 US dollars) shows there is only reigning military super-power, the USA spending $682 billion, this amount is more than the combined amount of $652 billion from the subsequent 9 nation-states with the largest defense budgets.[4] One could only imagine what would happen if a fraction of these defense budgets could be devoted to public services that sustain solidarity policies.

There are plenty of discontents with neoliberal globalization, as there are serious misgivings with the geopolitics of the strongest nations on Earth guiding solidarity and philanthropy. Occasionally, in the name of human rights, we witness the imperialism of human rights being projected by Western countries to justify intervention in order to prevent atrocities of genocide and other ills, but also to justify intervention for the benefits their own competitiveness and interest. I have suggested in many forums that we have to decouple human rights from imperialist interventions.

I have spoken of competition confronting solidarity as two ends of a continuum, and I have been quite sceptical that business-like competition could be very useful in the dictionary of furthering global citizenship education. Yet there are few experiences in which competition and solidarity may intersect.

Universities compete for the best undergraduate and graduate students, the services of the best professors, and, particularly, global universities compete for securing employment of the 'best brains' around the globe. They compete for research resources, growing endowments or better positioning in the rankings, and there is a civilized competition for advancing new knowledge and technologies.

This cultural competition is healthy, and is part of an educational utopia for the Twenty-First Century education, particularly when it is present in our schools, universities and lifelong learning system which seek to build global citizenship through a new paradigm of education well defined by Suárez -Orozco and Sattin-Bajaj when they seek an education:

> *...privileging disciplined curiosity, the beauty of discovery, a ludic engagement with the world, and an ethic of care and solidarity will be less a luxury and a rarity than an essential requirement for the next generation of children to thrive. We must continue to cultivate, replicate, modify, and improve models of education that are built on these powerful and indispensable architectures.*
>
> *(Suárez-Orozco and Sattin-Bajaj, 2010, p. 198)*

[4] States including Russia, Japan, UK, Saudi Arabia, France, Germany, China, India, and Italy. http://www.mapsofworld.com/world-top-ten/world-top-ten-countries-with-largest-defence-budget-map.html

The quest for global citizenship education should be understood in the context of multiple processes of globalization, which are drastically changing our collective and individual worlds and consciousness. While globalization provides the backdrop for any conversation about global citizenship education we are entering new frontiers and we need new narratives in education, which confront the traditional positivist epistemology in education. We should view citizenship marked by an understanding of global interconnectedness and a commitment to the collective good. We should advance a view of citizenship in which the geographic reference point for one's sense of rights and responsibilities is broadened, and in some sense, complicated by a more expansive spatial vision and understanding of the world.

There are three main trends underscoring the need for global citizenship education. First, it should be noted that the world is changing, cultures are intersecting, and borders are more permeable than ever. Hybridity is the quintessential nature of contemporary societies. The second reason is that we have moved from a concept of citizenship in a city to a concept of citizenship in a nation-state and now we are at the sunrise of global citizenship in the age of global interdependence and cosmopolitanism. Historically, education has played a major role in these transformations, hence the quest for global citizenship education. The third main reason for global citizenship education is that the different forms of globalization are confronting cosmopolitan democracies as emerging models of political organization of citizenship (Torres, in press). There must be a vision towards global citizenship education or the people and the planet will perish.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 30-42
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Beginning teachers as policy workers in Malaysia and New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

In 2007, the Malaysia government initiated twinned primary teacher education arrangements with five Southern Hemisphere higher education institutions (HEIs). Participating students completed their teacher education in both Malaysia and a partner HEI. In this paper, we consider the preliminary findings of a comparative study tracking the beginning teacher journeys of 13 Malaysia-based twinned programme graduates and six New Zealand-based teachers. The study involved two aspects: (1) a comparative discourse analysis of key Malaysia and New Zealand education policy documents; and (2) thematic and discourse analysis of participants' reflections on their early teaching experiences. Our focus is on beginning teachers as 'policy workers': policy subjects whose work is shaped and constrained by policy discourses and imperatives, and policy actors who mediate, translate and resist these. We compare the two policy contexts and consider how policy discourses appeared and were contested in teachers' initial online questionnaire responses.

Keywords: Malaysia; New Zealand; beginning teachers; education policy

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, the Malaysian government initiated the development of 'twinned' primary teacher education programmes involving higher education institutions (HEIs) in Malaysia, New Zealand, and Australia. Their aim was to foster prospective English language teachers' English language proficiency, exposure to English in context, capacity for intercultural engagement, and ability to adopt a critical standpoint in relation to teaching and learning. Students were selected for the programmes based on academic performance and their studies were fully funded by the Malaysian government. They graduated with an overseas English language teaching qualification and were 'bonded' to teach in Malaysia for five years post graduation.

Literature on beginning teachers uses the term 'shock' to describe the experience of transitioning from pre-service teacher education to classroom teaching (for example, see Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Flores, 2001; Schaefer, 2013; Schatz-Openheimer & Dvir, 2014). Staff involved in the twinned programme development were mindful that programme graduates could face a particularly complex transition as they moved between national, socio-cultural and socio-legal contexts, as well from teacher education to classroom teaching. However, beginning teaching in

any context often involves major transitions. For example, in New Zealand, beginning teachers are not bonded, but many move between geographical and socio-economic locations to find work.

In this paper we draw on findings from a project aimed at tracking beginning teachers' first year teaching journeys in Malaysia and New Zealand. Participants included six New Zealand based beginning teachers and 13 Malaysia based graduates of a twinned programme for prospective English language teachers. The Malaysia based teachers had completed their first and final year of study at a Malaysian HEI, and the second and third, in New Zealand. All of our participants had graduated from the same New Zealand HEI and were working in primary school contexts. We included New Zealand teachers in the project as a comparative group, as we did not want to assume that the Malaysian graduates' early teaching experiences were necessarily different to those of their New Zealand counterparts (after Madge, Raghuram & Noxolo, 2009).

The project involved two aspects. The first was a comparative policy analysis of key 'vision-setting' documents relevant to the schools sector in Malaysia and New Zealand. We also followed the teachers' first year of teaching through the use of 'secret' Facebook groups, open-ended online questionnaires, and face-to-face/Skype interviews. In this paper we focus on findings from our policy comparison and the first (mid-year) questionnaire. We 'read' our data in light of work by Stephen Ball and colleagues (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011a, 2011b; Braun, Ball & Maguire, 2011; Braun, Ball, Maguire & Hoskins, 2011; Maguire, Hoskins, Ball & Braun, 2011), who conceptualise policy as "a process" that is "diversely and repeatedly contested and/or subject to **'**interpretation**'** as it is enacted (rather than implemented) in original and creative ways within institutions" (Braun et al., 2011, p. 586). We were interested in what similarities or differences might emerge in the teachers' reflections on their teaching work across locations, and in their experiences as *policy workers* in each context: policy *subjects* whose work was shaped and constrained by policy discourses and imperatives; and policy *actors* who mediated, translated and resisted these (Ball et al., 2011a). We were also interested in what we could learn about the implications, strengths and limitations of education policy by 'listening' to beginning teachers' reflections on their work.

The paper is organised as follows. In the next section, we outline some empirical, methodological and theoretical literature that informed our study, specifically, on beginning teaching, education policy and teachers' work in relation to broader policy imperatives. We then discuss and compare the Malaysia and New Zealand policy texts. Next, we focus on the teachers' responses to our initial online questionnaire, noting how the teachers' accounts of beginning teaching in their respective locations took up, complicated and exceeded policy discourses. We conclude by considering how teachers' reflections on their teaching work can shed new light on education policy.

BEGINNING TEACHERS AS POLICY WORKERS

Research involving beginning teachers describes the transition to teaching as challenging and demanding (for example, see Caspersen & Raaen, 2013; Flores, 2001; Schaefer, 2013; Schatz-Openheimer & Dvir, 2014). The first year of teaching is a time of tension, vulnerability, formation and transformation, when identities shift and are shaped based on the interplay between self, others and context (Britzman, 2003; Schaefer, 2013; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010). Common challenges include 'managing' students, developing effective pedagogical approaches, and coping with administrative demands (Flores and Day, 2006; Pillen, Beijaard & den Brok, 2013; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). By focusing on teachers' talk, or reflections on their teaching work, we

can gain insights into their shifting identities, and how these are "negotiated…within external contexts" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 181).

In this paper, we understand policies as "representations of knowledge and power, discourses that construct a topic", for example, notions of what characterises the 'good school', the 'good teacher' or the 'good student' (Maguire et al., 2011, p. 597). We use the term 'discourse' in reference to "bodies of ideas that produce and regulate the world in their own terms, rendering some things common sense and some things nonsensical" (Youdell, 2006, pp. 35-36; also see Maguire et al., 2011). We recognise that multiple discourses are at play in any policy text, and that policy discourses compete and intertwine with discourses that operate within situated school contexts (Ball et al., 2011a). Attention to policy discourses allows us to see education policy as more than a set of written guidelines or vision statements.

Braun, Ball, Maguire, et al. (2011) argue that in order to understand the complexity of policy enactment in schools, we need to attend to both the "objective" and the "the material, structural and relational" conditions under which teachers work (p. 588). We also need to recognise teachers' dual positioning as both "agents and subjects of policy enactments" (p. 586). In this paper, we recognise policies as "discursive strategies": sets of discourses that "become worked into/against everyday practices of school life and become set over and against, or integrated into existing discourses (discourses) that frame both [teachers'] acting and how others see their actions" (p. 598). However, we are also interested in the "fragility in all this"; for example, how policy discourses are marked by gaps, silences and contradictions (p. 598), and how teachers' reflections allow us to see policy differently.

MALAYSIA AND NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION POLICY

In line with Braun, Ball, Maguire, et al. (2011), we recognise our participants' teaching contexts as multi-layered, including situational, professional, material and external dimensions. Many elements make up the 'external dimension' that shapes the work and life of the teachers in our study, including each country's unique colonial (and in the case of Malaysia, post-colonial history); and socio-linguistic, geographical and demographic characteristics. Our focus here is on one element of the external dimension: key policy documents in each place that outline a 'vision' for schools sector education. From Malaysia, we draw on the *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2012–2015* (Ministry of Education, 2012, hereafter *Blueprint*), and from New Zealand, the Ministry of Education's *Statement of Intent, 2013–2018* (Ministry of Education, 2013, hereafter *Statement of Intent*), and *New Zealand Curriculum* front pages (Ministry of Education, 2007, pp. 4-15, hereafter *NZC*). Together, these are more comparable to the *Blueprint* than either document taken alone. We begin with an overview and description of each of these documents.

Education policy for the Malaysia schools sector

The *Blueprint* was published in 2012 following a comprehensive review of Malaysia's national education system (Ministry of Education, 2012). This was led by Malaysia's Ministry of Education, with input from UNESCO, the OECD, the World Bank, academics, teachers, parents and students. The *Blueprint* is described as both evaluating "the performance of Malaysia's education system" and setting a "vision" for its future (p. E-1). It outlines a range of aspirations for both the Malaysian education system and Malaysian students.

At a system level, the *Blueprint* highlights the need to ensure universal access and full enrolment of children in education from preschool to upper secondary levels; universal access to an education that is of comparable quality "to the best international systems"; reduced educational disparities; an increased sense of national unity; and outcomes commensurate with investment.

Student-specific aspirations reveal a concern with fostering children's capacity in numeracy, literacy, and other "core subjects" (p. E-9); ability to use creative, reasoning, critical-thinking and problem-solving skills; ability to lead and work with others; bilingual proficiency in Malay and English; development of "strong ethics and spirituality" (p. E-10); and identification as "Malaysian, irrespective of ethnicity, religion or socio-economic status" (p. E-10).

The *Blueprint* outlines 11 shifts necessary to achieve these aspirations. These include: (1) providing "equal access to quality education" (p. E-11); (2) standardising Malay and English language curricula, upskilling English language teachers and providing remedial support in both languages; (3) strengthening Islamic and Moral Education and "civics elements", promoting co-curricular activities, and enhancing inter-school programmes (p. E-13); (4) strengthening the teaching profession by recruiting top graduates, ensuring access to professional development, providing career opportunities based on performance, and promoting a "culture of excellence" including accountability to peers (p. E-14); (5) ensuring that schools have "high-performing" leaders, with a "relentless" focus on "improving student outcomes" (p. E-17); (6) increasing state, district and school leaders' decision-making power in terms of day-to-day operations and interventions; (7) leveraging ICT to "scale up quality learning" (p. E-19); (8) strengthening educational leadership capacity at Ministry level; (9) strengthening school partnerships with parents, communities and private sector stakeholders; (10) reporting on investment returns "for every [educational] initiative" (p. E-22); and (11) increasing transparency and public accountability for educational expenditure and decision-making.

The *Blueprint* reveals an intertwining of material, religious, social and economic imperatives, that are in places, apparently in tension. It acknowledges a potential tension between nation-building and 'globalising' imperatives; concerns with fostering "an unshakeable sense of national identity" (Ministry of Education, 2012, p. E-13) sit alongside concerns with fostering Malaysia's global competitiveness and school leavers' capacity as global citizens. The *Blueprint* articulates a need to address social and economic inequality, while linking educational investment to 'school performance' and 'educational outcomes' rather than economic need. It espouses the need for parent and community partnerships, but Malay, and to a lesser extent, English, remain the two dominant languages from an instructional perspective. The *Blueprint* highlights a need to reduce teachers' administrative workload so that they can focus on "the core business of teaching and learning" (p. 5-10), but stresses the use of student outcomes reporting systems and ranking information as a means for judging student, teacher and school performance (see p. 4-21). We turn now to the New Zealand context.

Education policy for the New Zealand schools sector

The *Statement of Intent* (Ministry of Education, 2013) and *NZC* front pages (Ministry of Education, 2007) together articulate a vision for New Zealand schools that is both similar to and different from the *Blueprint's* vision for Malaysian education. The *Statement of Intent* is a similarly aspirational document that envisages education as central to the future of the nation. Like the *Blueprint*, it articulates intertwined educational, economic, and social imperatives, and stresses the need to ensure maximum returns for government investment. The *Statement of Intent* promises the development of a system where "children and young people" are "at the centre" (p. 6), and where the system's performance is improved for "priority students" who have been "traditionally under-served" (p. 8). It articulates four "education system outcomes": "education provision of increasing quality and value to all", "every student achieving education success", education being "a major contributor to economic prosperity and growth", and "investment in education is providing higher returns" (p. 12). The *Statement of Intent* does not reveal the 'nation-building' or 'moral' discourses of the *Blueprint*, although values language is applied to education

to a greater extent in the front pages of the *NZC*, which articulates a vision of students as "lifelong learners" and "international citizens" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 8). In the *NZC*, citizenship is envisaged not in terms of patriotism or national identity (Ministry of Education, 2012), but in terms of students' capacity to understand New Zealand's "bicultural foundations"; participate actively in New Zealand's social and economic life; and contribute to the economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 9). Like the *Blueprint*, the *NZC* stresses the importance of students learning to value diversity, seeing connections between their classroom learning and home lives, and having access to a "broad education" (p. 9). An emphasis on "community participation for the common good" (p. 10) sits alongside a dual focus on "enterprise" and "personal excellence" (p. 9).

Unlike the *Blueprint*, which positions citizenship in relation to "civic behaviour" and a sense of national unity or "Malaysian identity" (Ministry of Education, 2012, p. E-13), the *Statement of Intent* positions citizenship in terms of success. For example, its stated vision is: "A world-leading education system that equips all New Zealanders with the knowledge, skills and values to be successful citizens in the 21st-century" (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 12). It espouses two priorities: addressing existing educational inequalities and "maximising the contribution of education to the economy" (p. 12). Like the *Blueprint*, the *Statement of Intent* focuses on the need to ensure "greater quality and value" (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 8). 'Increased quality' is similarly imagined in terms of raising student achievement, particularly in numeracy and literacy; "strengthening the teacher workforce" and professional leadership (p. 16); using 'standards' and 'targets' as a basis for measuring student, teacher and school performance; and increasing (teacher, school and Ministry-level) accountability. Like the *Blueprint*, the *Statement of Intent* stresses the need to promote home-school partnerships and partnerships with other stakeholders (including the private sector). Whereas the *Blueprint* reveals the dominance of the Malay language, and to a lesser extent, English, the *Statement of Intent* reveals the dominance of English, and to a much lesser extent, Māori.

In summary, the *Blueprint* in the Malaysia context, and the *Statement of Intent* and *NZC* front pages in the New Zealand context, imagine education as central to economic gain, and stress the need for education systems that are 'globally competitive', while representing 'value for money'. Accountability discourses (for example, references to 'standards' as a means to measure both student learning and teacher performance) sit alongside concerns with fostering equity through increased educational participation and retention and a strengthened teaching profession. However, differences are also apparent. The *Blueprint* reveals a view of education as a public or national good tasked with promoting national unity and producing 'responsible citizens'. While acknowledging the role of education in promoting social wellbeing, the *Statement of Intent* and *NZC* position education primarily as a private or economic good tasked with producing successful (economically productive?) citizens. We turn now to the ways in which policy discourses were taken up, complicated and contested in our participants' mid-year questionnaire responses.

TEACHING AS POLICY WORK IN MALAYSIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Following ethical approval, we invited all 2014 primary teacher education programme graduates from a New Zealand university to participate in our project. Six New Zealand based teachers and nine Malaysia based teachers agreed to do so, completing our initial questionnaire in June-July 2014. Four additional Malaysian teachers joined the project later during the interview phase, however, since they did not complete the initial online questionnaire, their responses are not included here. At the time of the questionnaire, the teachers had been working for one to five

months, depending on when they had been 'placed' or gained jobs. They were teaching in New Zealand's North and South Islands, and Peninsular and East Malaysia.

We used an online questionnaire for the initial data collection phase as our participants were geographically dispersed and we were anxious to minimise demands on their time. Further, since some of our rural participants had limited connectivity, we knew that a one-response online open-ended questionnaire would be easier to engage with than either online face-to-face or email interviews. Our questionnaire was developed using Survey Monkey®. It used mainly open-ended questions to explore the teachers' roles within their school settings, transition experiences, access to support or mentoring, 'first day' teaching experiences, areas of enjoyment and challenge, reflections on their earlier teacher education programmes, and advice for prospective beginning teachers and former lecturers.

Braun, Ball, Macguire, et al. (2011) conceptualise teachers' contexts as including situational, professional, material and external dimensions. In some respects, the teachers' responses to the questionnaire revealed the uniqueness of their teaching locations. The New Zealand teachers were all working as general classroom teachers, and had chosen their teaching positions. The Malaysian teachers had been 'placed' by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, in most cases, with little prior warning, and were working as specialist English language teachers. Four of the six New Zealand teachers were based in suburban schools, and two, in semi-rural schools, with five of the six teachers close to family support. All of the Malaysian teachers were in rural or semi-rural settings, most, far from family, in schools where English language performance had historically been poor. Other factors that shaped the teachers' experiences included their access (or lack of access) to accommodation, transport and basic teaching resources; the availability or otherwise of mentoring support; the complexity and familiarity (or unfamiliarity) of their new role; and the school's preparedness (or otherwise) for a beginning teacher.

Striking similarities were also apparent in the teachers' responses. Most of the teachers (14) described their transition experiences as "mixed", while one described them as "difficult". In the remainder of this section we consider two sets of discourses that emerged in their questionnaire responses in ways that reflected, troubled and exceeded policy discourses in their respective locations. We have named these 'responsibility and accountability' and 'collegiality and enjoyment'.

Responsibility and accountability

Policy documents in New Zealand and Malaysia reflect a preoccupation with accountability, teacher performance, and ensuring 'value for money' (Ministry of Education, 2007, 2012, 2013). Ball (2003) describes such policy in terms of "performativity": a mode of "state regulation" that "requires individual practitioners to organise themselves as a response to targets, indicators and evaluations" (p. 215). Ball suggests that performative approaches are characteristic of "education reform…across the globe", although he acknowledges that they are enacted in "unstable, uneven" ways in specific locations (p. 215). Ball argues that performativity in education changes not only what teachers do, but also who they are.

Arguably, concerns with performance, or the enactment of teaching, are inherent in any beginning teacher's early teaching journey. For example, Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002, p. 105) describe "praxis shock" as a "teachers' confrontation with the realities and responsibilities of being a classroom teacher that puts their beliefs and ideas about teaching to the test, challenges some of them, and confirms others". Kelchtermans and Ballet describe teachers' "visibility" (p. 111), or

subjection to observation by others (including colleagues, principals and parents), as a factor that contributes to praxis shock for beginning teachers.

Performance-related anxiety was evident in our participants' reflections on their early experiences of teaching. However, for most of the teachers, anxiety and anticipation were intertwined. For example, Mike[1], a New Zealand teacher, revealed contradictory emotions when he recalled his first day of teaching:

> *The first day at school was the best and the most nerve-wracking ever. The excitement around meeting the children and being the teacher was exceptional, but the nerves [about] meeting the children that would be under my control for the rest of the year [were] huge. What would they be like, would they get on with me, would there be personality clashes?...Trying to meet the children, meet the parents, and not completely lose my cool was a juggling act.*

Mike was excited about 'being the teacher', but also, fully aware of his 'visibility' as a beginning teacher (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002). Mike associated successful teacher performance with 'controlling' the children in his class, but also with the ability to build positive, reciprocal relationships.

Elsewhere in his questionnaire responses, Mike associated success with "being on top of everything", identifying accountability requirements such as paperwork and assessment tasks, as "jobs" that teachers must do in order to succeed. He said:

> *There are times when I feel on top of everything, and that I am succeeding, and then there are days that I walk out of school feeling like I have failed. The amount of paperwork, and assessment, and other jobs that we need to do as teachers is huge.*

Here, Mike took up the performativity discourses inherent in New Zealand's policy focus on student outcomes, teacher accountability, and investment returns (Ministry of Education, 2013). He positioned the tasks associated with measuring, recording and reporting on students' learning as markers of successful teaching, and not keeping up with such tasks, as a marker of failure.

The Malaysian teachers in our study were 'visible' (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002), not only as beginning teachers, but also as graduates of an overseas university tasked with raising student performance outcomes. These teachers were acutely aware of their responsibility to meet high performance expectations. Hana, a Malaysian teacher, described her feelings during an initial encounter with staff at the school's district education office. She said:

> *Before [I] started working, I was very anxious. As I was introduced at the…State Education Office… it was nerve-wracking. The people had a high expectation of me. They kept on mentioning the [names New Zealand university] prestige. I was completely at the centre of attention.*

Hana revealed the tension inherent in being both a nervous novice charged with improving students' English language proficiency, and the product of a high level of government investment.

[1] All names used are pseudonyms.

Ball (2003, p. 216) explains that in a context marked by a performative culture:

> *…the performances (of individual subjects or organisations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality'…As such, they stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organisation within a field of judgement.*

Ball argues that struggles over what counts as "valuable, effective or satisfactory performance" are "often internalised", and expressed by teachers "in the lexicons of belief and commitment, service and even love, of mental health and emotional well-being" (p. 216). Serena, another Malaysian teacher, was in a school that had previously performed poorly in English language assessments. She echoed Hana's anxiety and sense of visibility (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002) in her description of an observation by district education office staff:

> *Just a week ago…two officers and two senior assistants came to observe me…I felt that I was thrown into the den because it wasn't my fault that I was put into this situation - I was new and the results last year that [were] so poor…it wasn't my fault to begin with…I was at the lowest and felt so depressed.*

Serena's comments revealed the personal and affective nature of performance-related struggles (Ball, 2003). Despite contesting the basis for, and fairness of, the observation, Serena took up performativity discourses in her assertion that "it wasn't my fault" (that student outcomes were poor); she linked student outcomes to 'teacher fault', implicitly holding the previous teacher accountable for poor student outcomes. At the same time, Serena grappled with the affective implications of performative measures that link a teacher's worth with "displays of 'quality'" (Ball, 2003, p. 216), describing her response to the visit in terms of depression.

The *Blueprint* positions the 'ideal citizen' as "responsible and capable of achieving high levels of personal well-being" and "able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of…the nation at large" (Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 2-2). Laila, another Malaysian teacher, took up responsibility and commitment discourses when describing her initial transition to teaching. Laila had been placed in a remote rural school far from family support, in a community where many people spoke limited Malay, and where English language learning was rarely a priority. She said:

> *I have a hard time adjusting to [the] school environment. First, I am posted far away from home, to a very different setting [than] where I came from…Secondly, my heart is not so into teaching. I am doing it because I felt responsible. Some of the days, I am so disappointed at myself and I started to feel bad about myself that I want to quit my job. Thirdly, I feel that this job is consuming me from the inside. I spend most of my time preparing for class…I don't have time to do other things.*

Ball (2003, p. 221) notes that performative technologies have an "emotional status dimension", for example, engendering "individual feelings of pride, guilt, [and] shame". In her statement above, Laila reveals a personal, affective struggle. While articulating a sense of responsibility and commitment, she also articulates a sense of isolation, disappointment with self, and constraint. As a 'good teacher', Laila cannot leave her job, despite "want[ing] to quit".

In their focus on learning outcomes, accountability measures and 'value for money', New Zealand and Malaysia education policy texts can be seen as fostering "judgemental" rather than "authentic social relations", and "'care' about performances" rather than "care for each other" (Ball, 2003, p. 224, emphasis original). However, in our study, collegiality and enjoyment emerged in the

teachers' reflections on their early teaching experiences, alongside accountability, responsibility and performance concerns. We turn to these now.

Collegiality and enjoyment

Ball (2003, p. 226) describes the performative society as fostering "cynical compliance", and as "leav[ing] no space of an autonomous or collective ethical self". However, the reflections of some teachers in our study troubled this bleak assessment, revealing their appreciation of collegial relationships despite performativity requirements. Karla, a New Zealand teacher, described senior colleagues' observation of her work in terms of supportive rather than "judgemental relations" (Ball, 2003, p. 224), saying, "I have lots of people to talk to when I need help and lots of support from everyone else". When asked what advice she would give to prospective beginning teachers, Karla drew a link between observation, support and learning, saying:

> *Ask lots of questions, observe as many teachers as you can, find your weaknesses and take the time to build on them and learn more about them, form positive relationships with all of the teachers…because you never know when you'll need their help.*

Similarly, in his advice for prospective beginning teachers, Mike emphasised the dual need to listen to and learn from more experienced colleagues, and to recognise success as more than a matter of performance outcomes. He said:

> *When you get into your school, make sure you ask questions, and make sure you listen. Be prepared to feel like you know nothing…Do not compare yourself to your fellow teachers…Do what you do best, and as long as you are developing your skills, you are succeeding.*

Here, Mike's definition of success contrasts with his earlier comment that defined success in terms of performance outcomes.

Collegial support is associated with positive experiences for beginning teachers (Flores, 2001; Flores & Day, 2006). The Malaysian teachers in our study identified supportive colleagues as a source of affective, professional and practical support in otherwise difficult teaching situations. For example, Serena, whose experience of being observed we described above, identified collegial support as mitigating the stress of being judged against performance targets. She said, "I realised how the support of my colleagues mean[s] so much to me and is crucial in keeping my work enjoyable and less stressful". Gloria, who like Laila, worked in a community where English language learning was not a priority, recalled:

> *At one point, I almost gave up on the teaching and learning because of the language barrier and [students'] learning capability. However, my colleague… encouraged me to keep trying because that is my job as a teacher. As a result, the pupils have slowly shown some significant improvement as they begin showing some interest in learning English.*

Gloria alluded to teacher responsibility, not in terms of outputs and accountability requirements, but in terms of teaching and learning. Instead of "cynical compliance" (Ball, 2003, p. 226), she revealed a commitment to promoting students' engagement and learning, based on her colleague's encouragement to see this as a teacher's professional duty.

