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## Our thanks for the photos

**Cover photos:** Many thanks to kaiako, tamariki and whānau of Paparangi Kindergarten, Wellington. Nga mihi aroha ki a koutou!

Our front and back covers show how a kindergarten environment supports and enhances Tiriti-informed early childhood education.

## Our thanks to our reviewers

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## Contributions

Contributions of articles and photos are welcome from the early childhood community. Please keep copies of any contributions as we cannot guarantee to return what is sent. Cover photos need to be 'high resolution'.

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## Next issue

SPECIAL focus



# 'Getting a grip on Te Whāriki 2017'

Contributions welcome.

**Please contact the editors by 1 July.  
Contributions due by 15 August 2017.**

# 'Watch this space'

## *Qualification developments in initial teacher education and ECE*

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**Today I write from my position as a former early childhood teacher turned university-based teacher educator with responsibility for stewarding initial teacher education (ITE) qualifications within my institution and in the profession more broadly. I have a vested interest in teacher qualifications – not only in early childhood education but also in the profession as a whole.**

This editorial is about teacher qualifications and ITE; it serves as a 'watch this space' regarding national developments in ITE; and asks what opportunities and challenges may arise for early childhood education?

In 1988 a hard fought qualification pathway was won for those learning to teach in the former College of Education system. It allowed institutions to offer for the first time, equivalent initial teacher education (ITE) qualifications (level 7 diplomas) for primary and early childhood teachers. The three-year diploma level qualification for early childhood teaching exceeded minimum teacher qualification requirements for quite some years; in fact it wasn't until the Ministry of Education's 2002–2012 Strategic Plan – *Ngā Huarahi Arataki Pathways to the Future* that the benchmark qualification of level-7 diploma was established as a national policy goal.

By the time of the strategic plan, many ITE providers had already revised qualifications to replace three-year diploma programmes with three- or four-year bachelor's degrees. In addition the introduction of one-year graduate entry teacher education programmes for people with existing degrees, in primary and early childhood education sectors occurred – secondary sector teachers had long been qualifying to teach through a 1-year ITE model. Presently no New Zealand tertiary education provider is offering early childhood teaching qualifications that lead to teacher registration below level-7 degree or graduate diploma level (Ministry of Education, 2016). It has been quite some rapid period of development and change.

Further changes to entry-level qualifications for teaching are on the horizon. How this matters to individuals and groups depends a great deal on where and how you contribute to the provision of early childhood education in Aotearoa. If you're an employer, worries about being able to adequately recognise teacher qualifications through fair pay and work conditions may be a priority question. If you're a parent, you may be concerned about the prospect of increasing early childhood education fees.

Not everyone who teaches in early childhood education is or *wants to be* a qualified, registered, and certificated teacher.

Nor do they have to be. The policy target of 100% qualified registered teachers in teacher-led early childhood education was lost in *Budget 2010*. But many who do teach also want to be fully qualified, registered, and certificated members of the profession with the full protections and responsibilities that this affords.

Upgrading the qualification standards for teaching has been being formally mooted for a number of years. Former Minister of Education Anne Tolley convened a working group around education sector workforce planning in 2009, and that group's recommendations included a proposed change within the New Zealand education system to postgraduate entry to teaching (Education Workforce Advisory Group, 2010).

This was progressed by Education Minister Hekia Parata with an announcement during *Budget 2012* that a trial of 'exemplary' postgraduate teacher education would be tendered for. So over the past four years as part of the Government's 'raising achievement agenda', we have seen postgraduate ITE enter into the teacher qualifications landscape in New Zealand including within early childhood education.

Now, as the Education Council's thinking on the issue has begun to solidify (through its publication, *Strategic options for developing future oriented teacher education*, 2016) and the Council's reported announcement to the Education and Science Select Committee (5 April, 2017) that "the Council was forming a view that all teacher training in future should be at postgraduate level", and that the Universities, where much of New Zealand's ITE programmes are situated, agree (Jones, 2017), where might postgraduate ITE leave early childhood education? And what are the risks and opportunities that a postgraduate entry-level to teaching may bring?

Not wanting to ignore completely issues over pay and working conditions, or the fact it will cost more for student teachers to qualify to teach if postgraduate entry to teaching becomes the norm, it does make sense I think, for the cohesion of the teacher workforce overall (for the professional body and for system-wide improvement), that we maintain qualification parity, if and when a change to the entry requirement to teaching occurs.

A common entry-level standard to the profession is a key starting point to building and supporting the profession. It enables the setting of practice standards that the collective teaching body can recognise and use for its members' development and learning. That the entry-level might



**Early Childhood teaching involves continuous problem solving on multiple levels. What are the risks and opportunities that a postgraduate entry-level to teaching may bring?**

become postgraduate means that we can expect newly qualified teachers to more adequately understand and use research – generated from and relevant to their local context – to inquire into the effects of their teaching on learners and learning. Evidence-based practice is being increasingly sought in education; inquiry-based teaching features prominently in New Zealand curriculum, and in *Te whāriki*. This occurs through calls for assessment and planning for children’s working theories and learning dispositions and the development of children’s mana. In the *New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* it occurs through their emphasis on teaching as inquiry.

The potential for more cross-sector work in teaching is increased; graduates with a diverse range of bachelor’s degrees and life experiences will bring with them a myriad of interdisciplinary knowledge which can be put to use in curriculum, in the support and advocacy of child, family, and community interests, or which might lead to the development of skilled inter-professional teamwork as more of a routine feature of teaching practice. These are only a few of the immediate opportunities made possible by a shift to postgraduate ITE, yet there are also potential challenges ahead.

Given that in our early childhood education sector there is not a requirement for 100% qualified, registered, and certificated teachers for teacher-led early childhood services, the relevance of postgraduate or any qualifications exceeding the level-7 diploma standard actually, is queried. And even if we agree that qualification parity for teachers should be maintained across the system, for all the kinds of reasons mentioned earlier, the profession will need to overcome an historical preference for three- and four-year ITE programmes over shorter models (in primary and early childhood education at least).

We will need to ally fears about the adequacy of curriculum coverage in ITE when new graduate outcomes, such as research, become more central to practice; and we will need to figure out how to keep the existing body of qualified, registered, and certificated teachers active in the professional learning and development of colleagues who may be starting a teaching career with a qualification level that exceeds their own.

One thing is certain for sure, change has been signaled, I hope the sector and profession will be ready to respond rather than react when the opportunity comes.

We are in a definite moment of ‘watch this space’.

*Alex Gunn*

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# Letter from... Shanghai

## Tēnā tātou

I need to premise this letter with a disclaimer: I am writing this back home in Wellington, having visited Shanghai very briefly in March. So whilst it was just a flying trip to talk at a conference there, it was a very intense and interesting experience. I had previously been to Hong Kong and Beijing on several occasions, but not for a decade, so it was fascinating to visit China again, and this time Shanghai.

China has a very strong egalitarian yet competitive educational tradition. For many years China, under governance by its Communist Party, generally resisted introducing Western educational ideas. When visiting specially selected kindergartens in Beijing in 1995, I was fascinated to see what were explained to me as modified Montessori-inspired activities, such as children using chopsticks to transfer dried beans from one cup to another. I wondered about the adoption of Montessori activities which tend to focus on autonomy and independence rather than cooperation, in a collectivist, communist society.

Whilst eating in restaurants, I also observed children who were probably eight years old, being hand fed by their grandmothers. Each child was said to have six adults doting upon her or him: two parents and two sets of grandparents. In many of the kindergartens there were large dormitories, each jam-packed with similar brightly covered duvet covered small beds, as well as a nurse's infirmary for sick children. The children stayed all the working week at the kindergarten enabling their parents to work full-time, only returning home for the weekend.