The teachers in our study linked collegial support to enjoyment and/or their wellbeing as novice teachers. Alongside an emphasis on outputs and outcomes, teacher accountability, and the

development of responsible (Malaysia) or successful (New Zealand) citizens, the *Blueprint* and the *Statement of Intent* also refer to enjoyment (Ministry of Education, 2012, 2013). The *Statement of Intent* links enjoyment with student engagement, wellbeing and success (Ministry of Education, 2013, pp. 16, 18, 26, 39). The *Blueprint* links student enjoyment with the increased "personalisation" of students' "educational experiences" (Ministry of Education, 2012, p. E-19), and teacher enjoyment, with a "reduced administrative burden", "faster career progression" (p. E-14), "access to mentoring" (E-17), and "performance-based rewards" (p. E-23). The teachers in our study linked enjoyment with student learning, student success and teacher-student relationships. New Zealand teachers' comments included the following:

> *I enjoy seeing students achieve and it is the wee successes that are the most memorable. I enjoy the relationships that I have in the classroom and the learning conversations when students are engaged and excited about new learning. I enjoy being a part of the students' lives. (Belinda)*
>
> *[I enjoy] seeing the kids progress, making them smile, kids bringing in their parents to show them their work,…seeing the kids responding to advice in their work. (Karla)*
>
> *The students are so excited to come and learn. With younger students, the little things become such a large part of learning and I find it so refreshing. (Rachel)*

The Malaysian teachers' responses were similar:

> *What I enjoy the most about my current work is that I can do a lot of fun activities with my class…I believe that it is a win-win situation…as I enjoy doing my job and the students enjoy learning English from me. (Mei Lin)*
>
> *I enjoy when pupils show interest in English and when my methods/teaching styles work. Their improvement and appreciation for the efforts I put in helping them, make me enjoy my work and remember why I chose this profession in the first place. (Serena)*
>
> *When the kids actually understood what I taught them, I feel like I'm on cloud nine. (Laila)*

These comments foreground enjoyment in terms of the learning process as well as outcomes, and highlighted the "wee successes" (Belinda) of excitement, engagement, interest and understanding, alongside children's "progress" (Karla) in learning. They suggest that 'good teaching' and 'student success' cannot be captured solely through the use of standards, targets and performance measures.

Ballard (2004) links the language of outcomes and outputs with a market-based focus in education systems, arguing that this risks narrowing both learning and teaching and subjugating "professional knowledge" to "market demands" (p. 21). Although, in their references to collegiality and enjoyment, the teachers in our study can be seen as contesting such discourses in their respective locations, a sense of subjugation (Ballard, 2004) was also evident in their reflections. In the previous section, we highlighted the burden of feeling responsible and accountable for performance outcomes. Subjugation also appeared in some teachers' references to enjoyment in teaching. For example, Nadia, a Malaysian teacher reflected:

> *Most of the times, I enjoy teaching. I enjoy looking at the pupils who are having fun while learning English. But sometimes, I feel so drained just to plan a lesson plan, because now, I have almost 30 periods to teach each week…Every day, I struggled to just create a lesson plan for each class. Also, as I am teaching a Year 6 class, I also face a major challenge, as those pupils are going to have a major exam in September. So, I really have to drill them for their English paper.*

Nadia's references to enjoyment sit alongside references to the struggle of negotiating everyday 'accountability work', a heavy face-to-face teaching workload, and performance expectations. Nadia's comment problematises the *Blueprint*'s linking of teacher enjoyment with performance-related rewards (see Ministry of Education, 2012, p. E-23). For Nadia, enjoyment is found in fostering her students' fun and success in English language learning, and not in "hav[ing] to drill them" for a high-stakes assessment. Meeting performance outcome requirements is an instrumental rather than an educational task, positioned in opposition to both learning and enjoyment.

DISCUSSION

In this paper we have compared and considered the discourses inherent in key vision-setting policy documents that govern schools sector education in New Zealand and Malaysia: in New Zealand, the *Statement of Intent* (Ministry of Education, 2013) and *NZC* front pages (Ministry of Education, 2007, pp. 4-15), and in Malaysia, the *Blueprint* (Ministry of Education, 2012). We have highlighted both similarities and differences in these documents. Similarities include a concern with ensuring 'value for money', improving students' learning outcomes, and strengthening the teaching profession. Differences include Malaysia's concern with education as a means for fostering 'national unity' and with strengthening English language teaching and learning, and New Zealand's focus on education as a means to develop biculturally aware, successful (productive?) citizens. We also considered how the performative discourses (Ball, 2003) inherent in the policy documents both emerged and were contested in teachers' reflections on their teaching work, as they grappled with a sense of accountability and responsibility, while taking pleasure in their students' engagement with learning.

In considering the implications of our findings, we are mindful of the need to avoid reducing complex realities to simple conclusions. Policy discourses apparent in the *Blueprint*, the *Statement of Intent* and the *NZC* are complex and contradictory. Performative discourses (Ball, 2003) sit alongside equity concerns, and references to 'enjoyment' appear alongside references to outcomes, outputs and performance measures (Ministry of Education, 2007, 2012, 2013). The teachers spoke as people who were subjected to (subjugated by) policy constraints (Ball, 2003; Ballard, 2004), while simultaneously positioning learning as more than a matter of outputs and outcomes; and collegiality, relationships with students, and enjoyment as central to teaching. In some respects, the teachers' reflections reiterated common themes that emerge in other literature on beginning teachers, including the 'shock' of moving from teacher education to classroom teaching, the complexity of teachers' work, and the challenge of working to engage students. However, they also revealed the material and affective burden of carrying heavy teaching workloads, meeting performance expectations, and in some cases, working in very challenging teaching contexts. Agency and constraint were intertwined in the teachers' reflections on beginning teaching (Lather, 2006).

It would be naive (in the New Zealand case, at least) to suggest that a golden policy period existed prior to the application of performative market discourses to teaching (see Bishop, 2005).

However, we would suggest that there is value in considering what policy *does* in relation to teachers and teaching, and how teachers' reflections can reveal its contradictory, perhaps unintended consequences. For the teachers in our study, performative discourses and expectations appeared to be at odds with enjoyment, engagement and learning, in that they engendered anxiety and a sense of pressure, and limited teachers' capacity to teach in creative, fun ways. Collegiality emerged as a mitigating factor that supported teachers' capacity to keep teaching and teach well. In the Malaysian context, we wonder about the logic of the *Blueprint's* focus on enjoyment in relation to performance-related rewards that risk pitting staff against each other in small school environments (Ministry of Education, 2012). In both contexts, we worry about teachers' capacity to sustain their practice as accountability expectations increase teacher workloads, particularly, if collegial support is limited. Although our study is small in size and scope, we wonder how our participants' reflections on their transitions to teaching may have been different if they worked in policy contexts characterised by a focus on human flourishing rather than performance outputs (Walker, 2008). We suggest that policy makers in both Malaysia and New Zealand would do well to pay close attention to teachers' experiences and 'sense-making' when evaluating existing policy and considering new policy directions.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 43-50
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Intellect, dream and action: Story-telling in Steiner schools in New Zealand and the embedding of Indigenous narrative knowledge in education

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that the historic mode of expression for Indigenous knowledge has been essentially visionary and mythic, often grounded in oral traditions of great antiquity. Essentially, communication of this knowledge has had a poetic 'supernormal' character, employing imagery that can be interpreted on many levels. The danger of superficially rendering ancient cultural forms of knowledge to fit with Western 'scientific' understanding is discussed, particularly the risk of divorcing such knowledge from the original, primal, imaginative source in which it is situated. Appreciation of this is necessary if Indigenous knowledge is to be effectively and sustainably embedded in education. The paper explores the educational significance of oral story-telling as a medium through which such knowledge can be articulated but also renewed and further developed, using the concept of Te Whāriki in New Zealand Schools as a model of culturally-inclusive, narrative-rich educational practice within the New Zealand national school system. A fruitful link is drawn between the oral traditions of holistic-wisdom knowledge of Indigenous people and the creative activity of oral story-telling in schools, encouraging an integrated approach to Indigenous knowledge in education that integrates intellect with emotional and practical intelligence.

Key Words: Indigenous; narrative; orality; story-telling; intuitive thinking.

Indigenous knowledge has its roots in story-telling passed down from generation to generation. It is essentially pre-modern in its gesture, grounded in tradition and imagery, often reflecting thousands of years of adaptation by a local community to the cultural and physical environment of a specific geographic or social region. Its mode of expression is visionary and mythic; it is infused with mythology which, Joseph Campbell (1991) describes as a "poetic, supernormal image, conceived like all poetry, in depth but susceptible of interpretation on various levels". According to Campbell:

> *The shallowest minds see in it the local scenery; the deepest, the foreground of the void; and between are all the stages of the Way from the ethnic to the elementary idea, the local to the universal being (p. 472)*

Indigenous knowledge is of growing interest to academics and development institutions seeking answers to social and environmental problems that cannot be readily found in globalized, modernistic knowledge systems. There is growing recognition that traditional practices and their cultural orientation have their roots in sustainable and holistic approaches to agriculture, medicine, and the management of natural resources (Nakashima et al 2000). However, there is a danger that superficially rendering ancient cultural forms of knowledge to

fit in with Western 'scientific' understanding will inevitably divorce them from their primal, imaginative source. Continuing access to this source is all-important if we are to develop future-oriented sustainable practice in human communities. Education's ability to recognize and acknowledge the story-telling source of such ancient knowledge will be a key factor in maintaining access to this source for coming generations. For Indigenous and first-people communities, the handing on of traditional narratives is essential for cultural continuity. The role of schools in supporting and celebrating this is significant, not only for the original inhabitants of a country or region but also for non-Indigenous, immigrant communities. A primary medium for such cultural transference will be oral delivery – stories told 'live' either by a class teacher or a visiting story-teller.

Conveying traditional stories through merely reading a text is secondary to the primal deed of telling a story 'live' to an audience. In the context of transferring Indigenous knowledge across generations or to newly arrived members of a community, story-telling has a ritual, cultic significance. Many stories are viewed as sacred, divulged only to people deemed ready and appropriate to receive them: they are guarded by keepers, for they have esoteric significance and potency for both listener and teller. For the Western, modernist mind, 'stories' are most likely to be viewed as mere tales for children or thought-provoking entertainment and are unlikely to be afforded high status in the canon of high literature.

The essence of Indigenous knowledge, however, lies in its imaginative, holistic and pictorial character; for instance, it can be described as 'Indigenous narrative knowledge', a term that emphasizes what Juan Martin Flavier (1995) describes as 'information systems (that) are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems'. The idea of embedding this knowledge in education is an attractive one but any attempt to codify or formalize such systems runs the risk of destroying the very creativity inherent in the oral narrative tradition from which such knowledge originates.

N. Scott Momaday, Native American author of Kiowa descent and winner of the 1969 Pulitzer Prize, powerfully highlights the dichotomy existing between Indigenous oral tradition and the conventions of literacy introduced by white settlers in his novel *House Made of Dawn* (2000)

> *In the white man's world, language, too - and the way that the white man thinks of it - has undergone a process of change. The white man takes such things as words and literatures for granted, as indeed he must, for nothing in his world is so commonplace. On every side of him there are words by the millions, an unending succession of pamphlets and papers, letters and books, bills and bulletins, commentaries and conversations. He has diluted and multiplied the Word, and words have begun to close in on him. He is sated and insensitive; his regard for language - for the Word itself - as an instrument of creation has diminished nearly to the point of no return. It may be that he will perish by the Word (p. 89).*

By implication, Momaday's critique of Western literacy culture is a celebration of orality, reminiscent of Socrates' remarks to Phaedrus when he compares the written word with the spoken. Referring to the writing down of speeches, personifying them as if they were living children, he says:

> *…when they have been written down they are tumbled about anywhere among those who may or may not understand them, and know not to whom they should reply, to whom not: and if they are maltreated or abused, they*

> *have no parent to protect them; and they cannot protect or defend themselves (p. 60).*

For Socrates, oral communication is the "intelligent word graven in the soul of the learner, which can defend itself and knows when to speak and when to be silent". "You mean," says Phaedrus in response to this remark, "The living word of knowledge which has a soul, and of which written word is no more than an image?" (Plato, 380 B.C./2008, LIX-LX)

Rudolf Steiner (1924/1995) shares Socrates' classical reserve about the primacy of literacy. When speaking with a group of teachers about teaching writing and reading, he describes how Native Americans ran away when the early settlers first showed them printed letters because 'they thought letters were little devils'. This is just what letters are for children, says Steiner, "They mean nothing to them. The child feels something demonic in the letters and rightly so. They have already become a means of magic because they are merely signs". It is out of this reservation that a tradition of oral story-telling has become established in Steiner schools throughout the world. Starting primarily with younger classes but carrying on right into the teenage years, teachers prepare stories, folk tales, legends, myths, scenes from history and their own creations tailored to the particular needs of a class - even those of an individual child. They present these as much as possible without using notes. Steiner does not reject or devalue literacy in schools; indeed, he sets the highest expectations for pupils to master grammar and writing skills as they progress through school (Stockmeyer, 2001). He does, however, discourage teachers from teaching literacy at too early an age and urges them to work with lively imagery and sound when introducing letters (Burnett, 2007).

As story-tellers, teachers have considerable responsibility. When they enter the classroom, their personal orientation, their beliefs and values sound through every word they speak, through every gesture. This cannot be concealed and their pupils hear it. If there is vanity or ambition in their personality or their gestures convey fearful compliance with the demands of an external government agency, the children sense this, intuitively. They have highly tuned 'crap-detectors' which become increasingly active as the pupils reach their teenage years. Teachers who stand before a group of children and present a story without reading from notes, an oral narrative out of themselves, make themselves highly exposed. At the same time, they unite themselves with something primal, the force of the human word freed from the constraints of text, sensing and modulating delivery according to the response and engagement of the listeners, open to the moment of inspiration when speaker and listeners become one. Education is a moral art. The teacher has an ethical responsibility to be a 'truth-teller' (Foucault 1985), to point to the future in a way that sees the noble and beautiful in the world that inspires courage, will for the good and purpose in living. It is all too easy for story-tellers to be indulgent, to tell stories that are sensational, dramatic and overwhelming in an unhealthy way. Ancient narratives are often blood-thirsty with bizarre, disturbing imagery and the teacher-story-teller is continually called upon to select, reflect and carefully hone and shape the material they prepare so it truly meets the needs of the learning community with which they are engaged.

Since the Fifteenth Century, oral culture has been increasingly subjected to the intellectualizing imperative of modernity, linked to the universalizing influence of the printing press. Walter Ong's (1982) classic study, *Orality and Literacy; the technologizing of the word*, acknowledges that oral cultures produce "powerful and beautiful verbal performances of high artistic and human worth which are no longer even possible once writing has taken possession of the psyche" (pp. 14-15). At the same time, he notes that, "without writing, human consciousness cannot achieve its fuller potentials, cannot produce other beautiful and powerful creations" (p. 15). The written word, he argues, is "absolutely

necessary for the development not only of science but also of history, philosophy, explicative understanding of literature and of any art, and indeed for the explanation of language (including oral speech) itself".

Erich Neumann (1996) points to gradual but profound changes taking place in human consciousness through the increasingly widespread influence of the written (printed) word. With the advent of High Modernity (Giddens & Pierson, 1998) these changes have become increasingly marked. The thrust to achieve universal literacy within industrialized societies (West, 1996) wrought massive changes in the public mind-set. From the early Nineteenth Century, access by the general population to public libraries, Sunday schools and, especially newspapers, created a cultural environment where common literacy was seen as both the oil and binding force of society. "Hardly any democratic association can do without newspapers," declares Alexis de Tocqueville (1840), commenting on American society during a visit in 1835. "The power of the newspaper press must therefore increase as the social conditions of men become more equal" (p. 122).

Walter Ong (1982) traces the evolution of consciousness from primary orality through communal literacy towards reflexive self-awareness. He speaks of "explicit philosophical concern with the self, which becomes noticeable in Kant, central in Fichte, obtrusive in Kierkegaard, and pervasive in twentieth-century existentialists and personalists" (p. 174), citing Erich Kahler's classic publication, the inward turn of narrative (1973), as reporting in detail "the way in which narrative becomes more and more preoccupied with and articulate about inner, personal crises."

So, what is the future for the "powerful and beautiful verbal performances of high artistic and human worth" (Ong, 1982, pp. 14-15) implicit in Indigenous oral narrative traditions? Are they destined to whither and fall at the cold touch of today's literate intellectuality? Is there a place for the aesthetic, affective, dream-like power of the spoken word in a performativity-driven educational world where learning outcomes and achievement targets are narrowly defined and assessed? Narrative culture in Steiner schools promotes story-telling as a balancing counter-force against these requirements and does this on a day-to-day basis as part of the pedagogical art to which the teachers aspire.

The following examples of practice in Steiner primary schools in New Zealand present a picture of what can take place with a class of children through an integrated approach to oral story-telling. Children who regularly listen to stories told from memory develop an 'imaginative ear' for pictorial language; they grasp concepts embedded in images, intuitively, and maintain these associations at a deep, often sub-conscious level as emotional associations which may only come to consciousness in adulthood.

In New Zealand, teachers work with the concept of Te Whāriki, a 'woven mat of knowledge and understanding on which all members of a community can sit'. This idea, deep-seated in traditional Māori culture, has been incorporated to good effect into the New Zealand Early Years Curriculum (Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1996) but is actually a concept that can be applied to learners and teachers of all ages and cultures. Stories and oral narratives are an essential element for weaving the multiple strands of understanding necessary for creating a communicative space in which people from different ethnic and cultural background can meet and work towards common understanding and action.

The creation story of Ranganui and Papatūānuku exists as an archetypal legend within the canon of Māori Indigenous narrative knowledge. In New Zealand Steiner schools, teachers commonly introduce this story to a class of nine-year-olds at the time when their emotional faculties awaken to a new awareness of self. As their intellectual powers develop, children of

this age experience, for the first time, a degree of separation from the magical, subjective, world of infancy. This separation experience is still child-like and dreaming but also disturbing and they readily identify with the powerful image of the earth-mother wrapped in dark embrace with the sky-father whilst the children within the darkness push and strain to separate the parents. They empathize with the rebellious off-spring, Tāne-māhuta, who clothed the separated earth mother in trees, bush and ferns; Tangaroa, the moody sea-god and the wild Tāwhirimātea god of weather, thunder, lightning, rain, wind and storms who attacks his siblings as he did not agree with the rebellion. When the pupils meet this story again during their teenage years, the same narrative can be a parable of dawning adult consciousness where the subjective and objective are riven apart, where the critical intellect wakens to a technological, scientific world, struggling to reconcile this with the equally powerful world of emotional passions and powerful impulses of will.

During their time at school, a typical Steiner pupil will have met such an archetypal motif in different forms and at different ages. At age ten, they will have heard the apocalyptic Norse legend of Ragnarök where Fenris, the giant wolf, wreaks havoc amongst the gods, devouring the whole world in his fury, until, at the last, fatal moment, he is confronted by the god, Vidar, who places his heel on the lower jaw, seizes the upper and tears the dissembler in two. Studying Mesopotamian culture in their eleventh year, the children hear of the legendary battle between Tiamat, the terrifying demon who keeps the whole world in perpetual darkness and Marduk, the hero-warrior who slays her and brings light and objective vision into human consciousness. Even the homely household tales told to the youngest children speak the same narrative language: the wolf who devours Little Redcap (Colum, 1972) and her grandmother is cut open by the huntsman as is the devourer of the seven little kids. “Oh, how dark it was inside the wolf!” exclaims Little Redcap as she steps free from the dark interior.

Stories derived from ancient, long-dead cultures still have the localized power of place and the cultural environment from which they originated. Their recurrent images contain deep, archetypal knowledge that still speaks to the intuitive part of the human being. Introduced in school, they lay foundations for a later mature thinking that can draw from unconscious depths, images and motifs that aid the grasping holistic ideas. Although Einstein (Isaacson, 2008) did not attend a Steiner school, he certainly recognized the potency of story-telling in laying the foundations for later intellectual development, attributing his own remarkable conceptual powers to the story-telling culture in which he grew up. Kate Forsyth (2015) records Einstein’s remarks when asked about his method of thinking, “When I examine myself and my methods of thought,” he proclaims, “I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than any talent for abstract, positive thinking." He is quite explicit about the source of his extraordinary intellectual powers: “If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales” (para. 2).

Indigenous knowledge can be a repository for good ideas about ”local-level decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management” (Warren, 1991, p. 254) but if this knowledge become viewed merely as ‘intellectual property’ it is in danger of becoming divorced from the holistic, imaginative-intuitive way of viewing the world which is its source. Story-telling, the presentation of living ‘Indigenous narratives touched by the creative power of fantasy, generates deep level emotional response amongst its listeners. This feeling response is the foundation of action, of emotionally intelligent will.

Rudolf Steiner (1919/1996), speaking to teachers, asks the question, “What is feeling, really?” He answers the question as follows:

> *A feeling is closely related to will. Will is only feeling made active and feeling is repressed will. That part of will that we do not completely express and that remains in the soul is feeling; feeling is blunted will (p. 79)*

The concept implicit in the above remark plays a significant part in the educational praxis of Steiner teachers. They tell stories not just to elaborate intellectual ideas or to entertain: they use oral narrative to touch the feelings of the pupils, and through this, to stir the will-forces which express themselves when they are moved by the interplay of dark, light and the colour of narrative imagery. These will-forces may surface during lessons enabling the teacher and class to explore and deepen their understanding, bringing it into concrete expression. At the same time, the same feelings may remain, sleeping in the subconscious until much later in life when they emerge as inspiration and motif for focused action in the world.

A nine-year-old girl listens with bated breath as the teacher tells the story of Adam and Eve and the eating of the apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. She is totally absorbed as Eve walks determinedly towards the forbidden fruit and suddenly calls out in a loud voice, "Don't do it! Don't do it!" The teacher continues with the story right to the moment when the two miscreants are banished from Paradise, leaving them gazing back longingly back through the gates of the lost world of innocence. The next day, the story continues: the wind blows coldly in the harsh world outside; it rains and there are thorns and sharp stones under foot. They are hungry. Adam and Eve learn to build a shelter; they gather food and hunt. They have to work and suffer but do this with dignity and trust in the future. Later, the teacher introduces practical lessons where the children visit farms and construction sites, observing human beings at work in the world. They learn simple building and farming techniques, putting up a wood store for a neighbour, preparing a small patch of land for growing corn, harvesting and preparing food. They learn to weigh, measure and apply simple calculations to do with practical life. Deep feelings experienced through dynamic telling of an archetypal myth lead to action, to deeds of will which lay foundations for an holistic understanding and feeling towards the world which can mature and bear fruit many years later when they reach adulthood.

Stories can be archetypal, embedded in the dream-like fantasy landscape of pre-modern consciousness. They can also be contemporary, reflecting the everyday world in which we live and work. Although Steiner would have supported Einstein's recommendations regarding fairy tales, he encouraged teachers to move from these simple tales through myths and fables into the world of history, recognizing that, here too, we are story-tellers, narrators recalling events from many viewpoints, adapting the story to fit with our own predilections and even prejudices. When the children are twelve to thirteen, said Steiner, you should tell them about the different peoples of the world and their various characteristics which are connected with the natural phenomena of their own countries (1919/1997).

A classroom culture where oral story-telling is cultivated, particularly the sharing of ancient, traditional narratives, is one where students and teachers develop a sensitivity to spoken language, to the poetic power of metaphor, of personification and the imponderables that sound between words. The history of colonialism has many dark pages, not least the wanton destruction of sites, artefacts and traditions that were sacred to Indigenous and first-people communities. In some cases, only fragments of a once-profound spiritual culture remain but such fragments are increasingly recognized as embodying wisdom and healing insight of great value and significance for the generations to come. In the spirit of Einstein's celebration of the foundations of original thinking, children who have learnt to listen with open ears and hearts to 'live' stories are likely to be able to formulate their own imaginative and creative response to challenging situations that face them when they reach adulthood.

Here is a story from today, told by Max about his experiences managing a large building project in Papua New Guinea. There were serious problems with thieving. Despite rigorous security arrangements, thousands of dollars of building materials kept disappearing, no matter how many guards or sophisticated surveillance technology were introduced. At length, in desperation, he phoned a friend who had close connections with Indigenous tribes in the highlands. He explained his dilemma:

> *"Five grand and you cover the airfare," was the friend's response. Max agreed and, quite soon, a group of small warriors arrived on the site. From that moment, there were absolutely no problems with theft. The warriors were Kukukukus.*

Max goes on to describe a huge gathering of many tribes in the highlands of Papua New Guinea - the Mountt Hagen Show –

> *Some tribes walked for days to go to this important cultural festival. There were headdresses, plumes and all the noise and cacophony that takes place when people meet. The area where the performances took place was not fenced but had two entry posts through which everyone entered - very strange, I know. When a small group of Kukukukus arrived, draped in their bark cloaks and carrying their black palm bows and arrows, everyone close by went silent and parted to allow them passage. They were feared by everyone. (Maxwell Smith, personal communication, 2014, June 12)*

There are thousands of stories like this, tales told from all over the world by settlers and workers abroad of their encounters with Indigenous people. These are stories of the meeting of different cultures, of the tidal wash of earlier colonialism and its post-colonial consequences, often carrying a detritus of guilt and anger mixed with wonder and awe that human beings can be so different from one another whilst having so much in common. They are good stories for young people preparing to go out into the world, to work in and for a stressed planet that needs them to become responsible custodians. They are narratives of human relationships, bearing within them the seeds for mutual recognition of what different cultures can offer one another. Out of this recognition there are possibilities for new working communities to emerge, so long as the coming generations are given the opportunities to hear the narratives and reflect on the complex interpretations we can draw from them.

Over centuries, the thrust of modernism has exploited and, in some cases, exterminated much of the knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous people. The remnants of this knowledge are precious and coming generations will need to protect it and devise ways to carry it into an uncertain future. The voice of the individual teacher, self-evaluating, self-directing the oral narrative he or she presents to the children in their care, has the potential to reunite this wisdom with the intuitive source from which it stems.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp.51-62
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Teacher transculturalism and cultural difference: Addressing racism in Australian schools

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ABSTRACT

The increasing cultural diversity of students in Australia's schools is one of the salient changes in education over the last 30 years. In 2011, nearly half of all Australians had one or more parents born overseas, with migration from China, the Indian subcontinent and Africa increasing during the early 2000s (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). However, despite these long established patterns of exposure to a multicultural environment, the incidence of racism experienced by children in Australian schools remains highly problematic. Recent research has shown that around 70% of school students witness or experience some form of racism (Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan & Taouk, 2009). This paper argues that, although the reasons for this persistent marginalisation of cultural difference are multivariate, the background attitudes of teacher educators cannot be ignored. It posits that, in line with recent research (Casinader, 2014), the development and awareness of transcultural modes of thinking in educators, which are inclusive and reflective of different cultural approaches, are essential for modelling an educational environment for students in which cultural difference is accepted and prized, and not held up as a point of separation. It is also argued that such a transition will be facilitated only when the existing monocultural reality of the Australian teaching profession) is acknowledged and addressed.

Keywords: racism; Australia; transculturalism; schools; teachers

INTRODUCTION: THE BROADER CONTEXT OF RACISM IN AUSTRALIA

The increasing cultural diversity of students in Australia's schools is one of the salient changes in education over the last 30 years. In 2011, nearly half of all Australians had one or more parents born overseas, with migration from China, the Indian subcontinent and Africa increasing during the early 2000s (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). However, despite these long established patterns of increasing exposure to a multicultural environment, the incidence of racism experienced by children in Australian schools remains highly problematic. The depth of this experience has been complicated further in recent years by a shift from a form of racism based on notions of racial superiority to one founded on attitudes of anti-diversity (Habtegiorgis, Paradies, & Dunn, 2014, p. 186).

It is now acknowledged that the concept of racism is a complex phenomenon. In essence, however, it can be defined as '…a phenomenon that results in avoidable and unfair

inequalities in power, resources or opportunities across groups in society…[that]…can be expressed through beliefs, prejudices or behaviours/practices and [that] can be based on race, ethnicity, culture or religion' (Paradies et al., 2009, p. 7). It can be inflicted in a variety of forms, including insults, deliberate actions to make someone feel excluded, mistrust, disrespect and sometimes physical violence towards those from ethnic or cultural backgrounds that are different to the locational norm. It can also be either intentional or unintentional, an expression of dominance of one group over another. It is important to note, though, that racism is not necessarily confined to one ethnic group. Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan and Taouk (2009, p. 44) found that 54.6% Anglo-Saxon Australians reported being subjected to racist treatment, although this group also had the smallest percentage of members reporting such experiences in the first instance.