I later understood the confusion that I had observed when in my own children's infant room at the campus creche. The teachers were having difficulty explaining to some of the Chinese parents that they could not bring a sick child to creche.



Jenny finds herself at the Shanghai International Early Childhood Education Annual Conference.

The one-child policy was ended in 2015 after 35 years. One of the side-effects of this policy was an extreme gender imbalance with selective procedures meaning many more male babies survived into adulthood.

So my impressions of Shanghai in 2017 were grounded in these previous experiences, in which I had learnt not to make any assumptions about what I observed or expected to occur whilst in China. The conference at which I was speaking was the three-day long Shanghai International Early Childhood Education Annual Conference<sup>1</sup> which takes place alongside the Shanghai International ICT Expo for Early Childhood Education. The ICT Expo was huge, filling two very large exhibition halls. The conference was in three very large adjoining marquees. One of the marquees was dedicated to Reggio Emilia education with a day of lectures provided by Claudia Giudici and Marina Castagnetti. So on this occasion it appears that Chinese interest in innovative early childhood educational philosophies has turned to that of Reggio Emilia.

<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.siee-expo.com/>

The publicity brochure for the expo is fascinating. It points to the 'Huge market eager to accept knowledge training' which comprises of 1,660,000 public early childhood teachers; 200,000 public kindergartens, and 38,940,000 children in public kindergartens.

But what was even more interesting was the 1,100,000 private early childhood teachers; 140,000 private kindergartens; and 20,000,000 children in private kindergartens. The growth in the private early childhood education 'industry' in China appears to have been astronomical. My assumption is that the switch to a two child policy has created a growth industry in China, in order to meet this doubling of capacity, and that this is being taken up largely by private operators. Does this sound familiar to us?

The Expo was also fascinating, the variety and sheer number of stalls, and the noise from people singing into microphones and digital technologies playing loud music almost overwhelming. Technologies included many different kinds of construction systems and innovative high tech devices, as well as low tech equipment such as wooden toys and furniture, weaving looms and chopstick making technologies. Also being marketed were 'international' kindergarten programmes, with brochures that featured blond children and teachers, and phonics systems for teaching English.

On the final day, our companion, a young economics student, took us by subway downtown to visit the heart of the city. Our first stop was the 'People's Park'. In one corner of this park, open umbrellas were arrayed around the edges of the courtyard, with elderly people crouching Chinese style behind many of the umbrellas. On each umbrella was attached a sign, often with a photo. Date of birth could be distinguished amongst the Chinese language characters. Our guide explained that this was a marriage market, where the parents came along to try and arrange a marriage for their grown-up child. Many of the umbrellas and signs were tatty, showing signs of age. Many of the faces on these elderly parents seemed similarly tired and lined with age.

My impressions of Shanghai? A very high energy, dynamic space, particularly for the early childhood education sector which is in entrepreneurial growth mode. Marketing of programmes to families that may convince them to pay extravagant amounts for elite 'international' private early childhood centres and schooling. The sense of a place that has undergone tremendous and rapid change. A place of great potential.

Mauri ora

*Jenny Ritchie*



**Sunny, an early childhood teacher, makes chopsticks at the Shanghai International Early Childhood Education Annual Conference.**



**Next issue**

**SPECIAL focus**

**'Getting a grip on  
Te Whāriki 2017'**

Contributions welcome.

**Please contact the editors by 1 July.  
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# Tiriti o Waitangi- informed teaching

## *A kindergarten case study*

Isabel Boyd, Robyn Mockett, Elizabeth Lee, Phillipa Wilson-Jackson, Anna Smith and Sue Eays

**Written collectively by a team of teachers from the same kindergarten, this article describes a journey of self-review, in relation to the expectations contained within *Te whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1996). Our focus is on teaching practices that resonate with the obligations contained within Te Tiriti o Waitangi for Māori aspirations for their tamariki<sup>1</sup>.**

Over the past six years we have been reviewing, reflecting and redefining aspects of our practices and looking at ways of making Te Ao Māori visible and valued in our programme, practice, documentation and physical environment. *Te Whāriki* states “In early childhood education settings, all children should be given the opportunity to develop knowledge and an understanding of the cultural heritages of both partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 9), and asks “In what ways do the environment and programme reflect the values embodied in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and what impact does this have on adults and children” (p. 56). We were, as a teaching team, committed to exploring what this meant for our practice.

When we began we were unsure as to how our community would respond, however any fears we had soon disappeared as our whānau supported and embraced us. Our journey began in 2008 by introducing the tamariki to kapa haka, and developing a self-review (Ministry of Education, 2006). We drew upon Rangimarie Rose Pere’s (1991) *Te Wheke* model in which the tamaiti is depicted surrounded by the enactment of core Māori values and organisational principles, such as:

- whānau and whanaungatanga,
- tūrangawaewae
- waiora,
- wairuatanga,
- mauri, and
- whatumanawa.

Our initial self-review focussing on implementing Te Tiriti o Waitangi was informed by ‘the three P’s’: Protection, Partnership and Participation, which were initially publicised by the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1987), and have

been widely referenced in education circles subsequently.

After setting quality indicators, we each reflected on our relationship and understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Once we had completed this, we created a visual display for tamariki and whānau with examples of the principles in practice. So for example, under the heading Partnership, we have examples of our whānau aspiration sheet, whakapapa information, and kapa haka, and so on.

We have also subsequently completed a series of self-reviews which have focussed on Whānau Aspirations, Ako, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Tātaiako along with introducing Place-based Education (PBE) (Penetito, 2009), all of which have developed and continue to support our practices.

More recently we have been reflecting on deepening our understanding of the four Articles of Te Tiriti and moving away from the terminology ‘bicultural’, to ‘Tiriti-based’. Jenny Ritchie described this shift as being from: ‘*Bicultural*’ ECE: as practiced from an ‘additive model’, where little bits of te reo Māori, songs, dress-ups are added in to a regular mainstream / Aoraki programme, to ‘*Tiriti-based*’ ECE: integrating Māori understandings within centres way of being, knowing and doing – such as incorporating a sense of whanaungatanga, wairuatanga, manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga ....’ (Ritchie, 2015, slide 20).

We believe, as Jenny Ritchie has stated, that ‘Tiriti-based practice demonstrates manaaki to all ethnicities present’ (2015, slide 56), and therefore supports all tamariki in multicultural ECE programmes. We have therefore begun to work on translating an understanding of the commitments contained within the Tiriti o Waitangi Articles, into practice within our programme. In the following sections we discuss each Article in turn.

### Article One

Article One of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Māori text of the treaty, states that “The chiefs of the Confederation and all the chiefs who have not joined that Confederation give absolutely to the Queen of England for ever the complete government over their land” (Wilson, 2012, p. 1). We asked ourselves, “What does this look like in our kindergarten?” We saw our commitment to this article being visible with

<sup>1</sup> For English translations, see glossary at the end of the article.



regard to two aspects: firstly our role as teachers in exercising good governance within the Kindergarten; and secondly, our responsibility as good governors to ensure the self-determination for tamariki and whānau that is required by Article One of Te Tiriti.

Governance can be broken down to the policies and procedures under which the kindergarten operates, the teaching philosophy of the teachers and the kawa used by tamariki to self-govern their interactions within the kindergarten. As does Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the kawa contains four parts:

- Manaakitanga,
- Kotahitanga,
- Rangatiratanga,
- Kaitiakitanga.

Self-determination can be analysed for tamariki in their ability to determine their own learning and self-assessment of that learning. It has strong links to the *Te whāriki* principle of Whakamana/Empowerment. For whānau it is evident in the consultation process that we utilise in order to determine their aspirations for their tamariki, as well as in their readily available access to teachers to discuss the learning of their tamariki.