Nevertheless, significant differences emerge between the experiences of Anglo-Australian young people and those of their non-Anglo migrant, refugee or Indigenous peers. Young migrants who have been in Australia less than five years are six times more likely to report being exposed to racist incidents. Second or third generation migrants are four times more likely to report a racist experience than other young people, and young women from migrant backgrounds were among the worst affected. Young Indigenous Australians reported fewer racist incidents than peers from migrant backgrounds, but experienced more pervasive forms of racism in everyday life (Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan & Taouk, 2009). Migrants are often the targets of racist behaviour and attitudes. Markus (2013) has found that two-fifths of migrants who arrived in Australia in the past decade had been discriminated against because of their race. Over 40% of recent arrivals from a number of Asian countries report experiences of discrimination over the last 12 months. When asked whether Australians are "kind, caring and friendly people" recent arrivals ranked this attribute last on the list on of presented options.

However, the nature of racism is keenly defined by locationally specific contexts (Aveling, 2007, p.70; Rizvi, 1993; Gillborn, 1995). In Australia's case, the historicity of its geographical and psychological isolation from its perceived British roots created a '…heritage of belief that Australia [was] properly white nation…' (McLeod & Yates, 2003, p. 32). The legacy of the "White Australia" policy has continued to persist, albeit in more covert ways. For example, McLeod and Yates (2003) have commented on the subtle Australian trope of seeing whiteness as a form of cultural capital (p. 38), a form of advantage within both schools and the economy. As such, this evocation of whiteness as a symbol or bearer of Western civilisation (p. 38) can be seen as the originator of what might be termed the "old" form of Australian racism, which was - and to a certain extent, still is - represented by the perception of Aboriginal Australians as the "Other" by Anglo-Australians (McLeod & Yates, 2003). In contrast, whilst the evidence suggests that most Australians are in favour of tolerance and diversity, the more modern idiom of Australian racism can be characterized by an attitude of anti-diversity in respect of the cultural composition of Australia's population. In this iteration, it is "Asians" who are defined as the "Other" by Anglo-Australians, in which "Asian" is used as a collective "alien" pejorative (Rizvi, 1993) with little regard for the diversity of peoples and cultures encompassed by such a broad term (McLeod & Yates, 2003), particularly by older Anglo-Australians. Younger Australians aged 18 to 24, for example, have been found to be more accepting than the general population of aspects of multiculturalism such as inter-racial marriage, even if, some have indicated a belief that certain groups do not "fit" into Australian society (Forrest, 2009).

In an educational context, one of the more disturbing aspects of this "new racism", in contrast to the old, is its developing visibility. A recent national survey has found that in 2013, 19% of Australians were discriminated against because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religious

beliefs, an increase from 12% in 2012, and the highest level since the survey began in 2007 (Markus, 2013). Other research identifies a deep sense of racism amongst about 1 in 10 Australians (Dunn, Forrest, Babacan, Paradies & Pedersen, 2014). The increasing frequency with which social media has exposed instances of aggressive racism on public transport in the first half of 2014 further suggests that this erstwhile subliminal racism is becoming more substantive.

THE EXPERIENCE OF RACISM IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

A substantial amount of evidence exists that a majority of school students witness or experience some form of racism, with school being a key site in which such discrimination takes place (Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan & Taouk, 2009), particularly for migrants from non-English speaking countries. A recent survey of Victorian school students found that more than a third (33.2%) of students reported direct experiences of racism at school, while 22.5% experienced at least one form of direct racism every day (Priest, Ferdinand, Perry, Paradies & Kelaher, 2014, p. 6).

More broadly, a 2009 survey of 698 secondary school students across four states by Deakin University found that 70% of school students witnessed or experienced some form of racism. Overall, 67% of students nominated the classroom, school grounds, or sporting oval as the setting of their racist experiences. Within this cohort, the prevalence of being subjected to racist behaviour is highlighted among students from migrant, non-Anglo backgrounds. More than 80% of students from such circumstances reported at least one experience of racism during their school years (Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan & Taouk, 2009). Another study (Priest, Ferdinand, Perry, Paradies & Kelaher, 2014) found that young people born outside Australia are almost twice as likely to experience intolerance and discrimination as those born in Australia, with around four out of five children born in non-English speaking countries experiencing racism at least once a month. The most common form of direct racism in schools is "you don't belong in Australia", with 19.5 per cent of students reporting hearing this directed towards them at least every month. Students recounted their peers excluding them, or not wanting to play with them because of their race, with 14.1% saying they were spat on, pushed or hit (Priest, Ferdinand, Perry, Paradies & Kelaher, 2014).

In line with earlier studies such as McLeod and Yates (2003), the work of Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan and Taouk (2009) highlighted how racism emerges in the ways that young people describe other groups within school environments. Anglo-Australian students, for example, frequently speak in terms of "us" and "them". They also tend to view other groups as homogenous, describing all people from Asian countries as "Asians", without acknowledging any specific country of origin or the cultural and linguistic differences between the numerous nation-states within that geographical region. By the same token, stereotyping on racial grounds is by no means confined to young people from a particular background; some young people from non-Anglo-Saxon backgrounds, for example, describe students with lighter-coloured skin as "Aussie" or "white", effectively grouping them together as if they were also homogenous entities.

The impact of such racism on the educational prospects and progress of young people can be profound. The research shows that being racially abused affects health and wellbeing (VicHealth, 2009). It can cause tension, anxiety, anger, sadness, a sense of exclusion, fear of being attacked, loss of confidence and self-esteem, diminished sense of belonging, headaches and post-traumatic stress and, on occasion, physical harm. Young people also describe a diminished sense of belonging, whether to the local community or to the school. Racist experiences can also have a negative impact on educational engagement and achievement.

Feelings of fear with regards to school life can, for example, impact on attendance, with flow-on effects to academic engagement and achievement. There is, therefore, a strong imperative for schools to acknowledge and deal with the existence and impact of racism in their environments.

ADDRESSING RACISM: THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

Mansouri, Leach, Jenkins & Walsh rightly argue that school is '…a place where students should expect to be able to learn from teachers who are educated about racial and cultural issues…' (2009, p.100). However, it can be argued that there has been a tendency for Australian educators, and schools, to view racism more as an institutional concern rather than an individual one, a perspective that can be equally ascribed to approaches taken by research studies in the field (for example, Aveling, 2007). This has led to an emphasis and belief that the racist attitudes of individuals within the school can be addressed through institutional measures such as school-based policies and programmes, in which the role of school leaders is seen as being pivotal. A study of Western Australian schools (Aveling, 2007) commented on the problems that resulted from principals tending to be reactive rather than proactive in dealing with racist incidents (p. 82), as well as issues arising from a belief that racism was encompassed by general policies relating to student behaviour, and that therefore the issue did not require priority status. It was not '… recognized in its multiple manifestations but [was] simplistically subsumed under the rubric of "bad behaviour"…' (Aveling, 2007, p.75), suggesting a fear and reluctance to acknowledge racism as an existing phenomenon in the school environment that demanded attention.

The difficulty with this institutional emphasis as the basis for school racism is that it does not acknowledge that institutions themselves are created and operated through the values and actions of individuals, whether these be school leaders, teachers or students. The choices or policies that institutions enact are made by individuals - that is, people - whose own decisions are framed on the basis of their own values and attitudes. Change in an institutional approach to racism must therefore be predicated on shifts in the attitudes and beliefs of the individuals who comprise that institution.

This de-emphasis on the individual nature of racism in Australian schools helps to explain one of the major effects of racist behaviour on those affected, and also suggests one possibility for how racism might be addressed in the school context in the future. Aside from the physical and psychological effects, there is a matter of trust related to racism - or to be more specific, a disturbing lack of trust - between the victims of racism and those around them, even those that students might expect to be their helpers and protectors. As reported in Markus (2004), only 31% of recent arrivals indicated that "people could be trusted" in contrast to the proportion in the national survey at 45% (Markus, 2014). The Deakin University study of students mentioned above also found that young victims felt a loss of trust in the world as a whole. One boy, Robert, who was born in Montenegro stated: ' "All I know is I don't trust no-one, even if you're my closest friend, I trust my dad and my mum and my two sisters, but I don't trust no-one. Cause everyone can do the dirty on you, so I don't trust no-one." ' (Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan & Taouk, 2009, p.80)

In part, such evidence as to relationships between students and teachers helps to explain responses of the students concerned. In the Victorian survey, one in 10 students reported that they thought their teacher did not think they could do something about racism because of their cultural background (Priest, Ferdinand, Perry, Paradies & Kelaher, 2014). The study by Mansouri, Jenkins, Morgan and Taouk (2009) found that just over half of students would report racism to a teacher, while less than a third would approach their school counsellor. In

addition, teachers often inadvertently reinforce stereotypes that compound feelings of exclusion. These can occur unintentionally through classroom talk in which the cultural characteristics of student's background are highlighted in ways that are intended to be celebratory, but instead "mark" the otherness of the students concerned. Exclusion is a common form of racist behaviour by teachers, with 16 per cent of students in the study describing recurrent examples of being overlooked or ignored in the classroom. In other instances, teachers can be overtly racist towards students, treating them differently from other students either within or outside the classroom. Teachers may also be complicit in racist behaviour, such as by tolerating exhibitions of racism in the classroom by other students.

The role of teachers in mitigating racism and nurturing the benefits of cultural diversity is complex, but a pivotal one in the school environment. As Mansouri, Leach, Jenkins & Walsh (2009, p. 8) suggest, 'Schools as social sites have the potential to either perpetuate or shift cultural prejudices and barriers. To ensure that a school is an inclusive environment, practical strategies can be implemented'. Being the frontline of interaction between the institution and the student experiencing racial negativity places school staff members at the forefront of any actions that need to be taken in building the trust that students often see as being absent. However, the establishment of such a relationship depends ultimately on the approach taken by individual teachers, and, in particular, their ability to demonstrate an "openness" to cultural difference, whatever form that may take. This readiness to fully accept, and not just to be tolerant of, visible and unseen manifestations of cultural and ethnic difference, is fundamental to addressing issues of racism within schools. It is this capacity that tends to be absent in the Australian context, no matter how inadvertent it may be. Although the reasons for this unconscious marginalisation of cultural difference are multivariate, the background attitudes of teacher educators cannot be ignored. In line with recent research (Casinader, 2014), the development of transcultural dispositions of thinking within educators, and their ability to be aware of the similarities and differences between their own and those of their students, thereby enhancing their capacity to be inclusive and reflective of different cultural approaches, is essential for modelling an educational environment for students in which cultural difference is accepted and prized, and not held up as a point of separation.

The subtleties between the notions of open acceptance of cultural difference - versus tolerance of it - have been played out in the myriad and often superficial ways in which schools choose to deal with issues of racism. In many cases, but not always, such initiatives have been, and still are, based around the teaching of Languages Other Than English (LOTE), centred around such activities as using student customs of religion and diet to generate discussion (seemingly ignoring the possibility that such students may be seeking to minimize their visibility), having school welcome signs in different languages, doing "aboriginal painting" in class, celebrating NAIDOC by painting snake banners, and having international food days (Aveling, 2007; Santoro, Reid, & Kamler, 2001). However, events such as Harmony or International Days are of limited value as symbolic activities unless they are embedded in ongoing practices that develop "school culture", pedagogy and curriculum in ways that are responsive to different cultural dispositions of thinking. In addition, the "Western" models of education that are applied in Australian schools, together with their underpinning curriculum and teacher pedagogy, need to both acknowledge and respond specifically to culturally differentiated styles of learning, communication and behaviour.

School educators often focus on the external signifiers in their exploration of culture in the classroom, tending to avoid some of the key perspectives that underlie a particular conception of living, especially the thought processes and perspectives that generate the complex psychological maze of a particular cultural perspective. In spite of the existence (until recently, at least) of an official government policy of multiculturalism in Australia, the focus

in teaching about culture has remained steadfastly assimilationist in character when applied to Australian society, and unerringly simplistic when investigating a way of life in another place. How often do schools and teachers use resources and a perspective in the classroom that convey only one side of life, focusing on ‘’traditional notions of culture, without ever fully acknowledging the ways in which that life might have altered or adapted to the imperatives of the modern era? Instead, cultures are treated as static entities rather than the living organisms that they are in reality" (Said, 1993). In this "fast-food approach" to cultural awareness and multiracial acceptance, the emphasis is, anecdotally speaking, to “learn bits of their language, look at their religion and traditional clothing, try their food: that’s it, kids, we’ve done Vietnam”.

WAYS FORWARD: TRANSCULTURAL DISPOSITIONS AND SYSTEMIC CONSTRAINTS

The concept of cultural dispositions of thinking (Casinader, 2104) posits that '… people from the same culture display some consistency in their conception and/or enaction of a thinking skill…’ (p. 147). It also argues the process of globalisation is leading to a conflation of these different cultural dispositions within individuals who are more exposed to the impacts of globalisation, thereby creating the transcultural disposition of thinking, in which educators display an ’…ability to adapt and modify the conception and enaction of thinking skills to suit [a] particular cultural environment…' (p. 152). The end result of this enlarged capacity is the ability and natural tendency to be overtly inclusive of cultural (and racial) difference.

But the capacity of this approach to achieve widespread change in teaching will continue to be delimited by the broader policy environment and the signals that this environment sends about the role of schools and systems in addressing racism. The low incidence of transcultural dispositions of thinking amongst Australian teachers is not only evidenced by the superficiality of antiracism programmes referred to earlier. It can be seen both at the systemic, policy level and the way in which the notion of racism in schools has been perceived. The development of cultural dispositions in teaching has been, to a significant extent, framed and shaped at the systems level.

Systems imperatives play a powerful role in shaping the prevalent values that underpin Australian schooling and the curriculum (Walsh & Black, 2010). Aspirational policy documents such as the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, which identifies a need for ‘…Australians…to become ‘Asia literate’, engaging and building strong relationships with Asia…’ (MCEECDYA, 2008, p.4), are keystones to substantive initiatives introduced in values education. If Asia literacy is about equipping young person with capabilities, knowledge and understandings of the region (Kirby, 2009), then it is equally relevant and pertinent to develop teacher capacities for openness towards difference and the evolution of a transcultural perspective.

At a larger scale, and in another example of the current paucity of transcultural thinking, the articulation of multicultural policy in recent decades has been inconsistent in the signals it sends about cultural diversity in Australia, particularly in relationship to migration. Multiculturalism began as policy related to accommodating the cultures of first generation migrants while seeking to promote integration of second and third generations around a set of norms and civic values aligned with a loosely imagined concept of Australian citizenship (Walsh & Leach, 2007). The Whitlam government's termination of the White Australia policy in 1975 (Bradford, 2007) marked a change in thinking about cultural diversity in relation to immigration. Where White Australia policies extending back to 1901 had actively restricted "non-white" immigration to Australia, from the mid-1970s, a more nuanced

understanding of those undergoing the settlement process became evident in immigration policy. A corollary of this was greater recognition of the rights of ethnic groups to cultural maintenance within a broader spirit of cultural pluralism (Galbally, 1978 and Cox, 1996). Over the next two decades the development of multiculturalism policy was characterized by greater recognition of the benefits of cultural diversity as a significant part of contemporary Australian life (for example, see Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989). Multiculturalism developed on the basis of principles such as the right of all citizens to express their own culture and beliefs and the obligation for them to accept the right of others to do the same, and the right to equality of treatment and opportunity free from discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religion, language, location, gender or place of birth (DIC, 2009). These policy movements provided a potentially fertile ground for the development of transcultural thinking; however, recent policy shifts have arguably served to constrain possibilities for the development of this thinking at a systems level.

In recent years, references to multiculturalism in Federal Government policy have faded and arguably even been challenged as a basis of contemporary Australian society. The Howard Government's national values framework sought to articulate culturally specific notions of discipline, identity and values (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). This values agenda capitalized '…on perceived divisions in Australian society…' by employing the comparative pejoratives of terms such as "Australian", / "unAustralian", "us" and "them" (Clark, 2006, pp. 107-108). Whilst the Rudd/Gillard Government promoted a more outward looking view, particularly in relation to Australia's place within the Asian region, notions of social inclusion were fairly hollow and instrumental in nature, and the current Abbott Government has returned to the language of the Howard era, arguably in an even more strident fashion. Even though the inclusion of intercultural understandings in the General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum represents a future positive at a federal level, the guidelines are still far from inclusive of differing cultural dispositions of thinking (Casinader, 2014).

State educational policies since the mid-1990s have to some extent filled this policy vacuum by recognising and promoting the benefits of cultural diversity in school life (Walsh & Black, 2010).But in practical terms, it has largely been left to schools to address the daily challenges of racism borne out of cultural diversity. Nevertheless, the restrictions of a cultural disposition of thinking that has held fast to older Euro-centric traditions in the face of an increasingly culturally diverse Australia has diminished the scope and impact of measures that schools have put in place. In a recent study, Walton et al. (2014) identified three types of underlying cultural messages from teachers in antiracism programmes directed at creating an egalitarian atmosphere of 'shared humanity' amongst children that programmes sought "to minimize difference and focus on individual qualities and skills needed to succeed in mainstream society': a 'distributive-justice, color-blind' orientation that acknowledges 'individual racial, ethnic and cultural differences'; a 'procedural color-blind' approach that actively dismisses the relevance of these differences; and a 'colormute' orientation that focuses on removing any discussion of race and racism at all" (p. 114). Only the first of these was seen to have any effect in countering racism, and it is the openness in the acceptance of difference within this approach that shows the seeds of transcultural dispositional thinking.

This general evasion of racism, or an unwillingness to confront it directly, may be due to Anglo-Australians perceiving racism to be a more extreme act that is found only outside Australia (Aveling, 2007). There are certainly parallels to be found in the moral righteousness expressed by the current government in its demonisation of asylum seekers, who by their very non-whiteness, are easier to declare as being the "other" as they are from "over there". Perhaps unexpectedly, such tendencies also seem to be found in academic studies that are aimed at investigating and critiquing racism in education, albeit in a far more subtle form,

and however inadvertent it may be. For example, studies such as Santoro, Reid and Kamler (2001) focus clearly on the experience of Australian teachers born overseas, often working in the area of LOTE, see such examples as personifying the racism experienced by teachers in schools. The fact that there may be Australian-born teachers who are also "non-white", or from ethnic backgrounds outside the Eurocentric sphere, is rarely considered explicitly. To a degree, Santoro (2005) marks a point of difference, as the study looked at the experiences of school educators teaching students from a different cultural background to their own, but even this did not identify Australian-born teachers from non-European heritages as a specific focus.

It is this last concern that needs to be highlighted as one of the main reasons why transcultural dispositions of thinking have been slow to develop within the Australian teaching workforce. As far back as the late 1990s, writers such as Troyna and Rizvi (1997) were decrying the Anglo-whiteness of the Australian teaching profession as a barrier to the addressing of racism through education. It is telling that the last three published comprehensive studies of the characteristics of the Australian teaching profession (Dempster, Sim, Beere, & Logan, 2000; McKenzie, Kos, Walker, & Hong, 2008; McKenzie, Rowley, Weldon, & Murphy, 2011) have all emphasized the dominance of Australian-born teachers in the workforce, with the United Kingdom being the most represented as the birthplace of teachers born overseas. However, aside from comments on the severe under-representation of Indigenous Australians in the profession, no questions were asked as to the cultural and ethnic background of teachers, regardless of where they were born. This has been yet another reflection of the afore-mentioned "Western" attitude, or assumption, that such factors were unimportant in the context of Australian education, and therefore not worthy of research. Such situations reinforces the tendency towards invisibility of cultural difference in Australian schools, or, at the very least, its reliance on Eurocentric cultural stereotypes. As evidenced by the school experience of one of the authors, it was not so long ago that some schools in the Australian State of Victoria were employing a widely-accepted extension activity in which, as part of their geographical study of market users, students went to Queen Victoria Market in Melbourne and determined "ethnic background" purely by looks.

RETHINKING THE FRAME

The need to develop teaching practice that responds to different cultural dispositions of thinking becomes all the more important in light of the culturally diverse make-up of Australia's young people. Indigenous young people account for 3.6 per cent of people aged 15 to 19, and fewer than three per cent of all people aged 20 to 24. One in five young Australians were born overseas, and one in five speaks a language other than English at home (Muir et al., 2009, p. 12). And yet, Australian schooling has never properly recognized and reflected the country's rich culturally diverse make-up in its curriculum, pedagogy and assessment (Walsh & Black, 2010).

Developing and harnessing transcultural dispositions in teachers can only go so far without a whole-school philosophy that is open about the cultural composition of its students and staff, and prepared to critically engage all stakeholders in the educational process. Charters and mission statements can establish the importance of diversity in a school (Mansouri, Leach, Jenkins & Walsh, 2009, p. 7). But again, these kinds of statements are only as valuable as the ways in which diversity is dependent on the level of knowledge and understanding of culture by teachers, which is then reflected in curriculum and pedagogy. Where embedded and holistic approaches to building cultures of diversity within schools are found, with teachers playing a pivotal role, good practice provides teachers with the skills to explore, challenge

and develop informed opinions on complex issues and notions such as multiculturalism, social justice and identity. This requires teachers to have, as a corollary, a knowledge and understanding of culture alongside a critical awareness of the cultural dispositions of thinking, and, in turn, necessitates schools and systems fostering opportunities for such competencies and capacities to flourish.

Consequently, it is not surprising that the lead recommendation of one recent study argued for greater professional development for all school staff, whether teachers, school leaders or administrative. Culturally effective pedagogy and general school practice is 'open, relevant, flexible and contestable' (Mansouri, Leach, Jenkins & Walsh p. 12). It is inclusive, participatory, and responsive to student feedback on an ongoing basis. Recognition by teachers as to how different learning styles are culturally informed, and how to actively use this in classroom practice, is central to this approach. Teachers need to be encouraged to reflect on how the content taught in their classrooms is culturally conditioned to be responsive to different learning styles, and conducive to embracing and engaging the diversity inherent in Australian society (Mansouri, Leach, Jenkins & Walsh, 2009, p. 11). In schools with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) student populations, parent involvement is also important in harnessing teachers' knowledge and understanding of culture in ways that would open the possibilities for encounters with difference beyond the school gates. The educational expectations held by some CALD parents '…are sometimes based upon an entirely different educational structure and curriculum, and often a poor understanding of the Australian education system…' (Mansouri, Leach, Jenkins & Walsh, 2009, p. 9). Perhaps most importantly of all, students need to be encouraged to celebrate and maintain their own heritage and culture as a point of self-confidence in difference (Walsh and Black, 2010). For that to occur in an atmosphere of trust, transcultural critical analytical skills and literacies need be fostered amongst teachers, enabling them to not only engage with students, concepts and alternative points of view as a basis for enriching individual perspectives, but also to engage with diversity inherent in their communities and society.

But to foster this environment requires an interrogation of the background attitudes of teacher educators. They enframe possibilities for the development and awareness of transcultural modes of thinking in educators that are both inclusive and reflective of different cultural approaches. Transcultural modes of thinking are essential for modelling an educational environment for students in which cultural difference is accepted and prized, and not held up as a point of separation. In order to harness and develop such a cognitive approach, however, there must be an initial recognition within educational policy that such a cultural bias is inherent in the Australian teaching profession (Santoro, Kamler & Reid, 2001), and needs to be confronted as a systemic challenge.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Emma Rujevic for her editorial feedback.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 63-77
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Decolonizing Interpretive Research: A critical bicultural methodology for social change

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a discussion of decolonizing interpretive research in a way that gives greater salience to and understanding of the theoretical efforts of critical bicultural education researchers over the years. Grounded in educational principles that have been derived from critical social theory, a decolonizing approach to theory building, as exercised by subaltern critical researchers must also be understood as also encompassing an underlying autoethnographic qualitative dimension; in that it is inextricably rooted in the histories and "authority of lived experience" (Teaching to Transgress, hooks, 1994) of the researcher. Hence, bodies of research produced within the context of hegemonic epistemologies and traditional research priorities are analyzed, deconstructed, and reinvented, as we say in the Freirian tradition, in ways that dialectically posit decolonizing meanings to support emancipatory praxis and social change.

Keywords: decolonising interpretive research, Freirian tradition, bicultural education

INTRODUCTION

> *The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways: the point is to change it (Karl Marx, 1885)*
>
> *For us, to learn is to construct, to reconstruct, to observe with a view to changing—none of which can be done without being open to risk, to the adventure of the spirit (Paulo Freire, 1989)*

Decolonizing interpretive research is rooted in a critical approach that focuses on creating counterhegemonic intellectual spaces in which new readings of the world can unfold, in ways that lead us toward change, both in theory and practice. True to this underlying revolutionary aim, many bicultural critical qualitative researchers have drawn heavily from the tradition of critical social theory, as was founded, articulated, and evolved through the writings of Marx, Hegel, Gramsci, Lukács, the Frankfurt School, Foucault, Habermas, and others. More specific to the critical pedagogical tradition, progressive and radical educational theorists of the 20th century such as Dewey, Freire, Giroux, McLaren, Apple, Shor, hooks, Kincheloe, and others have both provided inspiration and contributed to defining this important counterhegemonic political project for schooling and society.

However, despite the tendency to speak of critical theory or critical pedagogy as unifying fields of study, the many influences on these traditions are seldom cohesive and, thus, no one view can be positioned as the universal representation or authoritarian voice of the field. Instead, the political sensibilities from which a decolonizing interpretive research has emerged is both highly diverse and resistant to a universalizing language—a language of empirical inquiry that has often

been anchored in dominant epistemologies, which have resulted in the intellectual, social, and material colonization of subaltern populations, generally deemed as other. Hence, it is important to recognize that this discussion, true to its critical pedagogical foundation, can only provide an evolving and broadly defined qualitative understanding of this critical qualitative research methodology—an approach that has generally been perceived as solely a theoretical endeavor. Herein lies an important rationale for the need to provide a discussion of a decolonizing interpretive research methodology; in that, subaltern intellectuals working to critique, redefine, and reinvent dominant theoretical approaches to social phenomenon have often effectively employed this critical approach. Accordingly, the works of critical bicultural interpretive researchers, in particular, have evolved through a critical inquiry process that brushes Western traditional notions of culture, schooling and society against non-Western epistemological traditions—traditions that are anchored and have evolved within their own lived histories of struggle.

Some of the critical bicultural pedagogical works that epitomize this decolonizing research approach include *The Education of Blacks in the South* (Anderson, 1988) *Culture and Power in the Classroom* (Darder 1991/2012), *Red Pedagogy* (Grande 2004), *Indigenous Methodologies* (Smith 1999), *Conflicts in Curriculum Theory* (Paraskeva, 2011), and *Whitecentricism and Linguoracism Exposed* (Orelus, 2013), among others. All of these writings can best be described as both critically interpretive and epistemologically bicultural in nature. Moreover, it is not incidental that all the critical theorists who have authored these bicultural texts are members of historically colonized populations. In that all of them have arrived to their scholarly research anchored to a decolonizing sensibility as bicultural human beings—that is, they have been forced to navigate across the dialectical social terrain of dominant/subordinate tensions and contradictions, as part of their process of survival, as subaltern or subordinate cultural citizens and critical scholars (Darder 1991/2012). Furthermore, the same tensions and struggles of their biculturation process have also shaped them as educators and researchers who have elected to ground their decolonizing theories of schooling upon a critical pedagogical tradition. As such, the underlying ethos of their research has been to bring about, in deliberate and meaningful ways, a fundamental epistemological shift in the production of knowledge and, by so doing, offer a more just and emancipatory vision of the world.