As well as through *Te whāriki*, governance within early childhood education is mandated by the Ministry of Education through documents such as:

- *Ka Hikitia* (the government’s Māori education strategy) (Ministry of Education, 2013),
- *Tātaiako* (the Education Council and Ministry of Education’s Māori cultural competencies for teachers document) (Ministry of Education & Teachers Council, 2011), and through
- Government regulations and law.

The foundation for ensuring strong centre-based governance is a common vision and teaching philosophy supported by well linked policies/procedures. Akin to the centre of the unfurling koru of our practice with everything radiating from and returning back to it, our Vision is:

“Together embracing whānau and community we aspire to nurture the mana of our tamariki and empower every child holistically to become a competent, confident, self-assured and motivated learner”.

Alongside our vision sits the kindergarten’s pepeha, which acknowledges the land the kindergarten is on:

Ko Rangituhi te Maunga	Colonial Knob is our mountain
Ko Kenepuru te Awa	Kenepuru is our river
Ko Tainui te Waka	Tainui is our waka
Ko Ngāti Toa te Iwi	Ngāti Toa is our tribe

Ko te whānau a Paparangi te hapū	The families of Paparangi are our community
----------------------------------	---

Ko te māra tamariki te papa kāinga	The kindergarten is our home
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Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa	Greetings, greetings, greetings
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The pepeha is taught to all the tamariki as a step in developing their connection to the kindergarten as their place. From both our vision and our pepeha we have drawn our teaching philosophy.

Whilst beginning to embrace bicultural practice, we came across and began to incorporate the concepts of Place-Based Education (PBE) (Penetito, 2009). This encompasses connecting children with the community they live in, becoming ecologically aware, breathing life into history and understanding and celebrating the cultural life of our local community. With the concepts of PBE having an affinity to Te Ao Maori, these have become part of the team’s governing teaching philosophy. By using a Tiriti-based lens, we developed our philosophy in action using a metaphorical triangular tukutuku panel with our practice, environment and community being woven together with how it looked for whānau, tamariki, kaiako and community.

Within the kindergarten, the governance of everyday relationships is set down within a kawa. This kawa was developed over time and was originally a set of simple rules agreed with tamariki to oversee their behaviour. This has evolved to be centred on four Te Ao Maori concepts: Rangatiratanga, Kaitiakitanga, Kotahitanga and Manaakitanga. Through research and self-review, we developed a joint understanding of these concepts within our centre. It now covers all relationships, interactions and values within the kindergarten including with whānau, the wider community and between kaiako.

We have developed a specific bicultural policy which details our relationship to Tangata Whenua and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It outlines our commitment to continued professional development in relation to Te Tiriti and Te Ao Maori. It also specifies practices of Tikanga, celebrations and resources that we embrace. This has led to a review of all our procedures to include Te Ao Maori. One procedure where we have included more specific Te Ao Maori ideals is our Social and Emotional Competency Procedure. This includes all interactions between tamariki, whānau and kaiako and details how these competencies are developed under the parts of the centre Kawa.

All good governance and teaching practice has a cycle of reflection and review. We do this by annually reflecting, individually and as a team, and acknowledging the journey we have made in the most recent 12 months along a bicultural continuum, collating evidence to support this journey. Reviewing practice through self-review must always include the use of a variety of lenses; one being Te Tiriti-based practice.

So, irrespective of the topic of the review, we always ensure



that we consider Te Ao Maori is an integral part of any evaluation against quality indicators and that these indicators always include Maori pedagogy. An example of this has been with our recent review of our support for tamariki transition to school. Quality indicators included tamariki having a strong sense of self, and kaiako being responsive to whānau aspirations while supporting the transitioning process.

Within the documentation of tamariki learning, we make links to the governing Kawa where appropriate, highlighting ways in which they have embodied or developed learning within its concepts. An example of this was when a tamaiti showed over many months his amazing empathy and manaaki for his fellow tamariki. The kaiako documented this growth, making links to our Kawa.

As part of acknowledging Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a governing document of Aotearoa each year, we spend the weeks leading up to Waitangi Day discussing with the tamariki Te Tiriti and its place in Aotearoa, our own Kawa and what that looks like, as well as making links from it to Te Tiriti. On the Kindergarten day closest to Waitangi Day, we hold a signing ceremony and tamariki and kaiako sign a large copy of our Kawa, which is then prominently displayed in the Kindergarten.

The Kawa is a living document which is referred to many times in a day as ways to acknowledge appropriate behaviour, reminding tamariki of our agreed code of conduct and it is used during discussions and planning with tamariki around events, trips and activities. The Kawa has become a vibrant part of our learning community. We have had one of our whānau take its concepts home and draft their own Kawa based on its ideals.

The second part of Article 1 is our governance responsibility to support tamariki and whānau self-determination. Within our kindergarten we have considered how to ensure whānau and tamariki are supported and provided with opportunities to give voice to their aspirations and decide on what learning is important for them. When tamariki start at our kindergarten we ask whānau what they want their tamaiti to develop confidence in at kindergarten and their hopes and dreams for them. We collect this information either verbally, on a 'Me Sheet' or via email, whichever is most comfortable for whānau. We also have a 'Whakapapa Sheet' for whānau to complete where they can include details of people, places and things that are important to them.

When tamariki move from our younger Ngā Kōwhai session to our older Ngā Pōhutukawa session, we revisit these



**Setting sail in a Treaty-inspired kindergarten as Tawhirimātea blows a gale.**

aspirations with whānau by arranging a meeting with them. This can take place at a venue and time most comfortable to whānau: at home, in the kindergarten, at the end of session, in the evening. At this meeting we revisit the previous aspirations and get feedback on future aspirations. If the tamaiti is present at this meeting, they are also engaged around their own aspirations for their remaining time at kindergarten. We also ask whānau to imagine their tamaiti as an adult and what sort of person they would like them to be.

This is a basis for us to develop dispositional-based learning plans and the information from this meeting is documented in each child's profile book with an 'Aspirations Sheet'. The aspirations from both of these times are included in learning documentation, when appropriate. An example of this was when whānau spoke of their aspirations for their tamaiti. They wanted her to develop "confidence within groups, know she has a voice to share her knowledge with others". We have since been able to show her development by documenting her sharing her knowledge in front of the whole group of tamariki, leading karakia, and taking on a leadership role in our kapa haka session, and linking these back to the documentation of this meeting.



### A place to explore legends and place

We maintain an open door policy and welcome conversations with whānau at any time. This can be through face-to-face conversations, phone calls, emails, tamariki profiles and responses or questions on our Facebook page. By incorporating the concepts of whanaungatanga also within the philosophy/governance and practice of the kindergarten we are able to ensure that whānau have access to kaiako to discuss any areas and enable further self-determination. From time to time general feedback or aspirations from whānau are gained by the use of simple online survey tools. This is analysed and used in programme planning.

Tamariki show development of self-assessment through being able to articulate what they have learnt and how they have learnt it. They can also ask for specific things to be documented as a way of indicating the value that they place on the learning involved. We have facilitated this by ensuring tamaiti profiles are available for them to look at all the time and providing them with technology, such as cameras, to document their own learning.

We also ensure we use the language of learning with tamariki so that they become familiar concepts explored with questions such as “how did you learn that?” An example of this occurred when a tamaiti (a four-year old) asked for photographs to be taken of her hanging upside down on the bars and was able to articulate how she learnt to do this and the practice and perseverance needed to achieve this goal. Recording all this and documenting the sense of achievement is an important part of showing self-determination.

### Article Two

The second article of Te Tiriti o Waitangi “confirmed and guaranteed the chiefs ‘te tino rangatiratanga’ – the exercise of chieftainship – over their lands, villages and ‘taonga katoa’ –

all treasured things” (Wilson, 2012, p. 1). As early childhood kaiako, we promote and encourage this through the concept of kaitiakitanga in relation to whenua, tangata whenua, and taonga. Kaitiakitanga can be expressed as “the mutual nurturing and protection of people and their natural world” (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004, cited by Ritchie, 2010, p.12).

Our pepeha supports the history and our connection to the land that the kindergarten is situated on. To foster kaitiakitanga within our environment and community, we

promote practices such as sustainability. For example providing opportunities for tamariki such as recycling, making paper bricks for home fires, having a worm farm, being involved in ‘Paper for trees’ and growing an edible garden. As Paparangi School is next door, we take the tamariki down to their adventure zone to discover and explore with large natural materials. With the concept of looking after our environment, we take bags to collect rubbish with the idea that we are giving back to the community. Throughout our kindergarten environment we have a range of real, natural and open-ended equipment accessible on a daily basis. We strongly believe in ‘the environment as the third teacher’ which encourages and promotes creativity, problem-solving and kotahitanga.

*Te whāriki* highlights the importance of protecting “Māori language and tikanga, Māori pedagogy, and the transmitting of Māori knowledge, skills, and attitudes through using Māori language” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 12). Additionally these should be made visible and their value affirmed “for children from all cultural backgrounds” (p. 42). Te Ao Māori is interwoven throughout our curriculum and practice. Some of the ways we are kaitiaki for taonga katoa include:

- Upholding and embedding tikanga Māori (for example, by upholding the concepts of Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga by having a whakatau for new whānau to welcome them to the kindergarten);
- Sharing and making real many pakiwaitara such as reading Peter Gossage’s creation story, *In the Beginning* in both English and te reo Māori; and
- Through using te reo Māori.

Te reo Māori is a taonga that requires protection under Article Two of Te Tiriti. As kaiako, we are working on



increasing and improving our use of te reo Māori and have moved on from just using basic commands to using an increased vocabulary of words and everyday meaningful sentences such as 'Ka pai tō whakaaro' (Good thinking) and 'He aha ngā tae?' (What are the colours?).

Our confidence and understanding has increased to a level where we are now reading and understanding a variety of books in te reo Māori with our tamariki. Waiata are a great way of learning te reo Māori and we regularly sing waiata with our tamariki during our weekly kapa haka session, at mat times and during free play. Whakatauki are used in meaningful ways throughout the kindergarten both verbally and visually. For example, to highlight the specific learning in a learning story about tamariki being kaitiaki of the environment, we would use a whakatauki such as 'Manaaki whenua. Manaaki tangata. Haere whakamua: Care for the land. Care for the people. Go forward'.

Much of the signage around the kindergarten is bilingual. For example, our transition to school display is headed up, 'Na wai ngā kura? Who is at these schools?' (Note that this is not a direct translation but rather a different way of expressing the same thing.) Over time, we have noticed an increase of knowledge, confidence and appreciation for te reo Māori from our tamariki, whānau and community.

## Article Three

Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi states that 'In consideration thereof Her Majesty the Queen of England extends to the Natives of New Zealand Her royal protection and imparts to them all the Rights and Privileges of British Subjects' (Wilson, 2012, p. 1). In modern terms this means in theory that all citizens are considered equal within the eyes of the government and society. However, Mason Durie (2003) writes that in reality the idea of 'equality' needs to be measured and reviewed in terms of recognising indigeneity and the balancing and accessibility of indigenous people to their culture.

Modern aspects of citizenship are not solely about the rights of the individual but are also about the state having an obligation that includes supporting active participation in society for everyone. For tangata whenua that means enabling participation in Te Ao Māori. Durie (2003) goes on to say that participation in Māori society means being able to access Māori language, culture, whānau, and such customary resources as land, Māori social structures and Māori political voice. As ECE teachers, our role is to work in partnership with our whānau, hapū and iwi to support access and visibility of Te Ao Māori, for our tamariki, as embedded in their rights as citizens of Aotearoa.

The rights of tangata whenua for their culture to be valued and visible is woven throughout *Te whāriki*. The strand of Mana Whenua/Belonging states 'Appropriate connections with iwi and hapū should be established and staff should support tikanga Māori and the use of the Māori language (p. 55) and the strand of Ao Tūroa/Exploration that 'There should be a recognition of Māori ways of knowing and making sense of the world and of respecting and appreciating the natural environment' (p. 82).

The more recent publication of *Tātaiako* (Ministry of Education & Teachers Council, 2011) also acts as a guide for supporting culturally inclusive practice focusing on teachers knowing and understanding the cultural background of their students. The document validates Māori students learning and achieving as Māori located within their own culture, ensuring that the educational environment is not a homogenised template devoid of indigenous language, culture and identity.

Article Three supports our use of Te Ao Māori as a foundation for our practice and programme by ensuring our tamariki who whakapapa as Māori are immersed in their own culture and language. For our tamariki and whānau from other cultures who are citizens of Aotearoa, they are supported in building an understanding of another world view and the dual heritages underpinning Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

This dual heritage is evident from walking through our gate. As our whānau and tamariki enter our kindergarten, they are greeted with a series of murals that depict the dual histories of our community.

Inside, our walls celebrate aspects of Te Ao Māori that are part of our practice and programme. Our Kawa is documented through photos that show our tamariki and whānau living this kaupapa, Te Tiriti o Waitangi is visible again with photos from our everyday practice and programme that link to the articles and these displays are updated termly so that our current community can see themselves reflected in the environment linked to te ao Māori concepts.

At our Whānau Aspirations meetings, every whānau also receives a copy of a handbook we have written around our Tiriti-based practice explaining the importance of kapa haka and waiata; in addition, kupu, whakatauki and karakia are written out for whānau to support their own and tamariki knowledge of te reo and tikanga Māori and the physical and cognitive benefits for all our tamariki.

We have also established a routine of reviewing the profile books of each child six months before they go to school to see whether we have captured the essence of each child and their whānau. For our Māori tamariki, this includes ensuring we have celebrated their whakapapa and identity as Māori.

As the basis for part of our programme, PBE's strands of community and history support Te Ao Māori being visible and present in our practice and programme as well. Our yearly kapa haka concert is performed for all our community and local school and our tamariki perform for 40 minutes in te reo Māori telling the story of Papatūānuku and Ranginui through waiata and performance. The community is then invited back to the kindergarten for shared kai to celebrate this event. A learning story is also written for each child's profile book documenting the learning that takes place and Te Ao Māori concepts such as kotahitanga, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, wairuatanga and rangatiratanga that are fostered through this event.

Our Matariki celebration covers most of term 2 and the stories, traditions and practices of this time are explored and shared with whānau and tamariki culminating in a shared kai and fire pit (in the sandpit). These celebrations become part

of the learning environment for our community in a real and meaningful way and the knowledge gained is shared amongst all our whānau.

We are also building a relationship with our local papakainga, Ngā Hau e Whā o Paparāangi and were hosted with a whakatau for our tamariki and whānau. Links to the community were strengthened and our tamariki were able to participate in a whakatau process, get to know our tangata whenua, share manaaki with others and act as kaitiaki of our local environment by planting trees to celebrate our coming together. A group learning story is written that again celebrates these ideas and supports tamariki in sharing this experience with whānau.