Toward such a decolonizing end, critical bicultural theorists have chosen to engage the dominant literature on pedagogy, curriculum, methodology, and schooling in ways that treat these writings as data to be systematically and qualitatively analyzed, based upon their own (autoethnographic) historical experiences of difference, as both historical subjects in their self-determination and bicultural critical educators in their field. Hence, to consider decolonizing interpretive research that emerges within these instances, as solely a theoretical endeavor, is to ignore and diminish the powerful decolonizing dimension of the qualitative process these theorists bring to their counterhegemonic inquiry and subsequent analysis. Therefore, a decolonizing interpretive approach may be best understood as a deeply subaltern form of qualitative research practice; one which seeks to formidably challenge and disrupt the one-dimensional Eurocentric epistemicides prevalent in traditional theories of schooling and society (Paraskeva, 2011). Thus, there is a significant qualitative dimension at work here; in that it is precisely from an "authority of lived experience" (hooks, 1994) and their deeply subaltern knowledge—generally rendered marginal and irrelevant to mainstream thought—that a decolonizing view of the world is even possible.

Central to the qualitative labor of a decolonizing interpretive approach are radical processes of social inquiry, critique, and cultural reformulation (or reinvention, as Paulo Freire would say) that strike at the very heart of dominant ideologies linked to persistent asymmetrical practices—practices that, wittingly or unwittingly, reproduce classed, racialized, gendered, sexual, abled,

religious, and other social and material formations that sustain fundamental inequalities and exclusions. This research process then entails a multitude of careful (re)readings of the world and of histories, in ways that critically and openly engage what Freire termed the oppressor/oppressed contradiction (Darder, 2015). More importantly, bicultural relationships as they emerge between the subject and object or signifier and signified must be understood as dialectically mediated within the social and material relations of capitalist production. As such, theories of schooling and society here are understood as fundamentally rooted in assimilative official transcripts of society, generally governed by the interests of the wealthy and powerful. More specifically, critical bicultural interpretive researchers labor under a set of significant philosophical and political assumptions inspired by the critical pedagogical research tradition; where all thought understood as:

> *… fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted; that facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from some form of ideological inscription; that the relationship between concept and object and between signifier and signified is never stable or fixed and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist production and consumption; that language is central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious awareness); that certain groups in any society and particular societies are privileged over others and, although the reasons for this privileging may vary widely, the oppression that characterizes contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable; that oppression has many faces and that focusing on only one at the expense of others (e.g., class oppression versus racism) often elides the interconnections among them; and, finally, that mainstream research practices are generally, although most often unwittingly, implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005).*

With all this in mind, decolonizing interpretive research, as discussed here, must be profoundly understood as not only a process of the empowerment of individuals, but more importantly as a systematic political effort to shift in both theory and practice the ways in which we comprehend ourselves and make sense of the world. As such, critical bicultural researchers who embark upon such a process are not only uncompromisingly committed to reinterpreting the world, but to the struggle for the reinvention of social and material conditions of everyday life. Inherent here is a dynamic and evolutionary understanding of knowledge as informed by the radicalization of consciousness—a revolutionary social process, anchored in history and lived experience (Darder, 2015). Moreover, there is no illusive claim of neutrality in the research design and execution of decolonizing interpretive research, in that its fundamental purpose and aim is to serve as a critical bicultural epistemological tool in the transformation of schooling and society.

PRINCIPLES THAT INFORM A CRITICAL APPROACH

> *By applying a critical pedagogical lens within research, we create an empowering qualitative research, which expands, contracts, grows, and questions itself within the theory and practice examined(Denzin & Lincoln, 2011)*

As the discussion above suggests, decolonizing interpretive research is well grounded upon critical bicultural principles of knowledge construction (Darder 1991/2012), in concert with the intellectual traditions of critical social theory as first articulated by the proponents of the Frankfurt

school; and then later reformulated by radical educational theorists as critical pedagogy.[1] It is helpful here to provide a brief overview of the principles that inform the critical epistemological underpinnings of this research approach. At the heart, critical principles counter classical positivist approaches to the study of human phenomenon. This points toward dismantling traditional Western philosophical assumptions and values of empiricism associated with legitimate forms of knowledge construction. These include research conclusions that privilege reasoning shaped by an underlying belief in the superiority of an either/or, linear, reductionist, hierarchical, concrete, object/subject or nature/human separation, and neutral, decontextualized, ahistorical, and apolitical methodologies in the ways we construct knowledge about social phenomenon.

Accordingly, a decolonizing interpretive approach to knowledge construction is often considered a meta-process of investigation, in that it involves the interrogation and disruption of currently held values, beliefs, and assumptions and from this systematic interrogation and disruption a move toward a bicultural reformulation of how the social phenomena of oppressed populations is understood. Again this bicultural research methodology is intentionally meant to challenge mainstream social structures of inequalities that perpetuate racialized, gendered, economic, sexual, and other forms of social exclusions that persist within education and the larger society. In the process, decolonizing interpretive research seeks to unveil and destabilize the existing structures of power that perpetuate the material and social oppression of the most vulnerable populations.

True to its Marxist intellectual foundation, this form of critical inquiry does not seek to simply describe or interpret the world based on traditional notions, but rather encompasses an underlying commitment to the conceptual rethinking of the norm, as a qualitative process of analysis. Major assumptions that inform this critical bicultural process of inquiry are directly linked to ten principles tied to this perspective, which are concerned with the mediation of power relations in society; the acknowledgement of the manner in which privilege and wealth impact all types of inequalities; recognizes that all ideas or truths unfold amid particular forms of ideology; and, as such, dominant research epistemologies are implicated in the persistent reproduction of social exclusions and disempowerments tied to historical and contemporary systems of human oppression.

It is worth restating that to articulate or define a critical educational theory in a definitive manner is never an easy endeavor, given that the many theorists (Freire 1971; Giroux 1981,1983; McLaren 1986; Shor, 1987; Darder, 1991; hooks, 1994; Bauman, 1995; Carlson & Apple, 1998; Kellner, 1995; Grande 2004; Kincheloe, 2008; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005; Kahn 2010) who have contributed to its development have been reticent and, rightly so, to posit what might be perceived as a simplistic recipe in our understanding of this deeply complex field of study. Nevertheless, through a careful analysis of the literature in the field, efforts have been made to assist novice educators and researchers, approaching the literature for the first time, to gain a better sense of the underlying critical principles that inform and drive its epistemological directions. It is precisely from such critical pedagogical efforts that principles for conducting a decolonizing interpretive analysis[2] and can be offered here. Hence, in brief, the critical bicultural pedagogical lens that underlies decolonizing interpretive research may include a variety of aspects that speak to the following principles. Moreover, it is these critical principles that inform the decolonizing textual analysis undertaken in the development of critical bicultural reformulations of dominant or

[1] See the historical discussion of critical pedagogy in the introduction to the *Critical Pedagogy y Reader* (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009).

[2] This discussion of the principles of critical research is based on the introduction to the *Critical Pedagogy Reader* (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009), where critical pedagogical principles are defined.

colonizing educational theories, in order to support and sustain a genuine process of social change, in both theory and practice.

Cultural Politics

All research is conducted and functions within a cultural context that is shaped by the cultural norms and acceptable boundaries of legitimate knowledge as connoted by the dominant culture. The purpose of critical research then is to function as a culturally democratizing and emancipatory epistemology that recognizes the manner in which cultural politics are implicated in the process of both domination and subordination. As such, the practice of research is understood as a political act and, thus, represents a terrain of struggle over the definition and control of knowledge and material resources. Accordingly, the role of critical researchers is understood as that of cultural workers.

Political Economy

Researchers traditionally function within the values and norms that support the political and economic interests of the powerful. With this in mind, the political economy and its impact upon the construction of knowledge is clearly acknowledged. Class relations are, thus, seen as central to understanding the manner in which educational researchers develop a sense of their purpose and see their positionality within society. Moreover, critical researchers maintain that a system of meritocracy and economic inequalities is directly linked to the production of research; and, as such, wittingly or unwittingly functions to preserve asymmetrical relations of power within institutions and the society at large.

Historicity of Knowledge

For critical researchers, all knowledge is understood as both historical and contextual, where often the reification of knowledge renders historical events or states of affairs as permanent, natural and common sense phenomenon. The immutable myths of structural conditions of inequality are best challenged through bringing the power of historicity to bear on the investigation of human phenomenon. Likewise, critical researchers understand themselves and their "subjects" as historical beings who, simultaneously, shape and are shaped by historical conditions that inform the contemporary moment. Thus, the personal histories of researchers and their "subjects" are always implicated in the research process and, because this is so, researchers begin their study of inequalities from the definitions provided by those with whom they seek to learn.

DIALECTICAL VIEW OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is understood in the critical research tradition as dynamic and reconstructive. It is never seen as absolute or purely objective, but instead always as both contextual and partial in nature. Critical research seeks to disrupt the traditional binaries and dichotomies (i.e. humans/nature; mind/body, etc.) and hierarchical notions (i.e., elitism, privilege) of the world. And so, oppositional elements function within a continuum of tensions that confront and challenge what Paulo Freire (1970) called "limit-situations", which can also open up new possibilities of interaction between human beings and the world. This speaks to an epistemology of knowledge construction where contradictory elements and tensions linked to the negation of oppositionalities must be recognized and engaged in efforts to arrive to emancipatory knowledge. More important, critical researchers contend that all knowledge is generated and constructed through the on-going historical relationship of human beings to the world.

Ideology

A critical epistemology contends that there is always a set of ideas or ideology that shape the frame or lens by which researchers study and make sense of the world. Therefore, all theories and methods of research are linked to particular cultural/class interests and relations of power. Important to note here is that ideology generally exists at the level of unexamined assumptions often considered to be "common sense" or "naturally" existing.

In direct contrast, a critical methodology claims that research is never a neutral enterprise, in that it encompasses the values, beliefs, ethics and contradictions at work in the mainstream of society

Hegemony

The construction of common-sense notions within the process of research functions effectively to naturalize or normalize particular relations of power and practices that perpetuate paternalism and deceptive notions of impartiality that shroud hegemonic interests. This is made possible in that traditional practices of research, more often than not, serve to legitimate the existing social order, irrespective of contradictions and inequalities that exist. Research practices, then, as part of an ideological machinery (i.e. culture industry) function to preserve the status quo. Such control of the social sphere is said to be hegemonic, the Gramscian sense, in that it is carried out by the unexamined moral and intellectual leadership of researchers, deemed legitimate makers of knowledge.

Critique

Critique here entails interrogation into the values and beliefs that sustain asymmetrical relations of power. Critical research serves to unveil the hidden epistemologies and logic of power at work within the structure of traditional methodologies and, thus, their research conclusions. In this light, critical research methodologies functions in the interest of deconstructing and reconstructing conditions for transformative practice and social empowerment. A deep realization that people can change their conditions through a critical process of naming their own reality, problematizing their reality, and positing new possibilities for change, is also supported by this approach.

Counter-hegemony

In the context of a critical methodology research always occurs within a contested terrain of meaning and a competition of ideas, in that power relations are always at work within institutions and society. Hence, critical research must be linked to emancipatory efforts to dismantle oppressive theories and practices, in an effort to transform existing conditions. This calls for a research process that can support the creation of intellectual and social spaces where alternative readings of the world can exist in the interest of liberatory practice and social justice. Inherent to a counterhegemonic principle of research, is the on-going development and engagement with a language of possibility.

Alliance of Theory and Practice

Critical research methodology must be fundamentally linked to the practical intent of transforming inequities. Research then must be informed by and exist in alliance with practice. The emphasis here is in on what Freire (1970) called *praxis*, where social relations are grounded in a reconstituting and self-generating process of reflection, dialogue, and action. Research then must be understood as having purpose within the context of institutions and everyday life of the most

vulnerable populations. Hence, critical research outcomes must always be linked to the real world; and as such, it must be flexible and fluid, able to shift and move according to the actual conditions that emerge within the context of human interactions. Similarly, research theory is always informed by practice, just as practice always informed by the epistemological loyalties we embrace.

Conscientization

Critical research seeks to support a purposeful and emancipatory interaction between the research and the people or the texts that are engaged in the course of study. Essential to this process is a deep concern for the development of democratic voice, participation, and solidarity within the context of institutions and larger society. Toward this end, knowledge construction of the research process is always understood as a collective process, which engages the on-going interactive process beyond subjective/objective dialectic. Through its dialectical engagement, critical research seeks to support knowing the world and self through a connected, humanizing and democratizing process. At its core, a deliberate intent to support conscientization (*Conscientizaçao*)—the development of social consciousness and an expanding sense of human interactions—is ever-present.[3] Hence, underlying the outcome of critical research is always the question of collective emancipatory action for transforming existing conditions of inequality and injustice in schools and society.

DECOLONIZING THE INTERPRETIVE

> *You who understand the dehumanization of forced removal-relocation-re-education-redefinition, the humiliation of having to falsify your own reality, your voice—you know. And often cannot say it. You try and keep on trying to unsay it, for if you don't, they will not fail to fill in the blanks on your behalf, and you will be said (Trinh Min-Ha, 2009)*

Decolonizing interpretive research engages forthrightly with the phenomenon of human oppression and its debilitating historical impact upon the identities, social location, representations, and material conditions of subaltern populations. This notion is further substantiated by Boaventura de Santos Souza (2005) and Joao Paraskeva (2011) in their discussions of *epistemicides;* which points to a process in which knowledges outside the Western purview are not only rendered invisible but either absorbed or destroyed, as is precisely the case when we speak of colonializing epistemologies. Decolonizing Interpretive Research then speaks to a form of oppositional study that undertakes a critical analysis of bodies of knowledge in any field that engage with issues related to the lives and survival of those deemed as *other*. A central concern here is the extent to which a colonizing or what Edward Said (1978) called "orientalist" gaze is implicated in the Western production of research conclusion about the other. Thus, an accompanying question is to what extent do Western political and economic interests distort the perceptions of the other, where an underlying hidden curriculum is the assimilation of the other, in order to preserve the classed, racialized, gendered, and sexual hierarchies or supremacies of Western cultural domination.

It is not surprising then to discover that "the deep underlying assumption that emerges in [traditional] studies is the physical and mental laziness of 'non-Westerners' as an immanent

3 See chapter three on "conscientizaçao" in Freire & Education (Darder, 2014).

quality that makes them unproductive."[4] Moreover, studies derived from such a deficit perspective, despite well-meaning intentions, ultimately work to undermine the social and material conditions of the oppressed, often leaving them marginalized, exploited, disempowered, and excluded from participation in decision-making about their own lives and from the benefits enjoyed freely by the wealthy and privileged. In response, decolonizing interpretive research fiercely brushes across dominant interpretations of the West in an effort to both decolonize knowledge and reinvent epistemological approaches or ways of knowing anchored in the histories, cultures, languages, and cosmologies of the oppressed. Nancy Fraser's (1990) concept of *Subaltern counterpublics* is useful here in that she speaks to the concept of "arenas where members of subordinate social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs (p. 56)."

Herein is found the counterhegemonic dimension essential to decolonizing interpretive research; for without the "formulation of oppositional interpretation" born of the deep dialectical tension between hegemonic and subaltern knowledges that must be courageously navigated by the bicultural researcher, a genuinely decolonizing formulation of the world would be impossible. Furthermore, decolonizing interpretive theorists in education draw heavily on their own historical experiences and cultural knowledge. This is in line with Frantz Fanon's insistence that as colonized subjects liberate themselves from the colonized frameworks that have constricted their consciousness, they "are all the time adding to their knowledge in the light of experience, [and] will come to show themselves capable of directing the people's struggle (p.141). As such, education, as a space for knowledge construction and socialization of students, can be discussed and analyzed as the colonizing institution for dealing with the Other—dealing with the racialized other "by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling it: in short, [Western education functions as a hegemonic apparatus] for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the [Other]" (Said, 1978:3).

The interpretive studies conducted by Anderson, Darder, Smith, Grande, and Paraskeva, and Orelus for example, whether stated to be so or not, are also well representative of a process of decolonizing the interpretive, in that all these bicultural theorists bring their histories as colonized subjects to bear on the manner in which they engage philosophically, historically, and qualitatively with the decolonizing of educational theories related to oppressed populations. I also want to note here that a decolonizing interpretive dynamic is at work in many of the writing of subaltern or bicultural researchers throughout the last century, although this phenomenon has never been specifically codified in the manner offered in this discussion. Hence, there are radical sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, anthropologists, and literary writers from racialized and oppressed communities that have employed precisely a decolonizing interpretive lens, in their efforts to extend and redefine our understanding of oppressed and disempowered populations. Again, they as member of these communities and intimately tied to the histories of oppression of which they write, offer an oppositional reformulation that is epistemologically and politically necessary to forging a transformative praxis—one linked to critical theories and practices within these fields of study. Examples of these are found in the historical writings of W.E.B. DuBois, Frantz Fanon, Angela Davis, Stuart Hall, Cornel West, Chandra Tapalde Mohanty, Homi Bhabha, Vandana Shiva, Rodolfo Torres & Victor Valle, and others to name a few.

[4] Frenkel, M. & Shenhav, Y. Decolonizing Organization Theory: between Orientalism and Occidentalism. Accessed at: http://www.mngt.waikato.ac.nz/ejrot/cmsconference/2003/proceedings/postcolonial/Frenkel.pdf

It is also worth noting that often these bicultural interpretive researchers were not necessarily aware of the work of the others, since they were emerged in different intellectual traditions and in different historical and regional contexts. Yet an underlying similarity in the oppressor-oppressed dialectic expressed in their works gives credence to the epistemological differences that emerge from constructing knowledge from a subaltern positionality. As a consequence, these authors have further opened the way for counterhegemonic interpretations that critically privilege their cultural histories and experiences as bicultural human beings to the act of reinventing educational theory. Hence, the autoethnographic episteme from whence their research emanates sits subtlety but powerfully underneath—an essential decolonizing-episteme that is absolutely central to their research conclusions. Further, had these authors not found the wherewithal, courage, and intellectual support to follow the inner calling of their primary cultural voices, the classic decolonizing interpretive treatises they produced—centered on the lives and education of formerly colonized, enslaved, and genocided populations—would have remained ever silenced within the hegemonic tyranny of the positivist research tradition.

DECOLONIZING METHODOLOGY

> *The intellectual project of decolonizing has to set out ways to proceed through a colonizing world. It needs a radical compassion that reaches out, that seeks collaboration, and that is open to possibilities that can only be imagined as other things fall into place. Decolonizing Methodologies is not a method for revolution in a political sense but provokes some revolutionary thinking about the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies and knowledge institutions play in decolonization and social transformation (Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 1999)*

Any decolonizing methodology must begin with the view that all human begins participate actively in producing meaning, irrespective of their social location. Critical bicultural researchers involved in conducting decolonizing interpretive study do not simply see their work as an academic exercise in knowledge construction, but as part of a larger imperative for liberating subaltern meaning and provoking revolutionary thought. In this sense, decolonizing researchers recognize themselves as cultural workers and, thus, their intellectual efforts are understood as deeply political projects of contestation. Therefore, they do not enter the arena as impartial and neutral observers or solely objective thinkers but, rather, as transformative intellectuals, grounded in a humanizing emancipatory political vision of inquiry. Hence, critical bicultural researchers and all those with whom they seek to (re)create knowledge must be cognizant of the histories, lived experiences, cultural realities, and economic plights of the communities they seek to serve by way of their intellectual labor—not solely as an academic or abstract scheme, but rather as an intimately experienced phenomenon.

Decolonizing interpretive methodology encompasses a critical process of study that helps to expand the limits of rationality and, by so doing, supports the development of counterhegemonic forms of thinking and reflecting upon the world, so to better grasp the impact of current social and material relations of power at work in the lives of subaltern populations. In turn, decolonizing interpretive research designs aim to demystify the artificial limits of racialized formations and economic hierarchies of domination, also viewing all languages and cultures as significant to our planetary survival. In the process, critical principles serve to support the epistemological creativity, imagination, questioning, doubting, and risk-taking so necessary to this approach. And, lastly, as inferred in the last section of this discussion, all this signals a research design that incorporates the decolonizing researcher as an unapologetically political participant, whose knowledge is

understood *a priori* as partial, unfinished, and deeply informed by the particular historical, economic, and cultural configurations of the times.

Although the critical principles briefly discussed earlier also inform a variety of other critical qualitative approaches, including critical ethnographies, critical narratives, and indigenous research modalities, the discussion here is focused on a decolonizing interpretative methodology, in that it is often the least well defined, understood or discussed in research methods courses within most educational studies programs. This may be the case, because interpretive theory building is often, overtly or covertly, discouraged in educational research and only seldom offered up as a viable alternative, particularly to graduate bicultural students in the field who are often not considered capable of such depth of analysis—whether openly acknowledged or not. Yet, it is significant to note that despite this deficit notion, all of the earlier cited examples of decolonizing interpretive research were, in fact, works that emerged directly from the doctoral dissertations of their bicultural authors.

Similarly, there are many in the field of education that openly discredit decolonizing interpretive research as purely "library work," which fails to provide a challenging research experience, produce practical or useful knowledge, or include subaltern voices. Of the first line of critique, decolonizing interpretive research is by absolutely no means a lesser alternative in research design or less rigorous.

> *Original theoretical contributions are a profound intellectual challenge….If you know an area of inquiry inside out and are intimately familiar with the issues and controversies in the field, you have the chance to contribute a new theory…If you do choose to pursue a theoretical [approach], you will be expected to argue from the literature that there is a different way of understanding a phenomenon than has heretofore been presented. Some of the more viable theoretical dissertation in the social sciences are those that bring together or integrate two previously distinct areas (Rudestam & Newton, 2007, pp.54-55).*

About concerns that a decolonizing approach is less rigorous, due to its expressed political and cultural subjectivity, there are a few things that must be understood. Rigor is the outcome of developing an intellectual capacity to engage critically and move with depth into different aspects and dimensions of an issue or problem that one is studying and to do this both systematically and creatively. However, within the context of a decolonizing interpretive analysis, critical bicultural researchers must enact these critical skills in a manner that consistently contends with the link between theory and practice and within their own labor as educators and researchers out in the world. Academic rigor within the context of a decolonizing interpretive research design must be understood then as not only a cognitive or abstract process of analysis. Rather, it also entails a deeply physical, emotional, and spiritual activity for bicultural researchers; which, when practiced consistently, allows them to become more integral human beings, through a creative epistemological process of what Freire called problematization and radicalization (Darder, 2015) — an empowering process of knowledge construction that is also deeply rooted in the researchers worldview.

On the second criticism relative to practicality or usefulness, a decolonizing interpretive design is meant to generate new insights or develop a new theory from the richness of a detailed comparison of bodies of existing literature related to both theory and practice. This is essential if critical bicultural researchers are to disrupt and deliberately shift the hegemonic understanding of a social or educational phenomenon and move beyond traditional views of schooling and society.

This inherently implies that a different practice must ensue, given the shift in the epistemological framework that both defines the problem and posits alternatives for future liberatory practice.

For example, this call for critical approaches that move beyond the deceptive quant**t**ophrenias of positivism, also speaks to the unrelenting and uncritical tendency to embrace quantification of all social phenomenon and the tyrannous discourse of evidence-based, even among many qualitative researchers. This traditional privileging of a scientific epistemology of knowledge construction, wittingly or unwittingly, disrupts our ability to delve deeper into the human meanings and conditions that result in oppression and its disastrous consequence on oppressed populations. Freire's work, along with the critical principles introduced earlier function in direct opposition to this tendency in education and the social sciences. It is for this reason the Fanon insisted, "But the native intellectual who wishes to create an authentic work…must realize that the truths of a nation are in the first place its realities. [They] must go on until [they have] found the seething pot out of which the learning of the future will emerge" (p.223). This *learning of the future* that Fanon refers to is precisely that decolonizing knowledge that can support a shift in dominant social relationships and social structures in the interest of economic and cultural democracy in the world.

And lastly, there is the often-voiced and well-meaning concern about the "absence of voices" in this research approach. Decolonizing interpretive research signals an analysis that requires inherently a formidable decolonizing process of deductive analysis—an inferential analysis that is deeply anchored upon a priori communal knowledge of the bicultural voices of those racialized communities in which they labor (Darder 2012). That is, to "*know an area of inquiry inside out and [be] intimately familiar with the issues and controversies" that exists within the communal cultural context*. Accordingly, the research conclusions, although assumed to be an individual production or unilateral voice (due to the individualistic assumptions of knowledge construction in the episteme of the West), can only be derived from the bicultural researchers' consistent and on-going critical engagement with the joint voices of fellow subaltern subjects, within education and the larger community. Hence, decolonizing interpretive research is inextricably tied to the communal subaltern voice (or the "I am because we are" voice), which sits and remains ever at the center of this auto-informed qualitative analysis. In many ways this dialectical understanding of the bicultural voice, echoes Freire's notion that the emancipatory knowledge of the researcher must emerge from an intimate understanding of "the empirical knowledge of the people" (Freire 1970/2012, p. 181).

All this, of course, entails a very grueling and precarious process, in the reformulation of existing hegemonic conceptualizations based on traditional epistemologies of the subaltern, which must be systematically deconstructed by way of critical bicultural epistemologies and cultural wisdom brought to light by the decolonizing analysis. It is from whence that the decolonizing interpretive researcher unfolds renewed emancipatory insights and new bicultural perspectives. These decolonizing perspectives, anchored to a priori knowledge of lived histories and non-western epistemologies of the world, are exercised in the contestation and reinvention of hegemonic practices within schools and subaltern communities. This also points to a dialectical understanding that one's individual voice exists dialectically in relationship to a larger communal voice. It is, however, important not to essentialize the meaning of what has just been stated, in that bicultural theorists are critical researchers who recognize that they are deeply accountable for the exercise of their individual voices. But, however, who are keenly aware that their bicultural voice is also inherently tied to the collective voices of their communities—historically subordinated by genocide, slavery, colonization, and imperialism to conserve the political and material interests of a domestic and internationalized economic apartheid.

Hence, the overarching purpose of a decolonizing methodology is to provide an

emancipatory reformulation of the conceptual or ideological interrelationships that exist between theoretical explanations and practical applications within a specific field or area of study. In light of this purpose, the development of theory (or a theory building emphasis) must be understood here as primarily an integrative process. This to say, it will either produce a new or reformulated critical framework for consideration in some aspect of human phenomenon or demonstrate the ways in which existing theoretical constructs in the field do (or do not) coincide with the critical epistemological requirements discussed here and/or in relation to other counterhegemonic theoretical perspectives (i.e. critical, feminist, queer, etc.). Important to this rearticulation is a sound decolonizing analysis and interpretation that clearly demonstrates what theoretical, structural, and practical transformations would be necessary, in the process of effectively integrating decolonizing conclusions that arise from such a study.

Some research aims might include developing an extension of a theoretical framework into areas in which it had previously not been applied, by applying the insights of a critical pedagogical perspective. Or, it might entail a research design that subsumes several separate theories into a single larger framework or that demonstrates previously unacknowledged links between theoretical systems that point to decolonizing alternatives. On another note, it may encompass the introduction of an existing decolonizing conceptual framework from another field (e.g., theology, psychology, etc.) into education, with appropriate modifications and extensions to make it meaningful within a new intellectual and practical space. And, lastly, this methodological design might engage a variety of more limited theoretical discussions related to a specific phenomenon, which in so doing provides new critical insights related to theory and practice, by integrating concepts and perspectives from several critical or decolonizing perspectives (e.g., racialization, queer studies, and disability theories).

Decolonizing interpretive studies are generally designed with a close eye toward the development of a well-crafted critical bicultural argument that follows a clear logical progression, while simultaneously pushing the boundaries of both neutral and descriptive positivist notions of traditional research. As such the study begins with a thoughtful and well-developed introduction that states the central problem and focus of the study, in ways that reflect a critical bicultural lens in the contextualization of the problem and the use of demographic data to illuminate the extent of the problem. The introduction also provides readers with a glimpse into the conceptual frameworks most closely related to the topic, with an emphasis on situating the social or educational phenomenon within both the historical and contemporary moments. This generally includes an engagement with the limitations of existing formulations, unexamined data, contradictory notions, the hidden curriculum of educational policies and practices (Apple, 2004), and other aspects that can help support the critical theoretical interrogation and decolonizing analysis that will follow.