## Article Four

Article Four of Te Tiriti o Waitangi states that “The Kawana says that all faiths - those of England, of the Wesleyans, of Rome, and also Māori custom and religion - shall all alike be protected by him” (Network Waitangi, 2016, p. 16). This fourth article was agreed to before any of the Rangatira had signed the Treaty. It came about when the Catholic Bishop Pompallier asked Hobson that there be a guarantee of freedom of religion. The Anglican missionary William Colenso subsequently worded the article, then Hobson and the Rangatira agreed to it (Network Waitangi, 2016).

*Te whāriki* states, “Learning and development will be integrated through recognition of the spiritual dimension of children’s lives in culturally, socially, and individually appropriate ways... Activities, stories, and events that have connection with Māori children’s lives are an essential and enriching part of the curriculum for all children in an early childhood setting” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 41).

Important transitions and processes within the kindergarten follow tikanga Māori and therefore necessarily incorporate this spiritual dimension for tamariki. When each tamaiti transitions from the Ngā Kōwhai session to the Ngā Pōhutukawa session, a whakatau is held. Whānau are invited to stay for this important gathering where tamariki and kaiako exchange greetings, sing waiata, share information about the kindergarten day, and explain our Kawa. This whakatau offers a time and place for tamariki to have their say and to help one another, which promotes mana, wairuatanga, and mauritanga for all by enhancing a sense of belonging and group harmony. These gatherings also highlight how people, places, and things all have a life force and are connected and reliant on each other.

This idea of coming together as one also happens at te wā kai, when we remove our shoes, sit on ngā kai whāriki, and say karakia mō te kai - to thank our whānau and ngā hoa for our food. This is also the time where we remember our friends who are absent and send them good thoughts if they are unwell.

Our poroporoaki is a special time to celebrate the mana of each tamaiti who is leaving our kindergarten. Important times, stories, and events of their learning journey are shared with tamariki, friends, kaiako and whānau. This ceremony is brought to an emotional end with the waiata, ‘Te Aroha’, thereby sending the tamaiti off to continue their learning journey, with

all of our aroha, whakaponu, and rangimarie.

Our physical environment also offers tamariki a tangible insight into the spiritual realm of Te Ao Māori. From conception to construction, the tamariki have been actively involved in enhancing our physical environment by helping to create representations of many of the Atua in the Ranginui and Papatūānuku creation story. (Ranginui and Papatūānuku hold special significance for the tamariki - they will proudly tell you, “If you put Papa and Rangi together you get Paparangi!”) A huge figure of Papatūānuku, clothed in flowers and ferns, welcomes all who visit, and Ranginui watches from above the sandpit. Rongo Mā Tane protects our hua whenua gardens, Tangaroa swims with others in his watery kingdom (on a mural), Tūmataunga guides our waka in the form of a tauihu, and tamariki find both representations of, and real creatures in Tāne’s forest. Lastly, the ever present Tāwhirimātea announces his presence by making kinetic sculptures fly.

Allowing tamariki to contribute to improving their own environment, and working collaboratively with the learning community to turn ideas into a reality, certainly enhanced the mana of all involved. Enlisting their hands-on help also ensured a piece of each tamaiti (their wairua) remains at our place, even when they leave.

The Taniwhā of Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington Harbour) is another example of how a pakiwaitara can develop, in tamariki, an understanding of how spirit is connected to place. The story of Ngake and Whāitaitai is often shared at our kindergarten. This was truly brought alive during our visit to Ngā Hau e Whā o Paparāangi when Whaea Amanda retold the story as we all stood high above the harbour at the Papakainga, where we could relive the adventures of Ngake and Whāitaitai, and also recognise the resulting local landscape these adventures created.

## Conclusion

Where to for us as we continue on this journey? We are now at the process of looking back on our progress and about to undertake a self-review on our vision and philosophy to ensure all we do is reflective of a Tiriti-based programme. We are thereby continuing to ensure our practices and teaching are reflective and honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi in an authentic and respectful way and continue to have positive outcomes for children.

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## Glossary

Aroha	Love
Atua	God/s
Hapū	Subtribe
Hua whenua	Vegetables
Iwi	Tribe
Kai	Food
Kaiako	Teacher
Kaitiaki	Guardian
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship
Kapa haka	Māori performing arts
Karakia	Prayer
Katoa	Everyone; all
Kaupapa	Purpose
Kawa	Agreed process; protocol; etiquette
Kotahitanga	Unity; shared effort
Kupu	Word
Mana	God-given authority; empowerment
Manaaki	Generosity
Manaakitanga	The expressions of generosity
Matariki	Māori New Year marked by the rising of the Matariki constellation (Pleiades)
Mauri	Life force
Mauritanga	The nature of the life force
Ngā hoa	Friends
Ngā kai whāriki	The food mat; the mat where food is consumed
Pakiwaitara	Historic stories
Papatūanuku	Earth mother
Pepeha	Recitation of a person's place in the world; a person's genealogy
Poroporoaki	Formal reflection at the end of a gathering

Rangatiratanga	Chieftanship
Rangimarie	Peace
Ranginui	Sky father
Rongo Mā Tane	An atua; 'God of cultivated food';
Tamaiti; tamariki	Child; children
Tāne	An atua; 'God of the forest'
Tangaroa	An atua; 'God of the seas'
Tangata Whenua	People of the land; the indigenous people
Taonga	Treasures; valued things
Tauihu	Prow
Tāwhirimātea	An atua. 'God of the wind'
Te wā kai	Time for food
Te Ao Māori	The Māori world
Tikanga	Culture, customs
Tukutuku	Woven panel
Tūmatuenga	An atua aligned with human effort; 'God of war'
Tūrangawaewae	A place of belonging
Waiata	Song
Waiora	Wellbeing
Wairua	Spirit
Wairuatanga	Spiritual interconnectedness
Whakapapa	Genealogy
Whakapono	Faith
Whakatau	Welcoming ritual
Whakatauki	Proverb
Whānau	Family
Whanaungatanga	The nature of families
Whatumanawa	Emotions
Whenua	Land; placenta

# Unpacking picture books

## *Space for complexity?*

Lisa Helmling with Robyn Reid

**As an adult, I love reading picture books. As an early childhood teacher, I love reading picture books with children. As a teacher educator, I am dismayed when I see teachers skimming through picture books. It appears that books 'at mat time' are often used to fill up time rather than to engage with children and with the picture books.**

This article is about three of my favourite picture books which I've used extensively with children and now as a postgraduate student, I have the chance to look at them closely and to come up with some theories about why they intrigue me. The authors of these books have deliberately made the books complex and provocative. These picture books can be described as 'postmodern' because they disrupt 'normal' storytelling by introducing multiple perspectives and challenging the reader to make meaning rather than telling the reader what to think or to understand (see Anstey, 2002).

Through my studies, I also realised that there is a large body of research building up about how digital technologies are changing how we humans and especially young children are engaging with print and especially images, including how children engage with picture books. One particular framework that I found helpful is called 'Radical Change Theory' (RCT) and was developed by Eliza Dresang (2008). Originally Dresang looked at high school students' use of libraries, especially how students were negotiating and physically reading textbooks. Aspects of students' digital experiences were recognised and using the framework of RCT, Dresang (2008) identified three broad areas:

**Interactivity** - Digital technologies are responsive technologies. The computer user, the Internet inquirer is facilitated in interacting with, and making meaning across, a myriad of contexts. Interactivity is evident in the reading of picture books when the reader (adult or child) is encouraged to take control, to get involved, to interact, to make meaning. In the context of picture books, this is most likely to happen when text and illustration invite questions, and when whoever is controlling the book (usually the adult/teacher) makes time for interactivity between the text, the illustration and the reader/s. An example is where the text and images offer opportunities for multiple non-sequential and complex readings, or where differing styles or layouts demand the reader's active participation as they explore multiple possibilities for each image, word, page and book (Pantaleo, 2004).