Also important to this work is a presentation of existing bodies of literature that focus on the topic of study, which provide empirical support and point to the need for a critical bicultural approach in understanding, deconstructing, and recreating the central problem or question that drives the study. Moreover, a critical interpretive design provides a place for a detailed presentation of the new theoretical construct of analysis, which must emerge from a comparative decolonizing analysis of existing bodies of literature related to the central question, carefully substantiating the claims made through a decolonizing process of critical reinterpretation. Such a study concludes by summarizing the process of critical analysis and moving toward an emancipatory theoretical position or liberatory framework, considering the implications for educational practices and policy formulation that would be consistent with the new decolonizing approach and how it differs from the hegemonic perspective.

Hence, wherever possible, appropriate recommendations related to emancipatory pedagogy, curriculum, leadership, and/or educational policy or practices can be offered, linking these in clear

and consistent ways to the structural and practical transformations required to enact the decolonizing approach or political recommendations derived from the analysis. Moreover, this approach to research integrates a critical lens of analysis across the study, arranging discussions along the logical progression of the argument, according to the relationship of topics to this progression, rather than by chronology. That is, discussions unfold decolonizing forms of knowledge, through a critical bicultural analysis of existing bodies of literature pertinent to the topic of study and brushing these constantly against the existing emancipatory literature and the bicultural knowledge held by the author—all which help open the field to reinvention. The critical understanding that emerges here can be further demonstrated through the presentation of new curriculum, theoretical approach, knowledge practices, or political strategies that move the field into more humanizing ways of being and reading the world.

INQUIRY AS HUMAN PRAXIS

> *For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other (Paulo Freire, 1970)*

For Paulo Freire (1970), the construction of knowledge was above all a process of human praxis. Key then to this critical conceptualization of both pedagogy and human inquiry is an understanding of the imperative process as an expression of our true vocation: to be human. As such, when the communal and individual process of inquiry is stifled or squelched—as it has been for so long for many oppressed populations—the result are conditions of dehumanization that disable the social agency, voice, and political self-determination of racialized and economically impoverished communities. For Freire, coming to voice and democratic participation are undeniably linked to an evolving process of *naming of world* and cultivating the power to *denounce injustice and announce justice*. This is key to the discussion here, in that "oppressive reality absorbs those within it and thereby acts to submerge human beings' consciousness" (Freire, 1970, p. 51). In direct opposition to this, decolonizing interpretive research is meant to provide a counterhegemonic space for human inquiry that works to support a liberatory process of consciousness, as critical bicultural researchers arrive to new readings of the world.

Moreover, Freire (2000) adamantly asserted, "While the problem of humanization has always, from an axiological point of view, been humankind's central problem, it now takes on the character of an inescapable concern (Freire, 2000 p. 43). *Inescapable concern,* indeed, given the current oppressive conditions produced by neoliberalism's destructive creep internationally and the accompaniment of dehumanizing social forces that produce exclusions based on false notions of social privilege, ideologies of race, patriarchy, and other forms of social exclusions and their unrelenting push for the disaffiliation of the masses. Counterpunctal to all forms of exploitation, domination, disempowerment, false generosities, and all forms of violence against the oppressed, a decolonizing interpretive approach engages forthrightly the colonization of our humanity, in search for ways of knowing and being that can genuinely support a politics of liberation and freedom.

As a revolutionary praxis, the restoration of our humanity is privileged within decolonizing interpretive research, where the bicultural researcher engages systematically in a critical process of problem-posing (Freire, 1970), so as to reformulate new truths that are more in line with emancipatory possibilities. It is precisely though a rigorous and sustained progression of problematization that critical bicultural researchers arrive to decolonizing conclusions. These conclusions fundamentally reassert formally negated histories, cultural knowledge, and lived

experiences as legitimate and valuable dimensions of both knowledge construction and our current existence, despite our legacies of social and material subordination. Through this process, decolonizing interpretive research is fueled by a radical humanizing political commitment to uncover—through critical engagement with the oppressive structural forces that shape our lives—the knowledge necessary for the making of a culturally democratic and economically just future. By so doing, decolonizing interpretive research offers powerful renditions of new voices and bravely posits anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, and anti-racist directions for social change, through a critical bicultural praxis of human inquiry.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 78-89
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

A step on the messy path to alignment: Developing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander intercultural capability framework

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ABSTRACT

Like many other Australian universities, Curtin University identifies intercultural capabilities in its list of graduate attributes. Within this mandate, Curtin is increasingly foregrounding the need for graduates to develop Indigenous cultural capabilities. It is widely recognised that in order to develop these capabilities in graduates, educators at the interface need to embody these capabilities. Similarly, what has become increasingly clear is that it is not only educators but staff across the university that need intercultural skills and understanding in order to move towards a 'decolonised' academic environment that will truly support the development of cultural capabilities in graduates. Within the undergraduate curriculum, one of the core principles of developing cultural capabilities is that they are a journey, requiring students to engage with material through a graduated, progressive learning experience. At Curtin, the importance of mirroring this graduated learning journey for staff has been recognized, and in an effort to move from theory towards actualising staff cultural capabilities, the Indigenous Cultural Capabilities Framework' (ICCF) is currently being developed (referred to by these authors as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capabilities Framework). The Curtin University ICCF aims to map pathways that progress staff in developing cultural capabilities, as well as the measures with which the achievement of these capabilities are assessed. While programs and models to develop staff intercultural capabilities through professional development activities is not new, what appears to be unique with Curtin's ICCF is its attempt to implement a graduated professional developmental program for all levels of staff across a large university. At the conference we discussed, the somewhat messy process of developing and implementing the ICCF, and we also shared a draft of part of the framework.

Keywords: Cultural capabilities, professional development, cultural competence

BACKGROUND

It is recognized across the globe that universities must reconsider and deepen education in order to prepare students to engage with Indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems (Ma Rhea, p. 11, 2013). In Australia there is increasing expectation that universities educate graduates so they are able to work effectively with Indigenous Australians. This expectation grew initially from the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education (2008). The peak higher education body, Universities Australia then stated (2011a, p. 6) that all universities develop: "student and staff knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities and awareness of Indigenous protocols, combined with the proficiency to engage and work effectively in Indigenous contexts congruent to the expectations of Indigenous Australian peoples."

Revising and renewing curriculum to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander[1] perspectives is a major aspect to developing culturally capable graduates. Alongside this, it is widely recognised that educators need specific capabilities to effectively teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, particularly if they are non- Indigenous (Thackrah & Thompson 2013). How universities support their largely non- Indigenous Aboriginal staff, to value and keep developing these capabilities is difficult, and is largely left to individual motivation. The inspirational text, *We Can't' Teach What We Don't Know: White teachers, Multiracial Schools,* by Howard passionately explores the concept that 'transformationist teachers also know that educational equity and school reform, in large part, depend on White educators' willingness to engage in the process of our own personal and professional growth (2006, p.123). This is just as pertinent to tertiary teachers.

Students (and staff) arrive at a university with sometimes little, if any, school based knowledge about Australia's First peoples. However, even if it is within a university environment that a person first learns about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum is not simply an exercise in content transmission, but requires educators to have a suite of specialised skills that assist them to guide students safely through terrain that is often emotive, unsettling and challenging (Department of Health, 2015). The required skills include self-reflexivity, highly developed cross-cultural facilitation skills, deep appreciation of the learning journey specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, and the ability to manage student discussions within a safe space where tension, disquiet and resistance can emerge (Taylor, et al. 2015; Hershfeldt, 2009). Goerke & Kickett (2013) argue the best way for students to develop cultural capabilities is to be in a learning environment where the staff they encounter understand and model these attributes. Thus, educators need to continually work on developing their own cultural capabilities, with these capabilities observable to students in their practice.

The emphasis around effective implementation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum has recently broadened to highlight that leadership and executive commitment is critical to developing a culturally capable higher education setting, where curriculum can be effectively implemented and there is genuine development of graduate attributes (Taylor, Durey & Mulcock et al. 2014; Taylor, Kickett & Jones 2014; Universities Australia 2011). Executive leadership is crucial if management practices are to be examined and policy and strategic commitments assessed to articulate key performance indicators required to drive effective curriculum (Universities Australia, 2011a). Executive commitment is also required

[1] The preferred term 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' will be used when possible to refer to Indigenous Australians.

to ensure there is sufficient allocation of resources for associated initiatives- whether it be for professional development, as is being explored with the ICCF[2], or improving the retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students and staff. Executive commitment is also central to legitimising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in curricula and sends the message of the value of this content to students (Jones et al., 2013). The experience at Charles Sturt University with its coherent Indigenous Cultural Competency Program (Charles Sturt University2015) of implementing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in curricula, highlights the impact that can occur when curriculum strategies are aligned with organisational commitment, strong leadership at the highest level, senior level investment, and supportive strategies and initiatives (Taylor, Durey, & Bullen et al. 2014).

Development of Cultural Attributes at Curtin University

Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia has committed to developing staff and student knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The attainment of intercultural capabilities is a core graduate attribute, articulated as students being able to 'demonstrate intercultural awareness and understanding (Curtin, 2015)'. Within this attribute the importance of cultural diversity is explicitly mentioned – particularly the perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Curtin's Graduate Attributes, 2015).

In 2008, Curtin University was the first Australian teaching and research institution to implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). RAPs were launched in July 2006 by the Reconciliation Australia co-chair Professor Mick Dodson and the Prime Minister John Howard, with their purpose being to give organisations with 'good intentions' about reconciliation – often expressed in 'Reconciliation Statements', the opportunity to put these intentions into measurable outcomes. A RAP is described today by Reconciliation Australia as a 'business plan that documents what an organisation commits to do to contribute to reconciliation in Australia' (2015).

Since Curtin developed its first RAP, the momentum around enhancing the performance of the university in terms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has increased, particularly around efforts to improve the teaching and learning experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, and enhance the skills and understanding of non-Aboriginal staff and students. Underpinned by the principles of working together through partnerships, collaboration between Curtin's Centre for Aboriginal and Studies (CAS) and other key areas has strengthened, resulting in initiatives that seek to build bridges between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, knowledges and systems at the university. Building on the Universities Australia *Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency* (2011b), the recent RAP (2014) outlines Curtin's strategy for developing the cultural performance of the university across governance; management and leadership; teaching and learning; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research; human resources; and community engagement.

For some areas of Curtin, action towards the development of cultural capabilities has resulted in demonstrated commitment to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum. In 2006, the Health Sciences Faculty implemented an introductory unit on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This unit has since become a compulsory first year unit for all Health Science students. Revised and renamed, the Indigenous Cultures and Health unit (ICH) now operates as a jointly run unit between the CAS and the Health Sciences. It has received

[2] Indigenous Cultural Capabilities Framework' (ICCF) also referred to by the authors as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capabilities Framework

national recognition for its outstanding contribution to student learning through winning the *Educational Partnerships and Collaborations* Award in 2014 from the Office of Learning and Teaching.

However, implementation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum at Curtin has been asymmetrical. In 2010, as part of a university wide curriculum project, a commitment to embed Indigenous cultural competencies into all undergraduate courses was initiated (Oliver, Jones & Ferns, 2010). As part of this project, the CAS and staff leading the curriculum project developed the 'Mooditj Katitjiny (Nyungar words for 'strong knowledge'): Indigenising the Curriculum Generic Competencies Matrix'. Yet despite the commitment to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives or the fact that Universities Australia recognised the matrix as an example of best practice in its 'Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities', (2011b, p.115) - the matrix was not implemented. The integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives has been uneven, mainly because the university has not been able to align their policies and plans with their resources and strategies, and such alignment is essential for success in this area (Goerke & Kickett, 2014).

The awareness-raising that occurred through the Mooditj Katitjiny project and the ongoing monitoring and development work due to the RAPs has, however, provided a distinct focus on the capabilities of the whole university in terms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their knowledge systems. This focus is not only in teaching and learning; but across the whole organisation. Experience in implementing the ICH unit has particularly highlighted the need for convergence between the behaviours and values of the university and its staff, and the attributes that the curriculum is seeking to develop in the students. While ensuring the attitudes and practices of educators are suitable for the effective delivery of Indigenous curriculum is essential; a cascading approach from senior leadership and executive engagement right through the organisation must also occur if culturally competent teaching and learning spaces can be actualised (Universities Australia, 2011a; Ma Rhea, 2013). This requires that universities' commit to developing not only student, but:

> *…staff knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities and awareness of Indigenous protocols, combined with the proficiency to engage and work effectively in Indigenous contexts congruent to the expectations of Indigenous Australian peoples (Universities Australia, 2011a, p.6).*

Senior level commitment is also important to facilitate cohesive integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum and pedagogical synergies around the learning outcomes that each school and course are endeavoring to achieve (Taylor, Durey, Mulcock et al, 2014). Clearly for this to occur, staff across all levels of the university need to understand the lived experience of Australia's First Peoples if they are to i) recognize the significance of embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content across curricula and the requirements to implement it effectively; ii) commit to changes required to enable the university system to be more suitable and effective for Indigenous staff and students; and iii) understand the potential impact of culturally capable graduates on affecting positive change on Australian society. Curtin University is committed to developing this in *all* staff, as is stated in the second RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan 2014-2017, Curtin, 2014). This includes the ICCF, presented at the 2014 ANZCIES conference and described in this paper.

THE INDIGENOUS CULTURAL CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK (ICCF)

The people

The Framework had its genesis in 2013, when Curtin's Organisational Development Unit Director, Juris Varpins, identified that while there was recognition of the need to build cultural understanding and skills in staff across the university, there was little clarity about how this would actually occur or learning outcomes that could attest to the development of these skills. Taylor et al (2014) highlighted the importance of ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum and student learning adhered to the same standards of excellence that are required in other curricula was also highlighted. Early discussions of the ICCF highlighted the same expectations of quality and excellence in any related cultural capability professional development of staff. In 2013 a small project reference group consisting of A/Prof Marion Kickett (then A/Prof Learning Design Indigenous, after being the ICH Course Coordinator), A/Prof Simon Forrest (then Director of the CAS) and A/ Prof Sue Jones (then Director, Learning Design), Ms Kate Taylor (Project Manager), Ms Veronica Goerke (Intercultural Capabilities Coordinator), Mr John Bullen (Research Assistant) and Mr Juris Varpins (Director, Organisational Development Unit), began meeting to shape what was to become a framework for Curtin activity in this area. Early discussions and reviews of the literature led to the group naming the body of work, the (ICCF).

The Words

A key factor in the naming of the framework was the decision that 'capabilities' were a more appropriate term than 'competencies' to articulate the outcomes of staff professional development. Although UA adopted the term 'cultural competence' to describe the ability for individuals to effectively engage in the cross-cultural space (Grote, 2011), the idea of someone ever being competent is misleading as it suggests there are a finite set of transferable learning outcomes (Taylor, Durey, Mulcock et al, 2014). Further, as Paul *et al.*, argue, the complexity of culture makes the idea of assessing for competencies, or measurable learning outcomes, extremely difficult and somewhat unrealistic (2012). The concept of 'capabilities' offers a more realistic approach to identifying and assessing behaviours and understanding in this space, as they involve being able to demonstrate that what one has learnt can be appropriately applied in a cultural context (Duigan 2006). Capabilities are dynamic and are constantly being tested in every new interaction (Taylor, Durey, Mulcock et al, 2014) highlighting the critical understanding that cultural skills, understanding and knowledges are a lifelong process of learning and engagement.

Similarly, the dynamism of language meant that by 2014, the project reference group were often using the term 'intercultural' to replace the original word 'cultural' as not only is 'intercultural' the word used in the relevant Curtin Graduate Attribute, it is also a more accurate concept when discussing capabilities in this area. 'Intercultural' describes 'what occurs when members of two or more different cultural groups (of whatever size, at whatever level) interact or influence one another in some fashion, whether in person or through various mediated forms (UNESCO, 2013 p. 11).' However, when the project reference group first named the framework, this was not explicit and thus, the ICCF, keeps the word 'cultural'.

The 'other' influential project

In 2013 adjunct to the ICCF, a second project commenced at Curtin, commissioned originally by Health Workforce Australia (HWA) and later, the Commonwealth Health Department. Emerging from recommendations outlined in an earlier HWA report, this project aimed to develop a framework for the implementation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curricula across health professional programs in the Australian tertiary sector. This project

involved considerable national consultation through a series of workshops, as well as mechanisms for ongoing input and feedback from stakeholders around the country. The project team also undertook in depth literature reviews and case studies, to examine the various aspects required to develop a successful framework in this field. Learnings from this project were instrumental to the development of the ICCF, notably premising 'capabilities' to describe a process of lifelong learning; the importance of the learning process; and the organisational and educator capabilities required to drive effective implementation (Taylor, Kickett & Jones, 2014).

Recent history prior to ANZCIES Conference 2014

The ICCF project was further developed in 2014 within *Curtin Teaching and Learning* by Ms Goerke with support from A/Prof Jones. Staff from across the university, including the Pro-Vice Chancellors and Deans, Teaching and Learning in each faculty, the Manager of Recruitment and the Dean of Teaching and Learning at the largest offshore campus, Sarawak, were invited to respond and contribute to draft frameworks and advise how such professional development could work for their staff. Input, advice and feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at the CAS also continues to be a core element to the developmental process, particularly CAS staff noted they did not want the Framework to be superficial or 'tokenistic'; and they asked that themes such as understanding diversity, demystifying myths, challenging racism, and challenging leaders to support Indigenous activities, be included.

The ICCF presented at the ANZCIES Conference 2014, was unanimously approved in December 2014 for implementation by the University leadership team who oversee Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education matters: the 'Curtin Indigenous Policy Committee'. The framework articulates pathways for Curtin staff to develop their knowledge and understanding in the historical and contemporary perspectives, experiences and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The ICCF identifies professional development activities and initiatives across three levels i) beginner (see Figure One below); ii) developer and iii) leadership, with staff encouraged to undertake training across the three levels depending on their professional role and associated responsibilities. By participating in professional development activities associated with different stages of the framework, staff will have the opportunity to build their conceptual and practical skills and understanding of how both historical, and more recent events, have influenced the higher education environment in which they work and equip them to challenge instances of institutional racism they may not have noticed before doing professional development in this space.

Figure 1: Level 1 of the Indigenous Cultural Capability Framework (ICCF)

Capabilities Level	**Broad Learning Outcomes**	**Specific Outcomes** *(Minimum requirements)* ***New-to-Curtin staff, by the end of their second year of employment can:***	**Examples of Behaviours and Assessable Skills**	**Professional Development** *(Minimum requirements)*
Beginner Level 1	**Curiosity**	1. Demonstrate their knowledge and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their histories and current stories.	Give an 'Acknowledgment of Country'	1. Attend Staff Induction activity (already a policy requirement)

Capabilities Level	**Broad Learning Outcomes**	**Specific Outcomes** *(Minimum requirements)* ***New-to-Curtin staff, by the end of their second year of employment can:***	**Examples of Behaviours and Assessable Skills**	**Professional Development** *(Minimum requirements)*
	Awareness	2. Show their respect for different experiences and knowledge systems, including their awareness of the complexities of working in cross-cultural contexts.	Successfully complete quiz	2. Complete brief online quiz covering basic information about intercultural capabilities and facts about the local First Peoples
	Respect	3. Display awareness and sensitivity of their own heritage and show they value differences in others.	Explain the heritage and cultural protocols of the local Australian Aboriginal language group/s; especially in relation to the University	3. Participate in *Ways of Working with Aboriginal people* (WOW)-Part 1 or WOW-Part 2 (depending on staff member's prior knowledge/experience)

The ICCF is also considered a space for reconciliation at Curtin. While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander must be at the fore of all conversations and decisions in regards to Indigenous direction at the university, it is also recognised the work in this area must be done in partnership with non-Indigenous staff and students. As an example, staff have already had several opportunities to take part in 'Developer' Level 2 Professional Development which involves learning 'on country' close to where the main campus is situated (see Figure 2). Curtin University Bentley is on Wadjuck Nyungar Boodjar (land), and the Elder in Residence, Associate Professor Simon Forrest, has taken staff groups out to the Derbal Yerrigan (Swan River). A/Prof Forrest and other senior Curtin Indigenous staff have taken staff to several significant sites, and the types of learning activities on these trips are continually being refined to help achieve the specific learning outcomes at the three levels of the ICCF. (While only Level 1 was presented at the conference because of the limited time, Level 2 is also mentioned in this follow-up paper to indicate the intention of progression in the capability levels. Level 3 is about leadership and is not covered here).

Figure 2: Table showing Level 2 of the Indigenous Cultural Capability Framework (ICCF)

Capabilities Level	**Broad Learning Outcomes**	**Specific Outcomes** *(Minimum requirements)* ***Curtin staff, especially those who are embedding Australian Indigenous knowledge into a course of study, can:***	**Examples of Behaviours and Assessable Skills**	**Professional Development** *(Minimum requirements)*

Developer Level 2	**Reflexivity**	1. Demonstrate they are culturally responsive by following appropriate protocols for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Produce course learning material with relevant learning outcomes to develop Indigenous cultural capabilities	1. Participate in an On-Country activity Version 1
	Responsiveness	2. Design learning experiences that provide opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their histories and their current situations.	Complete a self-reflection exercise	2. Attend WOW-Part 2 or 3
	Integration	3. Recognise and discuss their own cultural assumptions, values and beliefs and how this may impact others.	Give examples where they have listened to, valued and acknowledged the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's heritage.	3. Other activity: Staff to choose activities from those offered at Curtin or externally. These activities will have been approved by the ICCF Reference Group.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Commitment to Resources

A professional development (PD) program of this size clearly requires considerable resource investment and commitment, and resourcing remains one of the most significant challenges facing sustained implementation of the ICCF. Rather than being a one off PD experience, the ICCF seeks to embed tiered staff learning, aiming to offer training experiences that seek to continue to develop staff along a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander space. This naturally involves investment in staff trainers and program development as well as allocating staff time to attend different PD training. Highly skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous trainers are also required. Given the large and tiered approach of the ICCF, central coordination and a monitoring of staff participation in required programs is also required. Curtin has more than 4000 staff (Curtin University, 2015), so logistically this is an enormous initiative. To date, the intentions of Curtin to embed the ICCF have been positive with several groups of staff participating in Level 1 and trialling level 2 activities. However, into the future, there is a need for ongoing and significant investment to bring sustainable realities. In a higher education climate of considerable resource shortages, Curtin may need to explore working collaboratively across faculties and disciplines to pool funding in order to contribute to sustainable support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership

It is absolutely essential that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people be at the forefront of the implementation of anything to do with Indigenous knowledges (Behrendt, et al., 2012).

Curtin's Indigenous Governance Policy states that all matters related to Indigenous Australians must be approved by the CAS and thus the Director of the CAS will need to remain in the ICCF Reference Group. The Aboriginal Advisory Board will also be consulted when further shaping and implementing the framework. Though staff in Malaysia have been consulted in developing the framework, the process as to how Curtin non-Bentley (Western Australia) staff, and those working exclusively with students who are not Australian, will include equivalent activities relevant to the First Peoples of wherever they are situated, needs further consideration by the ICCF Reference . At Curtin, the partnerships between the CAS and the University are based around the deep commitment to Indigenous knowledges being driven by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices. However, this does exist in a paradox; Curtin is also a fast-moving, contemporary, bureaucratic education institution, and the ICCF (and other related initiatives) are routinely faced with the challenges of taking time to develop and maintain genuine and trusting relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples. Yet these elements are absolutely critical for anything related to the ICCF to become real.

Indigenous and/or Intercultural

As one of Australia's most diverse international student body universities, Curtin has a strong emphasis on multicultural needs of students and staff, and of integrating related learning experiences throughout the curriculum. Currently, some of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategic initiatives are housed within multicultural, equity and diversity portfolios. Application of the term 'intercultural' can also create challenges, as while in this context it describes the enormous diversity between and within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cultures, it is a term that is also applied in the multicultural context. Yet while Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander capabilities and competencies within the university are recognized in key documents (such as the RAP), the distinction of these capabilities as being different to broader intercultural capabilities, is not evident in the current university five year strategic plan, or even as one the Graduate Attributes (though it does form part of the explanation for one of these attributes). In developing a framework for implementing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in Social Work programs, Bessarab et al (2012) cautioned against the conflation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content into the broader category of cross-cultural practice. As Fred Chaney AO also stated, that though it may be our 'in our hearts and instincts [to be] assimilationist (Chaney, 2014)', unless the Aboriginal people indicate otherwise, we need to make the distinction. At an institutional level, it is imperative that allusion to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is made explicitly distinct from multicultural at the highest level, to ensure this perspective is suitably recognized and resourced for its unique and crucial contribution to the teaching and learning environment, and to its position in Australia. Further, while there is considerable will and passion across the university for traction for both the Framework and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and causes to be developed more broadly, this is not yet a unanimous sentiment and there remain pockets of resistance within the university.

CONCLUSION

The higher education sector does not yet have a national standard for developing or measuring cultural competencies or capabilities in students and staff (Grote, 2011). Thus, the ICCF also faces challenges in developing suitable measures of achievement that align with those being defined for students- and are also realistic in the context of the staff experience. We know of the challenges in assessment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum to avoid an approach that uses 'tick box' markers that essentialize or homogenize the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experience, rather than reflecting its complexity

(Hollinsworth, 2013). Attributes related to cultural competency are poorly and rarely measured (Flavell et al., 2013; Oliver, 2010). The task of assessing the cultural capacity of students via measurable, definable and categorical indicators remains complex and underdeveloped (Universities Australia, 2011a). We are therefore cautioned that we need a monitoring and evaluation plan alongside the Framework, to ensure there is continuous quality improvement, and to be able to examine whether the program is effectively creating changes in the teaching and learning experience and transforming staff.

Like many other universities, concerns of an overcrowded curriculum, staffing pressures and competing demands and priorities; resourcing limitations; the complexities of teaching and learning in this field, and covert or even overt resistance or racism are some of the challenges that face the progress of the ICCF. However, these need not be roadblocks. Curtin University continues to work towards integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the undergraduate curriculum. As they do this, the RAP is a major vehicle to support the ICCF which in turn will steer the alignment necessary needed for this curriculum to succeed.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 90-100
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Unthinking the 200-year-old Colonial Mind: Indigenist perspectives on leading and managing Indigenous education[1]

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ABSTRACT

Two hundred years ago in 1814 in Australia, Governor Lachlan Macquarie developed a 15 point plan for the provision of education services to Indigenous children. Using the tools of policy ethnography, this paper will examine the administration of Indigenous Education from the establishment of the first Native Institution in NSW in 1814 up to the present policy of 'Closing the Gap'.

Education systems in pluricultural, postcolonial democracies worldwide are grappling with the incommensurability of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People with the colonial legacies embedded within education systems. Comparative analysis of education policies up to the present find striking similarities of colonial thinking embedded in policy formulation, aspects such as infantilization of Indigenous people, the unwillingness of administrators to share power and collaborate equally in the education of Indigenous children, and lack of willingness to bureaucratise the provision of education services for Indigenous children into the mainstream efforts of governments, with key individuals instead holding onto the legacy of executive powers enshrined this work from early colonial times.

This paper argues for the need to develop an Indigenist, rights-based approach to the leadership and management of education of Indigenous children and to the education of non-Indigenous children about Indigenous matters, proper cross-cultural training for bureaucrats, proactive support for schools to bring Indigenous people into the governance structures of schools, substantial commitment of funds to teacher professional development in Indigenous matters.

Keywords: colonization, Indigenist, Australia, education, postcolonial

[1] For a full version of the arguments and research touched on in this extended conference paper paper, please refer to Ma Rhea, Z. (2015). *Leading and Managing Indigenous Education in the Postcolonial World*. London, UK: Routledge.

INTRODUCTION

> *It is not only those who have been minoritized or deprivileged who can speak about oppression. Those in positions of power and privilege also have an obligation to speak about these issues. (Sefa Dei 1999)*

What are the problems facing education systems with respect to addressing the rights of Indigenous peoples? At its foundation, what is understood as the formal or mainstream education system was commonly exported from imperial centres to their colonies in order to establish an educated class of colonial administrators. Indigenous and other local communities were rarely considered in the early days of the establishment of these systems in colonies such as the Malay Peninsula, the Americas, Papua New Guinea, Canada, New Zealand, India, or Australia. This paper argues that the development of education in colonial Australia had both similar and distinct characteristics to systems implanted in other parts of the British Empire and as such provides a working example of the general case to be made about the colonial mindset that established the system of education for Indigenous peoples globally.