**Connectivity** refers to the non-sequential lines of inquiry that

are exemplified by the hyperlink in digital technologies and which can exist as links that are "hypertext-like" (Dresang, 2008, p. 295) in books. These are possible interpretations in the text that lead to connections to other worlds, books, and/or communities, thus also leading readers to make personal connections to their own knowledge. This increases engagement with images and supports readers to develop a personal, individual understanding and connection with them (Bull & Anstey, 2002; Dresang & Koh, 2009; Pantaleo, 2004).

Within RCT, *Access* refers to the way digital technologies have broken down information barriers, enabling access to a diversity of opinions and insights. When considered in the context of early childhood, and of early childhood settings, *Access* tends to be mediated by adults, requiring thoughtful decision making. With so much information on the Internet, what are children encouraged (allowed?) to access? What are they denied? Similar questions can be asked of children's picture books: What is made easily accessible? What is purposefully left out?

This article provides an introduction to three of my favourite postmodern picture books, as well as how teachers in ec settings can expand beyond their 'normal' ways of reading books with children.

The next three sections demonstrate how the postmodern pictures can stimulate conversations and how the RCT framework can guide teachers to engage more in-depth, especially with the illustrations.

### Picture Book #1:

*The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!* by A. Wolf

By John Scieszka (1989)

Illustrations by Lane Smith

This picture book tells the traditional fairy tale of the *Three Little Pigs* from the wolf's point of view. Starting with the front cover in a newspaper published as the 'Daily Wolf', there is a front page article written by A. Wolf. On closer inspection, it becomes evident that there is a pig's hoof holding the newspaper. Look at the way the hoof is scrunching up the corner, ripping the





**Figure 1**

page. What can be interpreted here? What connections with other stories could this suggest? Could it demonstrate annoyance with the story or disagreement between the pigs and the wolf? Could this pig be a family member of those in the original story? That hoof provokes many questions, including for whom the book (or newspaper article) is written. It also invites readers to question their own role in reading this text, whether they are reading from their own or an unknown pig's perspective. The reader's experience with the traditional story of the *Three Little Pigs* will influence possible connections and interactions as the story progresses (Dresang, 2008).

For teachers, there is a reminder that book covers can be worthwhile exploring in detail along with the children. What skills and strategies can teachers employ to encourage children to make connections between these images and their prior knowledge?

As regards this particular cover, it shows a newspaper front page. What do children know about newspapers? For adults, there may be an assumption that something presented in a newspaper has the appearance being truthful. In addition, the wolf himself is presented (in caricature) as wearing glasses and a suit. Again – does that make the wolf look more honest? Do we believe this story because of the associations we have with newspapers and credible people? The presentation of the text implies a secondary possible perspective because the structure and images of a newspaper article focused on a court hearing again imply an underlying attitude that it represents the truth. This is evident through the interactivity between images

and text, leading to possible connections to concepts like Honesty – and preconceptions such as whether the 'media' are usually accurate and trustworthy.

These are complex questions worthy of adult discussion. Older children in early childhood settings can engage with such ideas, for example, as when something is 'true' and when it isn't.

Figure 1 invites the reader to make connections between the images and the words, to challenge their own ideas of what is moral and ethical. In particular, what it means to be 'big and bad'. This image attempts to influence the reader to feel sorry for the wolf; however, a huge American cheeseburger warrants closer inspection in order to reveal bunny ears and a mouse-tail, and the wolf is looking very 'sheepish' peering up over his glasses at the burger. Why is eating the meat in a cheeseburger acceptable? but a rabbit and mouse is not?

The wolf then starts to push the blame away from himself and on to the reader:

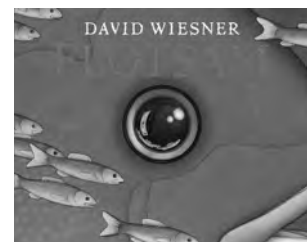
"It's not my fault wolves eat cute little animals ... If cheeseburgers were cute, folks would probably think you were Big and Bad, too".

In many traditional children's tales, wolves are stereotyped as 'bad' (Evans, 2015). This is questioned here and the reader, (who is assumed to eat cheeseburgers that contain meat) is challenged to consider themselves as also 'bad'.

## Picture book #2

*Flotsam* by David Wiesner (2006)

This book is wordless, so in *Flotsam* the illustrations do the speaking. The book consists of a series of images depicting a young boy exploring a beach. He finds an underwater camera, has the pictures developed and through them explores the wonders of



**Figure 2**



undersea worlds.

The meaning of the story is however not made explicit in the illustrations. The storyline is inherently interactive, inviting conversation. Multiple readings and close scrutiny of the puzzling illustrations offer multiple layers of meaning and a range of possible storylines. Multiple storylines are especially evident in the sixth photo which depicts three starfish dancing. But... are they starfish? We see they have trees on their backs, whales swimming beneath their feet and birds circling above. The starfish in the background looks more like an island, with its spreading foundations beneath the sea and trees and mountains above. The starfish in the foreground is balancing on three legs with one out to the side.

The more one analyses this image, the more possibilities and questions arise. Thus there are many opportunities for readers to create their own connections, use their own knowledge and develop their own layers of making meaning.

Sipe and Panteleo (2008) use Dresang's concept of connectivity to refer to the "sense of community or construction of social worlds that emerge from changing perspectives" (p.41). Consider the photo of the turtles swimming with entire towns or villages on their backs or the traditional home setting of the octopus with the parents reading a story to the baby octopi that raises questions about whether they live in family groups. Can we question some of the aspects of our own living spaces from this image? Does this make connections with the reader's experience, knowledge and opportunities? These connections with our world, showing a fish as a pet invite us to question the difference between families under the sea and in our own community. Is there an entire story line in this scene?

The layout of *Flotsam* is a series of different sized images that invite inferences based on their size and detail. The full double page of the boy finding the camera has an image of the beach over two pages. Over the page, there are eight bordered images and one un-bordered full-page one of the camera (see Figure 2). Readers can interpret the borders in many ways, such as depicting action or determining how much time should be allocated to them. Not only does the size of the images create multiple possibilities, but so does their order. There are two options for a focus here: the close up of the camera, or the image of the boy. Alternatively, the page could be read left to right, looking at the boy first and then the close-up of the camera.

On a number of occasions, I have introduced *Flotsam* to toddlers and found that with time and effort, the book is a great resource to encourage storytelling even with children who have limited vocabulary. Very young children in Aotearoa New Zealand generally have had experience with sand and water, and can connect to the images. Sometimes I heard toddlers share a few words, but more often the images themselves are so intriguing that the children sit enraptured. I know that something important is happening, and sometimes I find out what it is, but often the experience is the child's own and I'm left wondering.

### Picture book #3

*Voices in the Park*

By Anthony Browne (1998)

*Voices in the Park* is about two children playing in park. The front cover shows them facing each other under a row of



autumn trees and there are two dogs playing in the background. As we move through the text, there are many different ideas, concepts and readings about relationships, happiness, unhappiness and 'fun'.

Interestingly the words are often at odds with the images. This immediately creates a tension? What is the 'real' story? Or are there multiple stories here? And several layers of meaning including the possibility of a powerful psychological storyline.

Using RCT concepts, I have found new possibilities and opportunities to interpret, to make connections, and to create storylines. For instance, in one illustration we see Victoria chasing Albert, implying they are having a great time. In contrast, the body language of Charles and his mother suggests social discomfort. They are facing away from each other, arms folded, faces closed with drooping mouths. There is clearly a tension between these two characters, and although tension between family members is unusual in children's books, in *Voices in the Park*, there are opportunities to make connections to readers' own experiences at home.

Intriguingly, this book offers not only interactivity between these images and texts, but to other stories too. *Voices in the park* invites readers to make connections between images within images to create their own plot. RCT describes these elements as hypertext-like because (as happens with online hypertext links) they are immediate connections to other ideas, stories, concepts and visuals (Dresang & Koh, 2009). Every image has visuals that offer opportunities for children to make connections with their wider world and knowledge (Panteleo, 2004). A great example is in the image where Smudge's father is letting their dog, Albert, off his lead. In the background is a clear image of the classical storybook character, Mary Poppins, flying through the sky under her umbrella. Another example is the image of Charles leaving the park with his mother. Leaves represent their footsteps, and in the background one of trees is in flames. There are no explanation given, so the reader is left to puzzle over the significance of the illustrations.

### Implications

In 10 years of working with the youngest children in early childhood settings, I found that books work best when I was taking time to fully engage both with the books themselves, but also with the children and their responses.

I have also found that children's experiences increasingly include engagement with digital technologies, and it is important for early childhood teachers to recognise this. As such, RCT is likely to become more relevant as digital-savvy children become increasingly present in ece settings; the child who swipes at the page, expecting it to transform to whatever comes next, is no longer a novelty. So digital technology is changing how children engage with print - and with story reading and storytelling.

In the three postmodern books considered in this paper, RCT's concept of Interactivity is strongly evident in all three books as each invites the reader/s to connect into the story through the visuals and to collaborate in meaning making.

RCT's concept of Connectivity is especially evident in the nonlinear storylines of *Flotsam*, and to a lesser extent in *Voices in*



*the Park*. It is also evident in *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs*, by A. Wolf when A. Wolf directly and challenges the reader to consider what they eat, and the nature of who is 'good' and who is 'bad'.

However, RCT's concept of 'Access' is not immediately evident in these three picture books when considered in the abstract; in other words, when the books are removed from authentic settings where choices are made about what very young children can or cannot access. However, consideration of RCT's concept of Access brings into focus how adults tend to mediate what is available to young children. Who decides (and on what basis) the stories, images and books that young children can engage with? In an early childhood setting, these decisions indicate a political and negotiated space in which there are decisions made about 'what is suitable for children?'. Similarly in the process of reading picture books, teachers make decisions about when to move quickly, what to skip, and what to take time over. There are also political and pragmatic decisions about how long a teacher can spend with a child, sitting and interacting with a picture.

As you can I see, I find the topic stimulating! And I want to challenge early childhood teachers (and their centre managers) to slow down the busy-ness, so that both the author's intent and the child's response can become part of the reading experience.

Reading with children should not be seen as a luxury, but rather a vital time for engaging children's minds and encouraging them to focus, to interpret, to connect and to share.

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# Sa'afiafiga mo Iolesina Tagoilelagi

(7 December 1945 - 4 March 2017)

Irene Paleai-Foroti and Fa'atamali'i Kesi

*Aue! Ua maliu le toa  
A'o ana auupega o lenei ua o  
tatou oaoa  
Le tamaoaiga o le tofa sa ia  
sasaa ma faasoa  
O lenei ua malu ai Aoga  
Amata i Aotearoa.*



*Talofa e, Iolesina  
E lē tautogafau lou auau ia ta measina  
Sa e sailimalo e pei o le eleele e lē faamalieina  
Le gagana, aganuu ma le faakeriano ia  
faatumauina.*

*E manatua pea ou uiga malie ma le tausaaafia  
Sa fai ma toomaga o le musuā ma le lē fiafia  
O lau tuualalo sa aveva ma faiva e patipatia  
Lou naunautaiga ina ia folau i manū pea lau  
SAASIA.*

*Talofa e, SAASIA  
Ua tagi le fatu ma loimata le utufia.  
Sa'afi mo le nofoa o Tavita ua lē nofoia,  
E faigata o le finagalo o le Silisili Ese e le siligia.*

*SAASIA e, o lena ou faivamālō  
O la tatou taupati ia manomanō  
O le Atua lava lo tatou ala i mālō  
O fatu na, na saili ai e Iolesina Tagoilelagi mālō.*

In March 2017, the Sosaiete o Aoga Amata Samoa I Aotearoa (SAASIA) community lost one of its most prominent, influential, honoured and admired founders.

The present article is not only meant as an obituary but as a contribution in the spirit of Iolesina and of her work – in praise of the person, but even more with the focus on what she has strongly advocate to achieve for the field of Aoga Amata in New Zealand (Samoan early childhood education in New Zealand) to which so much of her life and energy was devoted.

She was a woman of high character and great promise, as, apart from her commendable personal qualities, she was remarkably talented, intelligent and reliable.

Her wisdom and huge, essential contribution to the development of Aoga Amata in New Zealand left a significant mark in Aoga Amata history in Aotearoa New Zealand.

# "My views have changed"

## *Graduating e.c. students calculate their bilingual, bicultural confidence*

Diane Gordon-Burns and Leeanne Campbell

**In the highly political space that is education, how do early childhood student teachers navigate the expectations that they will become confident and competent bilingual and bicultural teachers? In other words – how will they become self-confident teachers of Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori?**

As early childhood teacher educators, we are aware that students enter initial teacher education (ITE) often lacking confidence in these areas. Believing that self-efficacy is a major contributor to teacher motivation, we set out to learn more about whether the experience of teacher education builds confidence and competence in bilingual and bicultural teaching and learning.

As part of a larger longitudinal study (see Gordon-Burns & Campbell, 2014), two cohorts of early childhood student teachers were asked to self assess their confidence and competence in the areas of bilingualism and biculturalism relevant to early childhood education. This study reports on the findings of the second survey which was completed just prior to their graduation. Generally, the survey showed that in the course of their teacher education, there was a significant growth in confidence in both speaking Te Reo Māori and in understanding the value and purpose of the bicultural e.c.e. curriculum.

However, we remain concerned at the limited range of experiences and confidence that students bring with them when they start teacher education. And we remain concerned about whether as teachers in early childhood centres they can maintain this confidence.

### Authors' position and the significance of colonisation

The authors believe that the colonial history of Aotearoa needs to be discussed and taught in order for students to understand why members of the Māori nation agitate for bilingual/bicultural recognition within the education system and beyond. We believe, too, that students are likely to have a greater degree of empathy and support for revitalising reo Māori if they understand the historical alienation of

reo Māori and the impact the loss of language and culture can and has had on tangata whenua (Bright, Barnes & Hutchings 2013; Kēpa & Manu'atu 2011; Ministry of Education, 2013; Ritchie, Lockie & Rau 2011; Smith, 2003; Smith, 2000).

Over time these deprivations have created disadvantage for many Māori including the very real threat of the death of the Māori language (Anaru, 2011; Peterson 2000; Waitangi Tribunal, 1986, 2010). It could be said that the colonisers educated themselves and those who followed to despise Māori people, Māori culture and Māori language because of their unwavering efforts to access Māori land and to promote the settlement of English people, language, laws and attitudes on the history of the country. (For further insights into this thought, see Belich, 1996, 2012; Ritchie & Skerrett, 2014; Salmond, 1992). This continues in contemporary New Zealand society, with recent research into kaupapa Māori education pointing to urbanisation, colonisation and privileging of English as the language of education. All these factors impact negatively on the status of Māori (Bright, et al., 2013).

In his introduction to *Te whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 7), the acting Secretary of Education maintained that the curriculum's bicultural nature is established "for all early childhood services" (our emphasis). The curriculum reflects the relationship of both partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and espouses that "all children are to be given opportunity to develop knowledge and an understanding of the cultural heritages of both partners" (our emphasis) (p. 9). 'Both' refers to Māori and Pākehā.