Many previous colonies have become independent nation states in the ensuing years and have begun the process of nationalizing their education systems, developing local adaptations more suited to the emerging needs of a postcolonial state within a highly globalized world. The enormity of the task looms large and the problems appear myriad. There is an overarching valuing of Western industrial scientific and technical knowledge over human lifeways knowledge that is so very deeply embedded in the modern education system that once one is given responsibility by the state for the leadership and management of Indigenous education one needs to unthink one's previous approach (Ma Rhea & Teasdale 2000).

While beyond the limits of this short paper, the following argument draws on a range of theorists across the academic fields of educational leadership, educational administration, strategic change management, and Indigenous education internationally to examine the key problematic of systemically embedded, and arguably racially determined, failure. Reflecting on the evidence over the past 200 years, this paper aims to add strength to the argument for an Indigenist, rights approach to nation state provision of education to Indigenous peoples that includes recognition of the human rights of Indigenous peoples as fundamental, and specifically their distinctive economic, linguistic and cultural rights within complex, globalized, postcolonial education systems (Rigney 1999).

Postcolonial theorists commonly point to the enduring and complex nature of the task of decolonizing society. Ashcroft, Griffin and Tiffin (1998) employed Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome metaphor and postcolonial theorists of education such as Kaomea (2005: 35), builds on Ashcroft et al. (1998) and their use of the Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) notion of the rhizome arguing that:

> *For colonized peoples, the rhizomic nature of imperialism is especially difficult to combat because of the intermittent, overlapping, and intertwining nature of its operation. A rhizome may be broken or shattered at a given spot, but will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).*

Consequently, seemingly viable anti-colonialist and decolonizing movements are sometimes less than successful in combating colonialist and neo-colonialist legacies whose practices inherit the rhizomic operations of imperialism. It is therefore unsurprising that school decision makers face

a difficult task in rethinking their engagement with Indigenous people. They are members of a society that resists decolonization.

The capacity of schools to disrupt or maintain societal expectations about Indigenous education is centrally in the hands of principals and teachers (Kitchen et al. 2013; Price 2012; Sarra 2011; Thaman 2013). While it is recognised that there are many factors outside the school that influence what the child brings to their education experience, it is understood that the biggest 'in school' influencer is the teacher. It is the contention of this paper that unless teachers and other school leaders are aware of the colonial mindset that influences their thinking, that they will unwittingly reinscribe the contemporary school experience with tropes of education that are painfully familiar to generations of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island people.

The task of examining a decree such as the one discussed below, is that it has a powerful fractal impact into the future. To explicate its rhizomic nature and its colonial attributes, I draw on the established tools of ethnography and apply them to policies (Agar, 1996; Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). I have called this methodological approach 'policy ethnography' (Ma Rhea, 2011; see also, Hammersley & Atkinson, Chapter 6) to examine this 15 point plan, to look at the life and impact of this document rather than to maintain the colonially-permissible research gaze on the Indigenous people and their communities as the focus of analysis. In this way, the rights-based methodological approach I take examines how iterations and echoes of this policy have been enacted, and the ongoing legacy of its presence ethnographically in the minds and behaviours of education administrators of Indigenous affairs.

200 YEARS AGO…ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIVE INSTITUTION, 10 DECEMBER 1814

The groundwork for the colonial mindset was established 200 years ago and there is convincing evidence of the enduring rhizomic nature of its legacy on current provision of education services to Indigenous Australian people. In late 1814, the fifth Governor of NSW, Major General Lachlan Macquarie, issued a fifteen-point plan about improving the lives of Aboriginal people, saying:

> *With a View, therefore, to effect the Civilization of the Aborigines of New South Wales, and to render their Habits more domesticated and industrious, His Excellency the Governor, as well from Motives of Humanity as of that Policy which affords a reasonable Hope of producing such an improvement in their Condition as may eventually contribute to render them not only more happy in themselves, but also in some Degree useful to the Community, has determined to institute a School for the Education of the Native Children of both Sexes, and to assign a Portion land for the Occupancy and Cultivation of adult Natives, under such Rules and Regulations as appear to him likely to answer the desired Objects ; and which are now published for general Information.*

In pronouncing this plan, no mention of discussion with Aboriginal people is evident. There is an inherent, and enduring, assumption that Indigenous education will be conducted under Executive Order. The full version contains 15 points (see Appendix for full list), containing ideas and assumptions that would still be argued to be relevant today by those persuaded by the colonial mindset (Macquarie 1814). Those of particular relevance to this paper are:

- *First, That there shall be a School for the Aborigines of New South Wales, Established in the Town of Parramatta of which His Excellency the Governor is to be Patron, and Mrs. MacQuarie, Patroness.*
- *Secondly, That there shall be a Committee, consisting of several Gentlemen, for conducting and directing the Institution:--One of the Committee to act as Treasurer and Secretary.*
- *Fourthly, That the main Object of the Institution shall be the Civilization of the Aborigines of both Sexes.*
- *Eighthly; That the Children of both Sexes shall be instructed in common, in Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic; That the Boys shall also be instructed in Agriculture, Mechanical Arts, and such common Manufactures as may best suit their Ages, and respective Dispositions ; That the Girls shall also be taught Needlework : For all which Purposes, Instructors, properly qualified, will be employed.*
- *Eleventhly, That the Committee shall meet Quarterly … for the Purpose of … examining the Pupils as to their Progress in Civilization, Education, and Morals…*
- *Fourteenthly, That no Child, after having been admitted into the Institution, shall be permitted to leave it, or to be taken away by any Person whatever (whether Parents or other Relatives, until such Time as the Boys shall have attained the Age of sixteen Years, and the Girls Fifteen Years; at which Ages they shall be respectively discharged.*

By Command of His Excellency
The Governor,'
J. T. Campbell, Secretary GOVERNMENT and GENERAL ORDERS.
Government House, Sydney, Saturday, 10th December, 1814.

Of note, civilization was the explicit goal (Point 4); keeping children away from their families was another (Point 14), the oversight of the Institution by a committee of Gentlemen (Point 2) and that Indigenous students were coerced into a type of schooling that has not changed very much in 200 years (Points 8, 11, and 14). Arguably, all are present in contemporary national and regional policy making with respect to the education of Indigenous children in Australia.

This first Native Institution with its 'experimentation' was deemed a failure and, by 1838, the ninth Governor Sir George Gipps was again bringing together a number of reports on 'the Aborigine question' and appointing protectors. The responsibilities of the Colonial Secretaries were extensive. L. Fletcher (1994: 7) observes that:

> *The philosophy and outlook of these agents of culture was partly a product of their education and training. Until after mid-century, initial appointments went largely to men of good social background and a university education. It was a time when knowledge of the classics and of the ancient foundations of western civilisation were seen as the sine qua non of the administrator.*

J. Fletcher (1989) contended that by 1850s there was nothing that had not previously been tried by the State and by the churches in relation to Indigenous education. Unfortunately, my research

agrees with Fletcher's analysis, suggesting that despite a number of important attempts to the contrary, the 'colonial mind' has been tenacious. Despite a high water mark in policy making in Australia in 1989 with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (cited in MCEETYA 2000), the general policymaking effort has been directed to the same goals as were initially established by the colonial administrative class under Macquarie. The ongoing focus of Australia's Indigenous Education policy efforts towards improving reading, writing, and mathematics maintains echoes of Point 11.

THE COLONIAL MIND: A CONCEPT

The concept of the 'official mind' is a useful theoretical construct by which to examine the history of educational administration in Australia. Heinlein (2002: 7) usefully defines the 'official mind' as the sum of ideas, perceptions, and intentions of those policy-makers who had a bearing on imperial policies. He designates 'policy-maker' to those politicians and civil servants who were responsible for or had a bearing on the development and execution of imperial policy. As Liska (1978: 73) wryly observes of the development of empire, 'The career of empire starts with the learning process of expansion, is prolonged by the dreary task of management, and ends in the climactic agony of dissolution'. This captures the development of the systems of educational administration of Indigenous Education aptly. Like the above, Robinson et al. (1963: 11) observed that in India, 'The white rulers became increasingly absorbed with the mechanics of administration and sought to solve their problems less in social and more in narrow administrative terms'. Recognition of the colonial mindset is not new. The Coombs Report (Australian Government 1976: 340) identified that:

> *Some members of staff have become tired and disillusioned by the strain and disappointments of this exacting work; some lack any real commitment to its purposes or to contemporary policies based upon changed objectives. There is therefore a need both for the recruitment (for short terms if necessary) of those with a firm desire to work in this field, and for a positive program of counselling and placement in other work of those who are or have become unsuited to it. Secondment for a period of years could prove a useful device.*

O'Donoghue (1997: 6) highlights the problem for the non-indigenous administrator working within the Indigenous service provision domain. She observes that:

> *For the public administrator, Indigenous affairs has presented unique problems and challenges that were no doubt unforeseen or underestimated when the national effort to raise Indigenous living standards began. Indigenous affairs has had to operate across cultural barriers; it has had to defend itself in the face of waning public support and extraordinary scrutiny. More than any other area of government activity, it has had to contend with the charge of failure.*

Folds (2001) writes about the often conflict-ridden interface between managers and Indigenous communities in remote locations failing in their work. He (2001: 3) begins by explaining that:

> *What was best for the Pintupi seemed so obvious to me that I failed to ask them about their own aspirations. I mistook their apparent acquiescence to my blueprint as agreement, not realising that my eager plans were listened to without demur because I seemed to be just another zealot, there for the short term, assailing them with his own particular brand of salvation…*

His thoughtful book explores his coming to understanding about 'a competent indigenous society, still resilient at the periphery, while at the centre the dominant society self-confidently regards its policies as critical to the physical and emotional well-being of a disintegrating culture' (p.3). He concludes his analysis by saying that'…it is only through acknowledgement of the collision of values at the interface that the achievements of both sides of the relationship will ever been seen or appreciated' (p.181).

Mahood (2012) examines 'White workers on Australia's cultural frontier'. It is a sharp and though provoking indictment on how policies are not working and how Indigenous people speak about non-indigenous people who work in their communities. She reflects on the lack of preparedness that most non-indigenous people have when they become involved in the provision of services to Indigenous communities (2012: 1) noting that:

> *It is mandatory for anyone wishing to work in Antarctica to undergo a physical and psychological assessment to establish whether they will stand up to the stresses of isolation, the extreme environment, and the intense proximity to other people. All the same factors exist in remote Aboriginal communities, along with confronting cross-cultural conditions. Yet there don't appear to be any recognised training programs for people who aspire to work in a community, or screening criteria to weed out the mad, bad and incompetent who prowl the grey zone of Indigenous service delivery.*

TOWARDS AN INDIGENIST PERSPECTIVE

The idea contained in the term Indigenist is the support for Indigenous rights and perspectives without implying that the supporter is Indigenous. The term is most often used in reference to non-indigenous settlers in postcolonial nations who are actively supportive of Indigenous lifeways (see, for example, Rigney 1999; Wilson 2007). The activities of Indigenist settler groups include anti-racist work with non-indigenous people, offering cultural awareness workshops in workplaces, running community education campaigns such as Reconciliation groups, and working within organisations that are controlled by non-indigenous settlers to effect changes that acknowledge and respect Indigenous peoples rights, histories, cultures, and languages.

As there is no agreed use of the term, with most literature either focussed on the views of Indigenous people, hence the use of the descriptor 'Indigenous', or drawing on descriptors such as 'anti-racist' or 'Whiteness' to describe the engagement of non-indigenous people in the work of shifting unequal power relations, the motivation and goals of Indigenist settlers could be understood as various. Of importance to this discussion, in the same way that not all women are feminist, not all Indigenous people are Indigenist in their worldview. There are increasing numbers of Indigenous administrators around the world who are implementing colonially framed policies for Indigenous populations. The term Indigenist implies a commitment to a pro-Indigenous worldview.

Six Elements of an Indigenist Perspective

In asking administrators to shift from a colonial, deficit to an Indigenist, rights-based mindset, this last part of my paper will explore some of the following possibilities that such an administrator would have:

- Empathy for Indigenous matters revolving around acceptance that Indigenous and non-indigenous people are equal and should thus be treated equally, that is, Indigenous people

should have the access to and outcomes from education as non-indigenous people do
- A passionate and profound commitment that has changed every corner of their lives, containing a radical questioning of the traditional, colonial, civil service administrative mindset, of the ways in which these privilege settler ways of being and knowing
- An understanding that Indigenous people suffer inequalities and injustices in society, while non-indigenous settlers, particularly those in the administrative and governing classes receive various forms of power and privilege, and
- A recognition that the current, dominant model of education fails to recognise the rights of Indigenous Peoples and is therefore oppressive to Indigenous children, as well as being limiting for non-indigenous settlers.

Arguably, the Indigenist, non-indigenous administrator would understand that non-indigenous administrators in control of Indigenous education must take responsibility for their own behaviours and attitudes and work to change those of non-indigenous people in the education system in general, and that both personal and social change are vital (Sarra 2011). In this short paper, it is acknowledged that just as there is substantial diversity and disagreement within other social movements such as feminism, there is also diversity among settlers and Indigenous people that have adopted an Indigenist perspective in their work.

CONCLUSION

All these authors point to the need for a new class of administrators who can work effectively in the complex interface of negotiated meaning that is undertaken in every part of the process of providing public services to Indigenous people and in doing so working to co-create an Indigenist future for education in postcolonial nations such as Australia. For this to occur, I argue here that it is necessary for Australia to reset its relationship between Indigenous people and the Australian government, to begin to operationalize in policy making its endorsement of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and to unthink its 200-year-old colonial mindset first laid down by Macquarie in his 15 point plan. This short paper proposes that administrators of government, both Indigenous and non-indigenous, require a new sort of professional development that enables them to rethink their practices from an Indigenist standpoint, in consideration of their ongoing professional responsibilities in the provision of education services to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander populations in a postcolonial, democratic Australia.

APPENDIX

Major General Lachlan Macquarie's fifteen-point plan (Macquarie 1814):

- *First, That there shall be a School for the Aborigines of New South Wales, Established in the Town of Parramatta of which His Excellency the Governor is to be Patron, and Mrs. MacQuarie, Patroness.*
- *Secondly, That there shall be a Committee, consisting of several Gentlemen, for conducting and directing the Institution:--One of the Committee to act as Treasurer and Secretary.*
- *Thirdly, That the Institution shall be placed under the immediate Management and Care of Mr William Shelly, as Superintendant and Principal Instructor.*
- *Fourthly, That the main Object of the Institution shall be the Civilization of the Aborigines of both Sexes.*

- *Fifthly, That the Expences of the Institution shall be defrayed for the first two Years by Government, in such Manner as the Governor may deem expedient; but with a View to extend the Benefits of it after that Period, that Subscriptions shall be solicited and received from public Societies and private Individuals.*
- *Sixthly; That this Institution shall be an Asylum for the Native Children of both Sexes; but no Child shall be admitted under four, or exceeding seven Years of Age.*
- *Seventhly, That the Number of Children to be admitted in the first Instance, shall not exceed Six Boys and six Girls; which Numbers shall be afterwards increased, according to Circumstances.*
- *Eighthly; That the Children of both Sexes shall be instructed in common, in Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic; That the Boys shall also be instructed in Agriculture, Mechanical Arts, and such common Manufactures as may best suit their Ages, and respective Dispositions ; That the Girls shall also be taught Needlework: For all which Purposes, Instructors, properly qualified, will be employed.*
- *Ninthly, That the Manager or Superintendant shall have the immediate Care of the Children, the Purchase of Provisions, and of the Materials for employing them, together with the Disposal of the Articles manufactured by the Children.*
- *Tenthly, That a Portion of Land shall be located for the Use of adult Natives, who shall be invited and encouraged to cultivate it; and that such Assistance shall be rendered them for that Purpose by Government, as may be deemed expedient : That the Management and Superintendance thereof shall be also vested in Mr. Shelly; and under his immediate Inspection, subject to such Directions as he shall receive from the Committee.*
- *Eleventhly, That the Committee shall meet Quarterly at the Town of Parramatta, on the first Wednesday in each succeeding Quarter, for the Purpose of inspecting and auditing the Quarterly Accounts of the Manager ; and also of examining the Pupils as to their Progress in Civilization, Education, and Morals; and how far the necessary Attention has been paid to their Diet, Health and Cleanliness-That the Committee (which shall at no Time consist of less than five Members) shall have Power to take Cognizance of and correct any existing Abuses, and frame such additional Regulations as may appear neccesary for the Improvement and Benefit of the Institution.*
- *Twelfthly, That the Committee shall make a written Report of the Result of their Observations and Enquiries, at their Quarterly Meeting to His Excellency the Governor, as Patron of the Institution; and also of such Rules and Regulations as they may diem necessary to frame for the Benefit of the Institution ; which must receive the Sanction of the Governor, previous to their being carried into Effect.*

- *Thirteenthly, That the proposed institution shall be opened for the Reception of the prescribed Number of Children, on Wednesday the 18th Day of January next, being the auspicious Anniversary of the Birth of our Most Gracious QUEEN.*
- *Fourteenthly, That no Child, after having been admitted into the Institution, shall be permitted to leave it, or to be taken away by any Person whatever (whether Parents or other Relatives, until such Time as the Boys shall have attained the Age of sixteen Years, and the Girls Fifteen Years; at which Ages they shall be respectively discharged.*
- *Fifteenthly, The undermentioned Gentlemen having expressed their Willingness to forward and promote the Objects of the proposed Institution, His EXCELLENCY is pleased to constitute and appoint them (with their own Concurrence) to be the Committee for Conducting and Directing.*

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 100-112
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Choice as a global language in local practice: A mixed model of school choice in Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

This paper uses school choice policy as an example to demonstrate how local actors adopt, mediate, translate, and reformulate "choice" as neo-liberal rhetoric informing education reform. Complex processes exist between global policy about school choice and the local practice of school choice.

Based on the theoretical sensibility of global-local framing, this paper discusses how a neo-liberal discourse of education reform came about in Taiwan and in particular how the Fundamental Education Act of 1999 introduced choice. The Act incorporated choice as global rhetoric into existing school practice, resulting in a hybrid school-choice model which mixes a civil rights model and a market model. This study compares two junior high schools to illustrate how this hybrid model of school choice plays out in the complex realities of actual schools and discusses the effects of such a hybrid school-choice model on broader Taiwanese public education. This paper concludes that the school choice practices of parents, compounded with the neo-liberal rhetoric of education reform in Taiwan, is rapidly exacerbating the great disparity between public junior high schools.

Keywords: school choice, parental involvement, globalization, local, hybridization

INTRODUCTION

Many countries, including Australia, England, and the United States, have used neo-liberal ideas to restructure so-called unresponsive and inefficient public school systems. Neo-liberal policy initiatives are reshaping educational systems in complex and varied ways globally and locally (Arnove, 2003; Burbules and Torres, 2000; Popkewitz, 2000, 2003; Rizvi, 2004). As adopted in Taiwan, these same ideas have produced different meanings. Although Taiwan's neo-liberal ideas of education reform derive from the United States and Australia, local entities have reformulated these policies and reinserted them into local contexts to meet particular interests and personal needs. Education reform efforts must deal not only with global concerns, such as global competitiveness and efficiency, but also with local educational problems, such as educational democratization and education fanaticism in Taiwan (Ho, 2009).

There are always multiple logics behind the local adoption and adaption of global discourses of education reform and restructuring. To explore these logics, in this study I use school choice as an example of how the state and reformers have integrated a neo-liberal sense of education reform policies into the public school system and how the local participants (including parents) have transformed the choice policy into a hybrid model of civil rights participation and market competition. I also discuss the effect of this hybrid model on local schools by comparing two

extreme cases of junior high schools in terms of the reasons and strategies behind parental choice and modes of parental involvement.

In the first section of this paper I discuss a theoretical framework that informs global and local framing of education reform policy. In the second section I briefly introduce the Taiwanese school catchment system and a loophole within it that, exploited by parents for many years, has thus become part of the system. In the third section I present an ethnographic study of two junior high schools in terms of parental choice and involvement. In the fourth section I formulate a hybrid school-choice model and discuss its broader impact on the Taiwanese education system.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AS A GLOBAL AND LOCAL MIXTURE

"Choice" is one of the key slogans of education reform in many countries. The assumption is that "centralization and bureaucratization are substantially at odds with the effective organization of schools and the successful provision of education" (Chubb and Moe, 1990, p. 142). This assumption brings decentralization, deregulation, and choice into the discourse of education reform. Choice and quality frameworks increasingly embed or subsume equity concerns. By re-embedding issues of quality and equity within choice and accountability frameworks, neo-liberal thinking about education reform is not only popular, but also very seductive for many governments across the globe. As many theorists point out, there is a global convergence of education restructuring in which global ideas of reform are usually internalized within a national debate, so that when a society adopts the international language of reform (such as market, choice, and deregulation), it serves not only as a functional strategy of reform, but also as a local discourse partially projecting particular national interests and political ideologies (Ozga and Lingard, 2007; Ozga et al., 2006; Popkewitz, 2000, 2003).

Popkewitz (2000) mentions that any discourse of education reform is a hybrid that appropriates global discourses into national concerns. He points out that when a nation deploys a global discourse of reform to reformulate its national education system, reform ideas tend to be adopted without considering their history in terms of time and place. They travel across national boundaries in the form of universal principles, but are also reformulated into transmogrified forms that meet particular national and local interests.

Taiwan is a case in point. During the period from 1987 through the 1990s, deregulation and liberalization as the leading discourses of the education reform movement were strongly intertwined with the national idea of democratization (Mao, 1997; Xue, 1996). They resonated with Taiwan's social leanings toward democratization, which involved a range of initiatives to increase local autonomy and strengthen civil society relative to authoritarian state control. Thus, the reformulation of global ideas of neo-liberalism for education reform in the Taiwanese context has not necessarily been the same as the corresponding formulations discursively constructed in the United States or England (e.g., Apple, 2000; Whitty, 1997). There was a process of hybridization already underway when the global idea of neo-liberalism for education reform was adopted in Taiwan during the 1990s. The discourses of these reform efforts were not only tied to the ideas of national democratization and social justice, but also heavily relied on borrowing strategies from neo-liberal ideas of education restructuring, such as choice (Mao and Chang, 2005; Ho, 2009). Combining the global and local levels of policy borrowing and hybridization, in this paper I take two junior high schools in Taiwan as examples of what happens as these neo-liberal reform policies travel down to the local level and are refracted through a local system that has already developed its own local practice of school choice. In the following section I introduce Taiwanese school culture and school choice practices, and how, since the 1990s, they have been

reshaped by the neo-liberal education policies formulated in response to Taiwan's education reform movement.

School choice in the catchment area system

In the Taiwanese education system, elementary school education and lower-level secondary education are compulsory and free for children between the ages of 6 and 15. Recent statistics show that 97.6% of elementary and junior high schools are public, with only a very small number of private schools (2.4%) (Ministry of Education, 2014). The public elementary and junior high school a student attends is determined by a system of catchment areas based on the geographic distribution of public schools, so as to ensure that students can attend nearby schools in accordance with the rules laid out in the Constitution. This school system aspires to provide equal educational opportunities by providing equal funding for all schools. Such a public education system reflects the assumption that each public school provides the same quality of education. However, a primary concern of parents is that their children pass the competitive entrance examination for prestigious high schools. There is a gap between providing equal quality of public education and the personal desire for upward social mobility. As many Western studies point out, where you live can significantly affect the quality of your children's educational experience (Elmore, 1986; Wells & Crain, 1992). However, for some parents in Taiwan, this quality is more an issue of which schools your child attends than an issue of where you live. Therefore, parents tend to believe that only "superstar schools"[1] can properly prepare their children for passing the entrance exams to prestigious high schools. As a result, if no such "superstar school" is located within a given catchment area, many parents simply change the family's official address without actually moving their residence. Parents devote much time and energy to deciding which school to enrol their children in and where to live, which creates problems for popular schools because applications far exceed available places. Such situations are much worse in densely populated areas than in less densely populated regions (Lin, 2000; Chang, 2000).

The Taiwanese educational reform movement since the 1990s

While parents continuously update and share their knowledge of school choice strategies in their catchment area, Taiwanese society and the Taiwanese education system have also been undergoing rapid changes. In the 1990s the democratic movement argued for deregulation in education by transferring decision-making powers from central control to public control (Mao, 1997). Parents' right to exercise greater choice over their children's education embodied the democratic ideal and individual civil rights. Promoting parental choice and parental involvement justified the push to make schooling more diverse and more responsive to the needs of parents. It was claimed that parental choice and involvement could serve not only to correct an overly authoritarian style of schooling, but also to improve the quality of education (Yang & Lin, 1994; 410 Education Restructuring League, 1996). The call for education reform in the 1990s reflected the social trend of democratization and efficiency that involved a range of initiatives to increase local autonomy and the transfer of state control to local management.

In the aforementioned social and political context, the discourses of parental choice, parental involvement, and education rights finally became a part of the Fundamental Education Act, approved by legislators in the national assembly and announced in 1999. The Act clearly includes provisions which increase parents' ability to choose which schools their children attend, promote private sector involvement in establishing schools, and allow for the "publically funded-privately run" model in the public school system. The Act also provides a legal basis by which parents are

eligible to participate in the decision-making processes underlying the formation and execution of school policies and have the right of educational choice in terms of selecting schools, educational content, and instruction methods.

Although choosing a school outside the family's catchment area is not uncommon, and although the Fundamental Education Act legally ensures parents' right to choose their children's education, what are the compounding effects of such a reform policy on local school practice? Who will benefit from such a new hybrid policy? How will parents exercise their right to choose, and how will they involve themselves in school affairs? The problematic of these questions comes from the theoretical sensibility in which choice as the global idea of reform, rather than following a direct route, circulates and is then incorporated into existing local practices. Next, I introduce two schools as examples of parental choice, participation, and involvement in daily school life at the current conjuncture of global-local policy circulation and local appropriation of reform policy.

METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

In this section I compare two schools (School A and School B) in terms of parents' strategies of choice and modes of involvement. School A and School B are junior high schools located in the greater Taipei area.

School A is located in a prosperous area of Taipei City. The socio-economic status of the students' parents is, on average, higher than that of School B. Many of School A's parents work at big corporations and a hospital nearby. Because a consistently high percentage of its students attend top-end high schools, School A is widely recognized as one of the most popular superstar schools in Taipei.

School B is located in one of Taipei's satellite cities, nearby the intersection of two major highways and quite close to a soon-to-be-established line of the MRT (Metropolitan Rapid Transit). Because of its convenient location and flexible transportation options, new housing projects started appearing in this area twenty years ago, attracting many new families and young couples who could not afford the prohibitively expensive real estate in Taipei City. School B serves both old and new communities, and features a racially and ethnically diverse student body. Most of its students are graduates of the three elementary schools in its catchment area. These three elementary schools respectively represent the three different kinds of communities in the region: traditional, aboriginal, and new. The traditional community comprises families who have lived there for many generations working in occupations related to agriculture. This area also attracts many aboriginals from the east coast of Taiwan who migrate to the city looking for work. The third community comprises residents who have arrived in the area in the last decade, whose ethnic and racial background tends to be Han-Chinese, and who tend to hold white-collar jobs.

The following two tables present the basic information about these two schools.

TABLE 1. Basic Information about School A and School B for 2009

Item	School A	School B
Space	27,421 m^2	34,248 m^2
Average space per student	10.07 m^2	28.05 m^2
Number of classes	72	39
Number of students	2,724	1,221
Number of teachers	171	84
Student-teacher ratio (national average is 15:1)	15.93	14.54

TABLE 2. High school admission of graduates of School A and School B for 2009

Item	School A	School B
Total number of graduates	925	508
Number of graduates who gained admission to a public high school	648 (70%)	91 (18%)
Number of graduates who gained admission to one of Taipei's top three high schools	224 (24%)	10 (2%)

As Table 1 shows, the two schools differ little in terms of student-teacher ratio, owing to the equal distribution of educational resources stipulated by national education provisions. However, there is a significant difference between School A and School B regarding four matters: number of students, average space for each student, the percentage of graduates who gained admission to one of Taipei's top three high schools, and the percentage of graduates who gained admission to a public high school.

This research was conducted from September 2008 to June 2009. I paid regular visits to each school and attended various school-wide and class-level activities, especially both school-wide and class-level parent association (PA) meetings, usually held at the beginning of the spring and fall semesters. At each school I interviewed the head of the school-wide PA, the principal, the

director of academic affairs, and three homeroom teachers. With the school staff, I asked what reasons parents gave for choosing the school and how the parents participated in school affairs and the PAs. With the heads of the PAs, I asked about the duties and functions of the PAs and about school-PA relations. I processed and thematically coded the in-depth interview data to illustrate the complex realities of school choice and parental involvement at the two schools. The major themes identified are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of major themes

	School A	School B
1. Reasons behind choice of school	· School's impressive academic performance / status · Student clubs' excellent performance in national competitions · Attractive ethos (achievement orientation, highly competitive) · Experienced and devoted faculty · Near parents' place of work · Sibling-related factors	· School's appeal to parents' aspirations for improved academic performance · School's community-based appearance · New school with good facilities · Near parents' home · Spacious campus with great view
2. Modes of parental participation and involvement	· Volunteering and financial donations · Parental supervision of homework · Enjoyment of social-structure resources · Influencing the allocation of teachers in parents' favour · Taking strong initiatives to establish an afterschool program for entrance-exam preparation	· Volunteering · Little or no supervision of homework · Absence of pronounced parental participation or only limited social and cultural capital and time · Different views of and approaches to afterschool programs for entrance-exam preparation
3. Dynamic of the school's culture	· Competition among teachers · Highly regarded teachers and classes · Pride in being associated with the school's revered "brand name" · Student hardship and stress over learning	· Teachers' and parents' ambivalence over presence in school: should I stay or should I go? · Inexperienced teachers · Assigning blame to others · Viewing aboriginal community as a bad

	influence upon their students · The principal's strong and even inflexible leadership

Modes of parental participation and involvement

The Fundamental Education Act enshrines parents' right to participate in school affairs. Article 8 of the Act outlines two dimensions of this right. One is the parents' right to choose which schools their children attend, educational content, and methods of instruction. The second is their right to participate in decision-making in school policies and development. The Act requires reserving at least one-fifth of school board positions for PA members. Traditionally, teachers have a high status in Taiwanese society, and parents respect teachers and appreciate what schools do for their children. However, such an unconditional respect and appreciation has been somewhat undermined by parents' increased rights in education. The daily practices of parental involvement in Schools A and B have resulted in a transition from education as a given to education as an entitlement.

Previously, the main function of the PA was fundraising for the school, with very limited involvement otherwise. Rather than working in equal partnership with parents, both school administrators and teachers preferred that parents respond to teachers' requests for such assistance as support at special events and class supervision. However, since the enactment of the new legislation, this situation has been changing. School A, for example, has benefited from its PA's donations as well as parents' devotion of substantial amounts of time to school-related matters. However, there has been a growing ambivalence on the part of teachers toward parental involvement in school-related matters. Teachers, on the one hand, appreciate parents' supervision of students' classroom work and parents' help in organizing afterschool programs. On the other hand, teachers complain about parents' obsession with drills and tests in preparation for the entrance exam—an obsession that places pressure on teachers and can interfere with their professional role. Some of School A's parents participate not only in classroom management and teaching, but also in the school's decision-making, including the review and selection of principals, curriculum development, and the allocation of homeroom teachers and subject teachers. Some teachers resent this parental monitoring of teachers, resulting in a contradictory blend of parents' polite support of school-initiated matters and parents' sometimes forceful efforts to guide certain affairs, especially regarding their children's "best interests" in achieving outstanding academic performance.

Due to school B's diverse student body (reflecting three different demographic groups) its PA is less united and less competent than School A's. I discovered that there were different factions within School B's PA, each with differing opinions about the future development of the school. Some parents supported the school's policy of keeping a special program on aboriginal culture in the curriculum, mainly as a way of gaining extra-funding from the government, while some parents were strongly against it, claiming that it tainted the reputation of the school, resulting in lower enrolment over time. An overarching consequence of these differences was that School B's PA had difficulty achieving consensus. There was also a growing distrust between the parents and the school administration, as well as among parents. Compared to School A, where most parents and teachers were vocally proud of their association with the school because of its academic reputation, at School B many people affiliated with the school blamed others for perceived

failings at the school. In such an atmosphere, many parents and staff sometimes wondered whether they should stay or go.

From school-choice strategies to forms of parental participation, there was a huge difference between the parent-teacher interactions at the two schools. At School A some influential parents were able to exercise significant power over the school, not only by identifying and taking advantage of loopholes in admission procedures, but also by forming an information-sharing network about school policies and teacher performance. These parents dominated the school board and steered school policy toward their personal interests. In this way, parents and the school were not working in partnership. Teachers felt that the PA had them under observation, which created unhealthy competition amongst teachers for winning over parents' and gaining their support and praise. In contrast, the factional orientation between School B's three communities weakened or even prevented connections among parents, causing further distrust between school staff and among parents, essentially paralysing the function of the PA.

School choice: Community or Market? Diversity or Disparity?

According to the National Education Act, educational authorities must provide Taiwanese children with equal access to good-quality schools, regardless of social status or location. Yet, the Fundamental Education Act allow parents to choose which schools their children attend. When the Ministry of Education integrated parental choice into public schools, it assumed that parents would act in their best interests, thus strengthening parental participation in public schools. The policy was viewed not only as providing avenues for exercising civil rights, but also as a strategy for improving schools. However, the implementation of such a policy needs to be seen as situated in a historically embedded choice practice and culturally bounded social network.

In a democratic society, education plays a key role in developing capacities that enable people to become involved in the political process. This was the aim of enacting the Fundamental Education Act in the context of the political democratization and educational liberalization occurring in Taiwan during the 1990s. The Act states that educational rights are part of one's civil rights. It protects individuals from unwarranted action by government and guarantees the right to participate in school affairs without discrimination. Promoting parental involvement gives the impression that granting opportunities for participating in a decision-making process will create a sense of collective choice for improving schools within communities. However, the long-standing habit of middle-class parents choosing superstar schools also poses a challenge to the collectivism of the community.

Levin (2007) suggests that local management is different from parental involvement. He asserts that local management and parental involvement are only sensible if the policy assumes a genuine interest in the community. However, there are two senses of community: a social group in a specific locality, and a group sharing common characteristics and interests. Levin takes community in the former sense. In this regard, the present study shows that the school staff of School A is very proud of its talented students but has a less pronounced sense of being a community school than does School B. As School A's director of academic affairs noted, "We are not a community school. . . . [But] our school attracts students from at least fifty-four different elementary schools."

Parents involved in School A had their own sense of community (sharing the same interests and characteristics) because many of their children attended the same primary school together. These parents exercised collective strategies for participating in school life, and shared similar economic, cultural, and social capital, giving rise to a network in which parents looked to other

parents for help in deciding how to get involved in their school. The objective of this involvement was to strengthen their children's future prospects. Parents with economic, cultural, and social resources could compensate for perceived deficiencies in the school budget, teaching resources, and teaching practices. By congregating together in the PA, these parents could wield even more power over school practices. Whether acting individually or in coordination with one another, parents at School A participated in the school's decision-making process as a way of enhancing their children's education.

This situation also applied to School B. Parents at School B who were involved as volunteers also created strong links with each other, maintained close contact with the principal and classroom teachers, and drew on resources to protect their children's interests. As the head of the PA bluntly pointed out, many parents sought to be elected to the PA in order to strengthen opposition to the school's aboriginal program. Furthermore, members of the PA persuaded the principal to apply for a "talented and gifted students" program in the hopes of both attracting better students to the school and producing graduates who end up attending a top-end high school.

Although proximity was a popular reason for parents' selection of School B, academic performance remained a major concern for many parents, especially those belonging to the new community, many of whom were not always impressed by School B in this regard. Indeed, it was the parents of the new community who were most likely to identify nearby alternatives and opt out of School B. And because their community and School B are on opposite sides of a river, and because transportation from their community to the school was not convenient, choosing another school was feasible. Moreover, parents who based their decision on academic performance tended to withdraw their children from School B. A parent whose oldest child attended school B and whose younger child attended an elementary school in the new community said,

Every time I try to convince parents [who have a child in elementary school] to send their children to [School B], they always ask about the percentage of its graduates who go on to a top-end high school. I just tell them it's improving now. If smart students like yours come to our school, then it'll be much better. How can we expect School B to boast of excellent performance if we keep sending our children to other schools?

The parent continued,

Many parents do not believe the school is academically sound. If everyone gets caught up in a superstar school's name power, our community will never have a chance, since talented students will go elsewhere. If people don't support their own community, it'll never get better. Therefore, with my husband's support, we keep our children at [School B].

The Act and related new policies have helped formally redraw the boundaries between parents and schools, effectively creating new incentives for parental involvement in school affairs. One aspect of these redrawn boundaries is an interaction between the policies of parental involvement (including choice) and parents' sometimes fanatical preoccupation with their children's exams. Unlike the education systems of Western countries, where a neo-liberal sense of parental choice rests on perceptions of school differentiation, the Taiwanese educational system has created a hierarchy of junior high schools ranked according to graduates' performances on exams. The performance of a junior high school's students on high school entrance exams heavily influence Taiwanese parents' choice of school for their children. Most parents' objective is to have their children positioned as high as possible on the academic totem pole. The test-driven admission system favours superstar schools. The new act ensures the role of the PA and promotes general parental involvement in schools. In this regard, some parents have gained ground in mobilizing

school resources to ensure that their own child's "best" educational interests are met. A teacher at School A pointed out a salient irony: "People often say that our school has the quality of a private school but the price of a public school, but our efficiency [i.e., the school's capacity to churn out graduates eligible for attendance at top-end high schools] is more like a cram school's."

Following Taiwanese society's awakening sense of citizenship rights, the public school system promotes parental participation. However, parents tend to exploit this feature of the system to expand resources that can strengthen their children's performance on entrance exams. As a result, superstar schools do not have to fight for a greater share of the education market or struggle to find a market niche. All they have to do is to keep responding to parents' demands for high exam scores. Such a cycle leaves little room for either innovation in school development or diversity in educational programs, both of which are critical if schools are to meet the diverse needs of students.

CONCLUSIONS

Taiwan's school choice policy mixes a civil rights model with a market model. The former entails decentralization and giving more authority to schools and parents. Consumer choice drives the latter, in which parents act according to their own best interests when choosing a school. Such a mix consists of two ironies. First, the democratization-inspired impulse to strengthen people's right to education derives largely from neo-liberal ideas of choice but has been channelled into initiatives that have widened the gaps between public schools. Although the Fundamental Education Act provides moral and legal grounds on which parents can choose schools and participate in school affairs, the very limited choice in terms of schools, programs, and curriculum means that "choice" is merely a catchword chiefly referring to the choice of public schools whose graduates perform well on exams. Moreover, Taiwan's education policy encourages parental participation in educational matters in a way that can create further disparity among public schools and facilitate stratification in the public education system.

The second irony is that in Taiwan's public education system the value of social diversity and equity is contradicted by the value of market competition. Parents' choice of and involvement in School A have made it highly competitive because it operates under the formidable pressure of parents' constant monitoring and comparing. In contrast, most parents of School B seem relatively passive in terms of being market-based consumers. Even though School B was viewed as a part of the community, the sense of community was divided. In this sense, it can be seen that school choice along with parental involvement and participation can lead to heightened social competition and segregation rather than community management and improvement.

Notes

1. Because junior high graduates must take a very competitive entrance examination to attend senior high schools, parents pay particular attention to which junior high schools have a high percentage of graduates gaining admission to prestigious public senior high schools. This percentage has become the major indicator of school performance for parents when evaluating e junior high schools in a particular region (such as the Taipei metropolitan area). Such a ranking is not official, but rather popular information circulating among parents and the general public. Schools having a high percentage of graduates going to prestigious public senior high schools become the most desirable junior high schools. Such highly popular junior high schools are typically termed "superstar schools."

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 113-124
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Recognising change and seeking affirmation: themes for embedding Indigenous knowledges on teaching practicum

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ABSTRACT

The imperative for Indigenous education in Australia is influenced by national political, social and economic discourses as Australian education systems continue to grapple with an agreed aspiration of full participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Innovations within and policies guiding our education systems[1] are often driven by agendas of reconciliation, equity, equality in participation and social justice. In this paper, we discuss key themes that emerged from a recent Australian Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) research project which investigated ways in which preservice teachers from one Australian university embedded Indigenous knowledges (IK) on teaching practicum[2]. Using a phenomenological approach, the case involved 25 preservice teacher and 23 practicum supervisor participants, over a 30 month investigation. Attention was directed to the nature of subjective (lived) experiences of participants in these pedagogical negotiations and thus preservice and supervising teacher voice was actively sought in naming and analysing these experiences. Findings revealed that change, knowledge, help and affirmation were key themes for shaping discourses around Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in the Australian curriculum and defined the nature of the pedagogical relationships between novice and experienced teachers. We focus particularly on the need for change and affirmation by preservice teachers and their teaching practicum supervisors as they developed their pedagogical relationships whilst embedding Indigenous knowledges in learning and teaching.

Keywords: preservice teacher education, Indigenous knowledges, pedagogical relationships, cultural interface, Australia

INTRODUCTION

International, Indigenous and Multicultural Imperatives for Education was the theme for the 42nd annual conference of the Australian New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society (ANZCIES). Set against the global educational imperatives inspired by the *Education for All movement* and the *Millennium Development Goals*, the aspiration to achieve educational targets is well-entrenched in broad international and national education policy statements. However, the realisation of these goals is dependent upon contestations

[1] See https://www.education.gov.au/national-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-education-strategy

[2] See https://www.qut.edu.au/about/oodgeroo/embedding-indigenous-knowledges-in-curriculum

and contradictions, calling for stronger international partnerships, both North-South and South-South, bearing in mind the achievement of these goals in specific local contexts (McLaughlin, Iyer, Hepple, Hickling-Hudson & Sharma-Brymer, 2014). Accordingly, the conference convenors invited comparative and international educators to examine and develop methodologies and strategies that explored subjectivities, positionalities, location, place, space and time. In the tradition of comparative and international education meetings, papers covered a wide spectrum of educational issues adopting a range of relevant theoretical and methodological frameworks, with a focus on international and intra-national educational research.

Indigenous and intercultural perspectives were particularly sought, to explore new conversations and dialogue around re-thinking the dynamics of educational policies and implementation in specific contexts. Fittingly in the opening keynote address, Thomas (2014) challenged conference delegates to recognise the impact of colonial history, Indigenous knowledges and voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as we investigate educational imperatives for Indigenous peoples, and persisting underlying questions. Lee Hong (2014) extended the conversation by exploring and showcasing existing educational leadership demonstrated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples and communities, shifting the focus from hegemonic relationships through state and institutional policies to Indigenous emancipatory projects as clear examples of achieving parity in educational outcomes (Behrendt, 2012). A strong contingent of Indigenous Australian scholars contributed to this conversation including Clair Anderson, Marion Kickett, Peter Anderson, Grace Sarra and their non-Indigenous colleagues. We argue the realisation of the imperatives for Indigenous education is dependent on *all* educators recognising the significance of Indigenous knowledges and intellectual traditions to their professional work, here in Australia and across the globe.

In this paper, we will present findings from a recent project which investigated ways in which preservice teachers embedded Indigenous Knowledges (IK) on teaching practicum. We commenced from a standpoint that there is a need for recognition and acknowledgement of existing Indigenous knowledge systems and intellectual traditions and their place in pedagogy and curriculum. From this standpoint, we recognised and valued the Indigenous knowledges and perspectives that these preservice and their supervising teachers brought with them into the learning and teaching spaces. This project demonstrated that engaging in embedding Indigenous knowledges whilst on teaching practicum enabled the interrogation of dominant curricula taught and learnt from a homogenous standpoint (Hudson & Ahlquist, 2003) while silencing the active presence of Indigenous peoples and their knowledges and perspectives (McLaughlin & Whatman, 2015a).

We defined these preservice teacher participants in our project as future curriculum leaders as they demonstrated initiative to embed IK in their practice teaching in this contested field. We unpacked teacher education as a site for this contestation in relation to how teacher preparation programs enabled or hindered future curriculum leaders in embedding Indigenous knowledges in their future work as teachers. Our analysis was informed by the emerging themes from the project‘s research findings, two of which are discussed in this paper including *change and affirmation*. Further, we illustrate how practicum supervising teachers demonstrated their understandings of IK and their preparedness to work with preservice teachers in the embedding process. We conclude by proposing a ‘process model’ for supporting future curriculum leaders in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives in teaching practicum and into their work as teachers (McLaughlin, Whatman & Neilson, 2014, see also, https://www.qut.edu.au/about/oodgeroo/embedding-indigenous-knowledges-in-curriculum)

Supporting future curriculum leaders in embedding Indigenous knowledges on teaching practicum project

'Indigenous knowledges' (IK) in the Australian curriculum and pedagogical space is a contentious phrase, often informed by the broader Australian socio-cultural, political and economic landscape[3]. This project investigated the learning and teaching relationships between preservice teachers and their teaching practicum supervisors who consented to participate as they were specifically interested and engaged in embedding Indigenous knowledges and teaching perspectives. The project allowed us to explore the negotiations of expectations, role modelling and the interactions that occurred between preservice teachers, their practicum supervisors, and university staff involved in supporting teaching practicum. It was designed to develop long-term, future oriented opportunities for teachers to gain expertise in embedding Indigenous knowledges and perspectives.

Our main driver for leading this project evolved from our work in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at our university. Over the years, we liaised on behalf of and lobbied for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preservice teachers as they negotiated their teacher education and preparation program at the university, and how they demonstrated agency on teaching practicum. We witnessed their joy of success and, sometimes, their despair, as those who normally failed final teaching practicum graduated with a Bachelor of General Studies. Such an award did not qualify them to meet the requirements of full teacher registration by the State's College of Teachers, instead qualifying these graduates to work as teacher aides in schools. The funding from OLT made the project possible, which allowed our work practices to extend to supporting Indigenous preservice teachers on field placements from 2011 – 2013, spanning over a period of 30 months.

The three participant groups consisted of preservice teachers, their supervising school teachers and university staff supporting preservice teachers on practicum. Specific project objectives included that these preservice teachers would be able to identify their own strengths in curriculum innovation and demonstrate successful ways to embed Indigenous knowledge into their practicum via their curriculum decision-making. They also would be able to showcase these strengths in their portfolios and applications for teacher registration. Another important objective was that practicum supervisors would undertake important conversations about assessment of embedding IK to support and lead future preservice teachers and their teaching peers in the endeavour of embedding Indigenous knowledge.

Preservice teacher education and imperatives for Indigenous education

The imperative for Indigenous education in Australia is entrenched in the nation's history and policies and experiences of colonial settlement. Educational provisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were influenced by a philosophical stance on whether Aboriginal people could be educated (Bin Sallik, 1991, p.21), resulting in restrictions of Indigenous participation in formal education. Consequently, colonial discourses continue to inform initiatives for Indigenous education, characterised by principles of compensatory education, and ideology for social justice and equity. While these imperatives are required for

[3] See for example the recent weakening of the cross curriculum priority of teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures by the Australian Government appointed Wiltshire & Donnelly Review of the Australian Curriculum (2014) https://www.studentsfirst.gov.au/review-australian-curriculum and http://docs.education.gov.au/node/36269

'closing the gap' in educational achievement between Indigenous students and their non-Indigenous counterparts, it raises questions about the place and space for Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Mellor and Corrigan (2004) argued that the absence of Indigenous knowledges in the Australian curricula draws parallels to education as being a tool of assimilation whilst teacher preparation has also been described as predominantly assimilationist (Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2003).

Since 2000, some major projects in policy development, discussion papers and research on Indigenous education have occurred. The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Plan* 2010 – 2014 (the Plan) (Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs [MCEECDYA], 2010) sought to progress policy directions and priorities documented in previous policies such as the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy* and the *Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals of Young Australians,* part of the Australian government reform agenda that proposed to close the gap between the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their non-Indigenous peers (MCEECDYA, 2010, p. 4). The 2010 – 2014 Action Plan outlined six priority domains including *Readiness for school; Engagement and connections; Attendance; Literacy and numeracy; Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development and Pathways to real post-school options.* While some of these priorities reflect intents of previous policy statements, targets and performance indicators, it brings to fore the ongoing challenges for Australian policy makers and educators grappling with Indigenous educational disadvantage.

The *Leadership, quality teaching and workforce development* priority of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Plan (the Plan) (MCEECDYA, 2010, p. 24) aspired to develop a strategy to assist educational providers to progress the ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to students. Further, the Plan proposed to attract more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians into the education workforce and support their professional, leadership and career aspirations (p.24). While these are noble intentions, there was nothing specific to support aspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers to succeed in teacher preparation programs, particularly on practicum, and their retention in the education workplace after graduation from teacher education preparation institutions. A report into the *Retention and Graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students enrolled in initial Teacher Education* (Patton, Lee Hong, Lampert, Burnett & Anderson, 2012, p.9) highlighted the contemporary underrepresentation of Indigenous teachers, approximately 1% of the teaching force in Australian schools.

The *More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Teacher Initiative* (MATSITI) was aligned with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Indigenous Reform Agreement and associated with closing the educational gap campaigns. Targeting Indigenous education disadvantage, MATSITI aimed to address the above concern, and to work towards increasing Indigenous education workforce. Patton et al (2012) identified a variety of factors that contributed to success in teacher education programs including the availability of support from the Indigenous Higher Education Centres, and the need for professional and cultural awareness development of non-Indigenous staff and faculty. On the other hand, they reported that Indigenous preservice teachers were likely to drop out at critical points in their study including the transition into university study in first year, difficulties in reaching benchmarks in assessments and examinations and of significance for this study, after professional / field/ practicum experience.

Teacher education providers and their capacity to support aspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into the teaching profession have been positioned in the above-mentioned policy discourses as critical to the achievement of educational parity by

challenging and reducing the 'normality' of low educational achievement by Indigenous students. These initiatives are firmly entrenched in discourses of equity and social justice.

However, we argue for a shift in this discourse, to one that recognises and welcomes Indigenous knowledge claims (Hart & Whatman, 1998). This may only occur by disrupting teacher education providers' theoretical and practical approaches to growing the Indigenous educational workforce, from one that sees Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies as being relevant only to teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to knowledges that are important for *all* Australian students.

Nakata's (2002, 2007) theory of the cultural interface and Indigenous knowledges, that knowledge *about, with and for* Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples occurs within the cultural interface, requires constant critical reflection upon the 'Self', the relationships between 'Self' and 'Others' (adapting Levinas, 1978/1981) and how this informs an epistemological and ontological understandings of one's cultural and social positioning. This project was conceptualised on this theoretical position, while maintaining observations of the cultural interface as the locale of the learner, which is simultaneously a place of agency and a place of tension (Nakata, 2011). The cultural interface enabled us to view sites of curriculum and pedagogical decision making between these stakeholders as places of knowledge convergence and productive engagements, rather than as sites of divergent knowledges and irreconcilable differences.

In this project, we problematized teacher education as the site for developing future curriculum leaders in the project of embedding Indigenous knowledges in curricula and pedagogy. The project allowed us to explore the negotiations of expectations, role modelling and the interactions that occurred between preservice teachers, their practicum supervisors, and university staff involved in supporting teaching practicum. We now turn our discussions to our methodology, findings and discussions of this research.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA ANALYSIS

The exploration of pedagogical relationships between preservice and their supervising teachers was the aim of this project. Therefore, phenomenology as a methodological approach (van Manen, 1984) was adapted to direct attention to the nature of subjective (lived) experiences of participants in these pedagogical negotiations. Preservice and supervising teacher voice was actively sought in naming and analysing these experiences. The central question explored in this research was: *what is your experience of embedding Indigenous knowledges during teaching practicum?*

Principles of Indigenous research methodology and privileging of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives (Rigney, 1999) guided the conceptualisation of this project. As advocates of decolonising methodologies (Smith, 1999; Denzin, Lincoln & Smith, 2008; Mertens, Cram & Chillisa, 2013), the research process was informed by our engagements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preservice teachers as bearers of knowledges by virtue of their Indigeneity. Thus, the methodology privileged and made space for the voices of Indigenous preservice teachers, alongside their practicum supervising teachers and non-Indigenous preservice teachers undertaking the Indigenous Studies minor in their Bachelor of Education program.

Project participants included 25 preservice teachers, of whom 21 were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, all with a commitment to and passion for embedding Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in the school curriculum. We extended participation to include non-Indigenous preservice teachers who had already committed to an optional Indigenous Studies Minor in their teacher preparation program. Over the 30 months project, four non-Indigenous

preservice teachers participated in the project. Over a three semester period, a total of 23 supervising teachers in 21 schools participated in this project in both urban and rural schools in Queensland. Seven university liaison academics participated in two professional development workshops organised for the project. Individual interviews and focus group workshops were organised as primary data collection strategies. All qualitative data collected through individual interviews, focus groups and workshops were analysed by NVivo and Leximancer, qualitative data analysis software.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Recognition of Change

'Change' emerged as the primary key theme in this project. Project participants recognised a need for change, providing the necessary platform to facilitate the process of embedding Indigenous knowledges and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the curriculum. There was strong evidence of both policy mandates within the workplace and formal curriculum and professional commitment from project participants. Participants understood their professional responsibilities as espoused by the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE), the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) and Professional Teacher Standards advocated by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Supervising teachers' observations affirmed the need for change, when reflecting upon the impact on their students' interest and engagement in learning during exemplar lessons on IK taught by participating preservice teachers.

The process of change to embed IK, facilitated by the presence of the preservice teachers, enabled both novice and experienced teachers to reflect upon the often tokenistic approaches to including IK teaching and learning. To shift the representation of Indigenous Australia in schooling requires interrogating existing colonial representations in the official curriculum and engaging with the wider community. For Vanessa, a primary preservice teacher, embedding IK meant that she made genuine connections to the parents of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in her class, and the wider school community.

> *That is the thing for me when they say 'embedding', why does it have to be, I'm going to take myself up and do a rain dance? That is not what it is… I'm like, umm? Now they have these big telegraph poles that have been painted up by one of the parents who is an Aboriginal artist and so they have these totems that represent the seven families in the local area, their animal totems and they have these native plants and they are bringing in bush tucker plants and the Yugumbeh community to come in an plant them and they will have a place in the school to look after the gardens. They were like - what is the point of this? It is just plants? Who cares? (But) we are getting parents, Aboriginal parents… and they are coming into the school. They are seeing that you are valuing them and you are valuing their children, they are going to value what you do. In my mind it is a circle, you bring them in and they will help you... I'm a non-conformist (Vanessa, preservice teacher, 2013).*

During this project, supervising teachers had the opportunity to negotiate curriculum decision making with preservice teachers and to reflect upon the impact that embedding IK made had on students' learning, and their own curriculum decision-making processes. Donna supervised Rosie, a primary preservice teacher, and as a consequence of being project participants, both Donna and Rosie engaged in important conversations about curriculum

decision-making, curriculum relevance, meeting the learning needs of the students and meeting wider policy and professional demands. As an experienced supervising teacher, Donna recognised the Indigenous knowledges that the preservice teacher had brought into classroom and the value of such knowledge for all student learning.

> *It was good for me too because like Rosie was embedding the Indigenous culture in the curriculum and that was great and how we worked it in so I am thinking, we don't do enough of that, so that was great the Rosie was able to put that into the program, her teaching here (Donna, supervising teacher, 2012).*

One of the more significant findings about teachers' recognition of the need for change was a shift in the perception of themselves as in charge of all curriculum decision making. As we have argued (Hart, Whatman, McLaughlin & Sharma-Brymer, 2012), embedding Indigenous knowledges in curricula requires challenging hegemonic power relations and the Eurocentric approaches to learning and teaching. Genuine change in decolonising of the Australian curriculum process requires the recognition of Indigenous knowledges and valuing this as knowledge for all Australian students. As Gary, who had many years of teaching experience in Aboriginal communities, clearly asserts, this process requires teachers to be prepared to recognise and admit that they may not be the experts or are the bearers of all knowledges, but in this case, recognise that Indigenous peoples and communities are experts in Indigenous knowledge systems.

> *I think in our culture in the dominant culture in Australia at the moment, it seems to be that teachers are seen to be having all this knowledge. We need to let go of it a bit. You need to realise and be comfortable and be honest. That is the main thing. I have never pretended that I knew what this was about and I even said that when I was in the community, when I walked in, it was their opportunity to teach me. I became the learner. Yeah number one is to make contact with people who have been in the Kimberleys and who can talk to the students, with the students, about the sorts of experiences that they will have. The sorts of things that they can do in a school setting to embed, genuinely and authentically, Indigenous perspectives (Gary, supervising teacher, 2013).*

Change, as the dominant theme emerging from this research allowed the project team to problematize the perception that sources of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives did not or could not exist within the school and university (teacher education provider) settings through policy and curricula alone. The recognition of change to the process of teaching and learning Indigenous knowledges also enabled teachers to see that they have to power to effect this change – in their approach to teaching and learning decision making - and understanding that how they are socialised and professionally prepared through teacher education to see themselves as "all knowing" can hinder this change was essential. Such productive engagements created the circumstances that resonate with Nakata's (2011) concept of knowledge convergence – natural opportunities to embed Indigenous knowledges within the Australian curriculum. We contend that with knowledge, recognition of and respect of IK, both preservice and supervising teachers are capable of transforming teaching and learning through Indigenous Australian perspectives.

The need for affirmation

Affirmation was also identified as a major theme in the project findings. The recognition and valuing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives instigated teachers' determination to embed Indigenous knowledges in the curriculum and pedagogy. Yet, there was much uncertainty and anxiety by non-Indigenous preservice, their supervising teachers and school site coordinators (often Deputy Principals) on what, how and when to embed. We had predicted in the conceptualisation of this project that there would be much uncertainty around how to embed IK but that this very uncertainty could be mediated through facilitated (by the project leaders) opportunities for conversations to occur between stakeholders, which could take different forms, determined by contexts and needs of all stakeholders. These conversations transformed into opportunities for role modelling and provided the necessary affirmation of successful embedding processes through what can be described as a restorative pedagogical relationship.

Gary, who was an experienced teacher, a school liaison officer and senior administrator in regional Queensland, reflected upon opportunities for role modelling from within the school community and therefore, created the agency for IK held in the community to impact upon core school learning:

> *I mean that there are some really good resources in terms of human resources and people in communities that you can talk to. I am thinking even from my experiences, the Elders from within the community, who are also teachers and they are good to speak to. It is also good to see the regular white perspective in terms of non-Indigenous who go into a community and teach and have you know this, just getting their views and experiences and knowledge about what they do. I was very fortunate to work with, I had some very wonderful teaching partners in my first year. There was one lady who was a parent, second year she was my student teacher and in the third year my teaching partner. She was Aboriginal and she was able to switch so beautifully, you could hear the Aboriginal language when she was talking with the kids and then she would switch back. It is being comfortable with being who you are too. I didn't pretend in any way to own this knowledge (Gary, supervising teacher, 2013).*

It can be argued that building community connections and engagement is critical for incorporating IK in school curricula. Community Elders and members are holders of IK, however, a genuine relationship built on trust, respect and reciprocity can pave the way for authentic partnerships in education. Formal education in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities may generate awareness and sensitivity to Indigenous knowledges, but the reality of this embedding work was shaped by local contextual issues, by acknowledging diversity and via teacher self-interrogation. Sean further explained:

> *Aboriginal people in the SE corner that people may be exposed to are different to North. Yulangi culture here is alive and well here and you can touch it. That is what makes this stuff that I am talking about actually easy. We have a defined community. So they (preservice teachers) need to know history and they need to know data about the gap and they need to know the reality of the regional centres that they might be going to. Then what they need is some sort of skills in terms of relating to students. Now from my experience, Bama kids here have a heighted awareness of whether you really care or not. They know, they know. I've learnt from my experience*

> *with the Elders and I remember this from the very first meeting I went to and Richard invited me to come along and Richard is like we are mates. I saw the old ladies sitting there in the group, looking at me as if to go… what is this bloke all about. Is he full of crap? (Sean, site coordinator, 2013).*

The above insights draw attention to policy imperatives designed to solve problems of educational disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The issue we infer from this remains with confirmation and affirmation of policies designed to effect change and the instruments of measuring or validating its implementation strategies. It also returns the gaze back to teacher education providers and their ways of validating and affirming knowledges and ways of knowing. We contend that to appropriately locate Indigenous knowledges in curricula and pedagogy, engagement with local contexts and local communities is imperative as by virtue of their Indigeneity, they are strategically placed to be sources of affirmation for those engaged in embedding IK. While this may sound problematic in some contexts, particularly where teachers feel that they have no connection with local communities, affirmation of IK is always possible in the classroom through the connections created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their wider families.

CONCLUSION

This project was informed by Indigenous knowledges and perspectives and primarily based on the recognition and valuing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing. This project facilitated opportunities to recognise the need for change and to seek affirmation around embedding IK endeavours by supporting professional relationships between practicum stakeholders as they developed their pedagogical relationships and negotiated the embedding of IK in the school curriculum. From these findings, we developed a process model that revolves around the understanding of the cultural interface as a place of convergence of knowledge systems and experiences (Nakata, 2011) that inspire innovative learning experiences for all students (McLaughlin, Whatman & Neilson, 2014, see https://www.qut.edu.au/about/oodgeroo/embedding-indigenous-knowledges-in-curriculum). So, in terms of project objectives, our preservice teacher participants and their supervising teachers indeed had the opportunity to create new curriculum products as a consequence of their conversations and engagement with IK. They experienced how it could be done, as a pre-cursor for role modelling embedding endeavours with current and future colleagues.

These future curriculum leaders then could be argued as being not only agents of change but of *momentum* in embedding Indigenous knowledges, depending on where their host school was already at with embedding – an agent for change, an agent for building momentum, an agent for inspiring and enthusing more experienced colleagues. As teacher education institutions and their work in teacher preparation are sites for knowledge convergence (Nakata, 2011), serious conversations about Indigenous knowledges and their place in Australian curricula must occur here.

The project provided an opportunity for future curriculum leaders to develop their agency, and with the support of their supervising teachers, to develop sustainable pedagogical approaches for embedding Indigenous knowledges in the preservice teacher education and teaching practicum. A decolonising approach to educational change is clearly effective. Recognising diversity and utilising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and knowledges whilst adhering to community protocols can complement policy imperatives in facilitating Indigenous knowledges as knowledge for all students in Australian schools.

Sean's comment below is an eloquent vignette in closing summary of what we had hoped to achieve with this project:

> *My philosophy about teaching is that it is all about relationships, 90% about what you do is about relationships, it is not about what you know and content and all that other stuff. Aboriginal and Islander kids in my experience it is relationship. They suss you out, they know whether you are full of crap or whether you are a genuine person. And if they think that you are genuine person they will latch onto you like there is no tomorrow. It is actually quite humbling. I think that preservice teachers need to know about that and how to develop relationships, for all teaching, it is not just about the Indigenous kids. They need to also be able to, in any unit that you teach, it doesn't matter if you are an English teacher or a maths teacher, science teacher, they need to have some knowledge to be able to always when they are planning a unit, always if you are teaching in a school like this. You need to think about it from an Indigenous perspective. What could I do? What resources could I tap into? A lot of that is going to be given from a local context.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which our universities now stand. We pay our respect to the Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge that these have always been places of learning, teaching and research.

We also acknowledge our colleagues who were involved in various stages of the project reported here including Victor Hart, Mayrah Dreise, Susan Willsteed and Vinathe Sharma-Brymer. We value your leadership and collegiality.

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The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 14, No 2, 2015, pp. 125-133
Special Edition: ANZCIES Conference Proceedings 2014
http://iejcomparative.org

Samoa's education policy: Negotiating a hybrid space for values

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the education policy of Samoa to examine the values that are presented within as relevant to the education system. Drawing on the theory of postcolonialism and globalization, we illustrate how the global and local interact within the education policy to create a hybrid, heterogeneous mix of values and, while the policy acknowledges the significance of Samoan values, it is principally directed towards universal values being incorporated into the education system. We undertake a critical policy analysis to illustrate how the hybrid set of values are indicative of a neo-colonial discourse and argue that universal values are required, however, these need to be equally matched with local Samoan values for the education policy to be highly relevant, authentic and applicable to the Samoan education context.

Key words: Samoan values, Education policy, globalization, postcolonialism

INTRODUCTION

Education policies have largely been sites of contestation as global and local values intermix to create discursive practices that are translated to local practices. As Rizvi and Lingard (2010) observe, attending to the policy discourses that have emerged through "global networks" requires attending to the "institutions, organizations and individuals who are bearers of globalized education policy discourses" (p. 44). The increasingly "global education policy field" (Ozga & Lingard, 2007, p. 69) created through education borrowing, that is "conscious adoption in one context of policy observed in another" (Phillips & Ochs, 2004; see also Steiner- Khamsi, 2006) is a strategy adopted by policy makers to avoid uncertainty of novel policies (Nedergaard, 2006). In keeping with the global trends in education, the education policy in Samoa proposed by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC, henceforth) in its 2006-2015 strategic plan focuses explicitly on universal values in education rather than on core Samoan values.

This paper undertakes a critical policy analysis of the *Strategic Policy and Plan* (June 2006- June 2015) of MESC to illustrate the global trends in education that are promoted by the policy, particularly through the five key concepts of equity, quality, relevancy, efficiency and sustainability. The education policy originated from the practices of the World Bank and donor nations and, while the policy promotes the core values of *fa'a-Samoa* (the Samoan way), it does not integrate *fa'a-Samoa* values explicitly or appropriately within its mandates. A caveat that we recognize is that almost all the core Samoan values underwent some transformation due to the long period of colonization; however, our standpoint is that it is in identifying the heterogeneous, hybrid, core Samoan values and in foregrounding these that Samoan education system becomes relevant for Samoans.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Colonialism in Samoa led to the adoption of a model government based on British Empire and the acceptance of an education system that insisted on the coloniser's language, knowledge and skills being promoted. Colonization in Samoa brought big changes to the educational landscape and the values invested within education. The deliberate attempt by colonisers to change the values and behaviours of people was aimed at converting Samoans to Western values. As we will argue in this paper, as most Samoan values were incompatible with Western values, colonizers changed the essence of the cultural values to suit their own socialization processes (see also Tavana, Hite & Randall, 1997) .

As Burnett (2005) observes, the colonial influence continues in the form of aid agencies and global agendas having significant influence on the education system in the Pacific region. Further, as Ashcroft, Griffin and Tiffin (1998) note, the oppressively interwoven manner in which colonial ideas operate make it difficult for policies such as MESC (2006) to be free of colonial undertones; a postcolonial reading, therefore, illustrates how stereotypical colonial notions are entrenched in the system. Adopting a post-colonial stance implies undertaking a rigorous examination of the oppression encountered by the colonised people and exposing the history of symbolic violence of the coloniser. Currently, a postcolonial Samoa has discovered that most of its cultural and social values have been reinvented to coincide with its new ways of living. In the current education system, most of these social and cultural changes have now been introduced into the curriculum. Students are now expected to learn and acquire new social and cultural ways of being and teachers are expected to perform to these new norms and modes of operation.

Postcolonial theory, in this study, is a means to question and examine the values proposed by education policies and expose these as a reproduction of colonial power. It provides an avenue for the voice of the Other, so that the territory can be re-appropriated and re-presented. This study responds to colonialism by theorising the concept of hybridity and heterogeneity. Hybridity assists in clarifying the place of Samoan cultural values in a Western type education system and offers a possibility to consider an in-between space that gets created through mimicry and ambivalence (Bhabha, 1994). Moreover, it also assists in justifying how, within a post-colonial society, Samoan values can contribute to a system that caters to Western knowledge and skills. Another key concept within postcolonialism relevant to this study is heterogeneity. Heterogeneity, as defined by Goldberg (2005), "is simply the general characterisation for diverse social arrangements that, in fact, have been historically fashioned" (p. 73). Heterogeneity in relation to culture indicates an understanding that culture is made up of many different types of entities. As Burnett (2007) states, contemporary ways are defined by "cultural and identic fluidity, heterogeneity and mobility" (p.263). Even the local context is experiencing change in terms of beliefs, knowledge, values that are mobile (Burnett, 2007). Therefore, we argue that with Western systems being quite diverse and local values and culture being mutable there is a crossover of cultures and values that needs to be recognised by the education policy.

Globalization is another significant influence on the Samoan education system. "As a set of processes that tend to de-territorialize important economic, social, and cultural practices" (Suárez-Orozco & Hilliard, 2004, p. 14), globalisation is a contested notion (Carolissen, 2012). Variously described as Americanisation (Hirst, 1997) or global modernity (Featherstone, 1995), globalisation is a concern with the liberal and neo-liberal value systems that cross national boundaries to impact on indigenous ways of living and replace them with global ideologies and methodologies. In terms of education in Samoa, the impact of globalisation is felt through the on-going changes that are occurring to the education policy that is now designed around a Western—oriented, neo-liberal agenda. The aims of the present system are to infuse a market–oriented,

consumerist outlook where student numbers are important and student autonomy is stressed as necessary (Banya, 2010). Subsequently, the values that are stressed are individual achievement and success at the cost of social and civic responsibility. In the Samoan education system, global changes have led to strategic education policies relying on borrowed policies from donor countries and world agencies that have financially supported Samoa for education. However, whether the policy enables effective education is questionable and raises the need to amalgamate core Samoan cultural values to formulate an education system that is meaningful and relevant to present day Samoans. In order to clarify what we denote by Samoan values we describe these in the following section.

RELEVANCE OF SAMOAN VALUES TO EDUCATION

Values are significant terms that provide meaning of how individuals are socialized in their environment. Aspin and Chapman (2007) describe values as a way of providing meaning to human action, "functioning as the rules" for individuals" (p. 27) and further state that values involve human behaviour and serve to rectify individual relationships between members of a society (p. 31). The five core principles of equity, quality, relevance, efficiency, and sustainability form the basis of MESC practices (MESC, p. 10). Equity implies providing fair and just treatment to all individuals and focusing on equal distribution of resources and providing appropriate knowledge. The concept of quality is situated within professional and technical knowledge and social and cultural practices generally, and acknowledges that *fa'a-Samoa* values must underpin academic, social behaviour. Nevertheless, the acknowledgement of *fa'a- Samoa* is so that it will "better enable the individual to cope with change and relationships in an increasingly complex environment" (p. 10). The concept of relevance, while acknowledging local cultural and spiritual values, is more about individuals, communities, and national development. The value of efficiency means "optimum use of human, financial, and material resources at all levels; timely and quality service delivery; unhampered communication; and coordinated decision-making" (p.10). Sustainability requires appropriate utilisation of all educational resources to guarantee equal division amongst all individuals and schools in Samoa (MESC, 2006, p.10).

A study of local Samoan values highlights significant differences between these and the values regarded as core values that are embedded in the local context of Samoa. As Vaá (2009) notes there are core values that "guide social action" (p. 243). Commonly described, these values are: *alofa* (love); *faaaloalo* (respect); *va tapuia* (sacred relationship); *va fealoai* (mutual respect); *ava fatafata* (behaviour accorded to others); *usitai* (obedience); *tofiga poo tiute tauave* (responsibility); *feavatai/fetausiai* (reciprocity); *soalaupule* (consultation) and *galulue faatasi/fesoasoani ai* (collaboration); *faasinomaga* (identity); *tautua lelei* (good services); and *fai mea amiotonu* (honesty). These values comprised the essence of the Samoan way of life before and after the missionaries' arrival and during colonization.

As Silipa (2004; see also Eteuati-Faamanatu, N., Silipa, S., & Tuia, 2007) explains, *fa'a-Samoa* (the Samoan way) is the main influence of social and cultural values in Samoa. Furthermore, as Vaá (2009) observes, Samoans believe that values and beliefs are "social markers of ethnic identity" (p. 246). The performance of these values in social and cultural activities is a symbol of Samoan identity — it is a Samoan way of life or *fa'a-Samoa* that a Samoan must acquire and understand. The value of *alofa* (love) has to do with *amio lelei* (kindness) and *faaaloalo* (respect) for one another. Silipa (2004) refers to love as an authentic way of being benevolent (p. 267). This kind of love is displayed in *faalavelave*, sharing of resources between family members, between village people or assisting strangers who need food and water. This kind of love is also known to Samoan people as *o le alofa le faatuaoia* (transcendental love), where there is no boundary or limitation of affection. The value of *tofiga poo tiute tauave* (responsibility) relates to serving the

family, village and church. In Samoa, matai (a family chief) is responsible for all the lands and resources belonging to the extended family. In addition, his/her other role is to represent the family in village and district affairs. This was explained by Davidson (1967) as a village setting, where all the households in the village are headed by a matai, and each matai is responsible for the welfare of his family (p. 17). All other family members are responsible to ensure their family solidarity by sharing their work through *galulue faatasi* (collaboration).

Respect or *fa'aaloalo*, is also related to *va tapuia* (a sacred relationship), *ava fatafata* (behaviour accorded to others) and *va fealoai* (mutual respect). The Samoan way of respect is very crucial in *aiga* (family) and *nuu* (village) where children must know their sacred relationship and show respect to their parents and significant adults as well as to other children. As explained by Davidson, self-respect in Samoa is well protected by individuals, families and nation (1967, p. 30). This entails knowing how to converse with elders by using respectful words and displaying appropriate behaviours. As a result, it is the *tofiga poo tiute tauave* (responsibility) of all individuals to practice respect in their social and cultural activities. More importantly in *fa'a-Samoa* (Samoan way), family and village members must *feavatai/fetausiai* (reciprocate) with one another.

The value of reciprocity has much to offer to protect *fa'asinomaga* (the value of identity) in a Samoan family and village. In fact, Davidson (1967) indicated that each Samoan village is identified by its unique cultural, formal greetings of its principal matais. The value of reciprocity helps maintain a good family identity. In fact, it relies on collaboration and cooperation amongst family members. For instance, all family members must work together to protect their family chief's title, as well as providing *tautua lelei* (good service) to the family chief. In the Samoan culture, family members must display appropriate behaviour at all times while in the presence of family guests and village chiefs.

As Rilometo (2005) observes, in the traditional Pacific societies, "ways of teaching and learning are integrated within family and community life" (p. 14) and, as Mageo (1991) points out, in Samoa, the model behaviour is patterned on the core Samoan values. The MESC, however, interprets values as these form part of the present day global and local educational discourse. To comprehend how these are an attempt at neo-colonial, cultural imperialism we undertake a deeper analysis of the MESC policy document.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilised an interpretive, qualitative research methodology approach. In essence the potential key purpose of the qualitative approach is its capacity to elicit and synthesise rich and reliable information. Qualitative inquiry in this study aims to understand the values orientation of MESC policy and, as policy analysis dictates, to identify the problem with the policy. The data comprised of the policy document of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture's *Strategic Policies and Plan*, June 2006- June 2015 (MESC, 2006) and following a qualitative, interpretive methodology, situated reading of the themes was conducted to analyse the values embedded in the policy. In order to understand the thematic thrust of MESC, we took, at face value, what was in the policy and examined it for the influences of globalisation and themes of market oriented discourse. Adopting a critical analysis approach, the aim is to offer social and cultural critique by illustrating how far the Samoan values are reflected in the policy. A critical analysis also helps by subverting the existing policy perspectives with alternate perspectives.

EDUCATION POLICY

The current education system with its five key concepts presumes to provide an ideal education system to guide the spiritual, cultural, social, intellectual and physical potential of all participants (MESC, 2006). MESC's vision is, "a quality holistic education system that recognises and realises the spiritual, cultural, intellectual and physical potential of all participants, enabling them to make fulfilling life choices" (2006, p. 4). To a limited extent, the five key concepts support the hybrid education system in Samoa as a mechanism to generate academic knowledge and skills. Following Green (2006) we argue that these second hand educational concepts are placed in underdeveloped nations without considering their compatibility to the society and culture of the people. As the policy states, the information gathering and a series of meetings of the Ministry, ADB, AusAid and NZAid missions led to "identify elements to create a vision for the Ministry" (p. 8). It shows that education in Samoa has been driven by policies that other countries have used in the past and present and Samoa is expected to utilise these borrowed education policies in order to sustain economic and educational relationships with donor nations and world agencies. This educational process is intended to proving the quality of education while continuing at the same time, to improve equity, relevancy and efficiency. In light of scarce resources, the process will adopt measures for cost effectiveness and sustainability. It will above all ensure the development of resources – human, material and financial. (MESC, p. 8)

The overall aim of the Samoan education system is for all students to be equipped with local and global knowledge, values and beliefs that situate them as glocal citizens. The policy claims that good maintenance of these educational areas will contribute to better learning and fostering of diverse knowledge in different educational programmes. While the five key concepts stress the significance of incorporating local, cultural and spiritual values of Samoa, the philosophical understandings about education signal a different focus. The philosophical understandings stress the commitment to international agreements such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and education that "must equip the individual to engage confidently in the modern world and a rapidly changing society" (p.11). The goals of education are explicit in the global focus of the policy:

> *Education is recognized as pivotal and critical in all strategies to address the global problems of environmental degradation, developmental impacts, poverty, hunger, disease especially HIV/AIDS, governance, conflict and war. The Government of Samoa is a partner to many of these global initiatives (p.11).*

It is significant that the education policy recognises global issues, however, there is a lack of a specific goal on how the cultural and spiritual values or *fa'a- Samoa* core values mentioned earlier in the policy are to be attained. As a goal, quality improvement is stated to be achieved through a commitment to "quality goals which include improvement to literacy and numeracy and teacher quality" (MESC, p. 11) amongst other ideas, however, there is no mention of quality improvement through a reaffirmation of some of the core Samoan values that form the basis of daily life in Samoa.

The aim of the curriculum according to the policy is to capture the social, cultural, educational, and political values, beliefs and ideas of a heterogeneous society. As indicated by MESC (2006):

> *The Samoan curriculum emphasises the need to develop environmentally and socially sustainable practices. This applies not only to the physical environment but also in the way society structures itself socially, culturally and economically. (p. 38)*

The curriculum is intended to educate teachers and students to realise the social, cultural, and other resources in their environment (MESC, 2006). The objective is to produce skilful and intelligent citizens for the nation's future. As Edwards and Usher (2000) have suggested the "impact of globalisation on curriculum…is to enable learners to engage as global citizens or consumers –covering… issues such as global values, sustainable development and environmental education" (p. 47). This is reflected in the attempt made in MESC to reflect global values in the curriculum such as "holistic approach to education" (p.13). However, this global curriculum discourse, as Nordtveit (2010) observes, highlights an underlying colonial influence that can be perceived as still active behind the operation and organisation of educational curriculum in Samoa. As Nordtveit (2010) states, "curriculum … is not targeted at improving the students' economic wellbeing, but is based on a colonial inspired academic rationalist discourse" (p. 325). This colonial rationalist discourse is reflected in the MESC's curriculum objectives, where most ideas and values commodify Samoan values within relevance and sustainability.

Within the overtly Western five basic principles of the policy, the curriculum section of the policy aims to achieve a set of hybrid values that are not specifically identifiable as Western, religious or Samoan, but are comprised of heterogeneous, global cultural traces. For example, "The Samoan Curriculum recognises that *fa'a-Samoa* must be upheld and that community, families and parents play a large role in the education of students" (p. 38) does little to specify the aspects of *fa'a-Samoa* that need to be upheld, in contrast to the curriculum values that are universal, for example, fairness and collaboration, wisdom and excellence, honour and respect (MESC, pp. 38-39)

That the policy aims to focus on Samoans acquiring an international status in primary education is stated through access to "universal provision and access to primary education with a broad and enriching curriculum to enable all students to realize their full potential" (p. 12). The access to secondary education aims to enable "a comprehensive range of educational experiences which will enable students to make informed choices about their future" (p.13) while postsecondary access is about "flexible educational pathways for all people" (p.13). Terms like "universal provision" (p. 12), "human resource development, market and employment needs" (p.13), and "flexible educational pathways" (p. 13), "community partnership" (p. 15) do not explicitly outline relevance to the Samoan way of life or to Samoan values. While space prevents us from a deeper analysis, we note how the policy stresses the significance of cultural understanding as "appreciation of family history, cultural norms inherent in the *aiga* and village systems" (p. 13), yet there is little by way of specifying the cultural norms or cultural ways of appreciation of family history.

We acknowledge, as MESC (2006) does, that change in education is unavoidable. As MESC (2006) states, "Change is inevitable. Education must equip the individual to engage confidently in the modern world and a rapidly changing society" (p. 11). Samoa has to accept change in order to survive in the modern world. Nevertheless, in order to survive these global changes, the education system needs to explicitly encounter the in-between space and embrace hybridity through aligning core Samoan values with the larger global values. Drawing on Bhabha's (1994; 2005) notion of hybridity elements of Samoan culture integrated into the globally oriented curriculum can create an enriched third- space, so that education becomes a mechanism that can generate relevant knowledge and skills for Samoans. At present, there is educational borrowing that results in mimicry and ambivalence with the resultant effect of "a mottled background" (Lacan cited in Bhabha, 1994, p. 172) being present in the policy.

Curriculum values such as responsibility, hospitality and reciprocity promote general educational connotations as these reiterate that "students are responsible for their actions and take actions to assist others" (MESC, 2006, p. 39). The values of honour and respect, where "others are treated with consideration and sensitivity, the physical environment is maintained and cultural, spiritual

values and societal rules are adopted by all" (MESC, 2006, p. 39) are universal values of all good curriculums. The value of tolerance ensures that "differences and diversity within society is respected and accommodated" (MESC, 2006, p. 39). The value of tolerance is based on the difference and diversity valued in a globalised world and gathered from the different systems of donor agencies rather than an explicit acknowledgement of the Samoan value of va fealoai (mutual respect).

The issues of equity, quality, efficiency, relevancy, and sustainability in education as outlined in the Samoan education policy are questionable as these lack specific social, cultural and educational relevance for Samoan students and teachers. The absence of specific reference to Samoan values can be perceived as a reflection of colonial agenda one that embraces neo-colonial values, beliefs and ideas. It could be argued that policy makers perceive an explicit global focus and universal set of values as a move towards successful education, and an explicit incorporation of Samoan values to be associated with a retreating mentality. While we do not claim there are pure Samoan cultural, social and educative values, an explicit incorporation of the hybrid Samoan values would imply a truly postcolonial agenda of placing the education system within a heterogeneous third-space. The primary discourse of neo-colonialism that emerges is of rescuing the education system through justification of universal, primarily Western values. A postcolonial discourse highlights how the use of universal, globally focused values reflects the Western ideal of an efficient education system, one that is colonial in its expectation so that it would be readily accepted.

CONCLUSION

While the Samoan education system has been hybridised, Samoan cultural values are caught in the middle of hybridisation and heterogenization. Social, cultural, and educational values are no longer homogeneous but have become heterogeneous through marked mimicry of Western ideals. On the basis of a document analysis we demonstrated that there is an absence of *fa'a- Samoa* values in the education policy. The findings are limited due to the limitations that are inherent in relying on one policy document as a data source. However, the document being representative of the organization to the educators and the public have discourses of the organization and what it purports as acceptable and important.

An alternative discourse means would be to critically examine the educational conditions that promote a lack of awareness of the *fa'a-Samoa* values and reiterate these through teaching and learning activities. Reconceptualizing the values from an indigenous perspective and employing a postcolonial response of resistance to uncritical acceptance of universal values would be another step to challenge the neo-colonial agenda of policy makers. As Luke (2005) states, "the normative answers for education systems might indeed be blended, hybrid and laminated" (p. xvii). We reiterate that policies that draw on rich, contextual elements and concepts would be exemplars for an effective education system.

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