Although this expectation has been repeatedly reinforced by other legal and political reports (see for example, Ministry of Education 2002, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2017; Education Review Office (ERO), 2008, 2010, 2012), early childhood centres throughout Aotearoa undertake this expectation with various levels of understanding and success, where success is entirely dependant on the abilities, commitment, attitudes and confidence of in centre staff (Williams, Broadley & Lawson-Te Aho, 2012).

Our earlier research highlights that initial teacher

education (ITE) students at our institutions enter their teacher education with a dearth of cultural capital and confidence in this regard (Gordon-Burns & Campbell, 2014). As teacher educators, we wanted to find out how our programmes affected student belief systems and their competency and confidence, as regards biculturalism and bilingualism. This is important to us as teacher educators because students' perception of their self-efficacy, their perceived development of both reo Māori and their confidence to *speak* reo Māori may mean a difference in regards to the progression of reo Māori me ōna ahuatanga within early childhood environments where they will eventually teach.

## The research

Students were recruited from two early childhood teacher education programmes, one at University of Canterbury and one at Rangi Ruru Early Childhood College<sup>1</sup> in Christchurch.

Students at the respective institutions must enrol in courses that teach te reo Māori and associated topics each year of their teacher education. For those students who attended Rangi Ruru Early Childhood College, their courses ran over the whole year and students attended weekly lectures of between one and two hours. As year three students, they attended three professional practicum placements which ranged between four to six weeks in duration (here students were mentored and supervised by a registered teacher), as well as reading and viewing course materials and other relevant articles, DVD or web-based information such as the tutor prescribed.

At Canterbury University students attended a one semester course. There were two options open to these students; attendance on-campus or distance learning. Students who attended on-campus courses had a four hour weekly class. Those who learned by distance could access the recorded on-campus session each week and there was opportunity to connect with their lecturer for teacher/student vocal and/or printed interaction.

Both groups of students at Canterbury University had required readings as well as web-based instruction which supported reo Māori pronunciation, reading and writing. They also completed two four week practicum placements where they were mentored by a registered teacher.

In our study, the student teachers' ages ranged from 20-56 years. There was one male. While the majority identified themselves as Pākehā, two identified as Māori and one as Pasifika. While there were 16 students who undertook our initial study in 2011, this second phase of the project gathered in only 10 responses. Through the questionnaire, information was sought about students' attitudes and values in relation to reo Māori me ōna tikanga, as well as to appraise the overall impact of their student teaching placements and course work on their personal skills, ability,

knowledge and development in terms of bilingual and bicultural teaching/learning.

## Research findings and discussion

A comparison between the students' first and third year responses highlighted an important shift in their self-confidence and self-competence. Significantly, the responses in the students' third year questionnaire highlight that their reo Māori courses had been effective in terms of their preparedness for the next stage of their journey; that is, their teaching within the early childhood sector. We see this as significant as Lewis et al (1999) found that teacher quality is a result of how well students felt prepared for this role. The responses in this (our second questionnaire) highlighted a high percentage of student efficacy in terms of their bilingual/bicultural *preparedness* for teaching.

### *Teacher self-efficacy is linked to their own effort, persistence, commitment and willingness to try new methods to motivate students.*

One respondent, for example, wrote "From year one when I entered college and I knew very little about biculturalism/bilingualism [,] this [has] now changed & I have become passionate and more vocal of my views & why it is import[ant] we understand this" (Respondent 2, p. 3).

Another student wrote:

My views have changed and developed to being more respectful of bicultural/bilingual practices as I have learnt about the importance of keeping Te Reo Māori alive in New Zealand, I am now more motivated to implement a range of bicultural practices into early childhood education settings. (Respondent 13, p. 7).

Anne Moran (2007) calls such change a philosophical commitment: making changes for fairer and more inclusive practice which requires a willingness to accept the complexity of change.

These students' quotes are typical of the overall responses and tend to show that they, just prior to entering the workforce, have not only made an important connection between their prior and present knowledge, but they are also conveying their belief in themselves to implement what they have learnt during their ITE studies.

Our findings are similar to those of University of Otago academics, Jill Paris, Adair Polson-Genge, and Brenda Shanks. Their 2010 research discusses the importance of teacher educators making connections to students' prior learning and experiences. This, they say, can enable students to better understand not only what is being taught but also why it is important and how to deliver their knowledge to

<sup>1</sup> Since preparing this paper for publication Rangi Ruru Early Childhood College has closed. This was due, in part, to the Christchurch earthquakes.



children. Significantly, they found that students recognised the importance of teacher educators that ‘walked the talk’, that is – that there was congruence between what teacher educators said and what they did.

One of the initial findings in our 2011 study (taken within two weeks of the respondents’ first year of teacher education) was an apprehension that the majority of students had in relation to their pronunciation and knowledge of reo Māori. This anxiety and lack of confidence, they said, created a barrier for them in speaking the language. One student, for example, said that she was concerned about saying the wrong word or the wrong thing. Other respondents did not want to offend anyone by mispronouncing words. In contrast, amongst the third year responses only two noted pronunciation as an ongoing concern. One noted that pronunciation is a progressive learning that would be continuing after graduating.

The connection between respect for Māori culture and respectful engagement with the language is a recurring theme both in our research and in the literature (see for example ERO, 2010; Williams, et al., 2012). Charged with promoting reo Māori within Aotearoa New Zealand, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (2000) advocates that teachers model correct pronunciation. This, they say, will encourage children and others to also use the correct pronunciation, which is especially important when speaking of Māori place names, people’s names and other words related to the environment. Correct pronunciation can demonstrate both knowledge and respect for the language

In contrast, Doerr (2009) writes about the feelings of disrespect that Māori students experienced when Pākehā teachers did not pronounce their names correctly. She contends that the mispronunciation of reo Māori is so hegemonic that challenging the perpetrators can be regarded as offensive. In fact, it was the Māori students who were deemed to be disrespectful when they showed their disapproval of the way their names had been spoken. In line with the discourse of respect and knowledge of the language, proper pronunciation contributes also to the notion of culturally safe environments.

Teacher self-efficacy is linked to their own effort, persistence, commitment and willingness to try new methods to motivate students (Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012). In the face of anticipated problems, self-efficacy also affects how teachers’ attitude and effort towards the activity (Venatta-Hall, 2010).

To build self confidence and self competence amongst student teachers, students entering ITE must have the groundwork laid for them through the schools that they attended, no matter where in the country that might be. This would mean that students starting teacher education are already grounded in the history of this country and the importance of their contribution in revitalising and maintaining integrity in bilingual/bicultural competency.

Our study and research highlights that it can take many years to shed the colonial layers of normalising monolingual

and monocultural schooling. Our teaching profession is required not only to fully understand our responsibilities as students and teachers in relation to bilingual and bicultural educational settings for all of our children, but to also build self confidence and competence amongst the teaching profession.

We end this paper with an encouraging quote from one of the students in our research project:

I have come to respect and gain insight into the importance of incorporating te reo Māori and Māori culture into early childhood education. It is a way of going beyond teaching children about school readiness to teaching children about where they come from, their heritage, values and beliefs and involving whānau in their learning. (Respondent 13, p. 3).

While this student nearing graduation recognises a change in attitude and preparedness for biculturalism and bilingualism, the challenge will be to maintain as a teacher this dedication, respect and confidence.

Mā te huruhuru, ka rere te manu

*With feathers the bird can fly.*

(With resources and valid instruction, the work can be achieved.)

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# Cameras in early childhood settings

## *Preliminary findings from a small-scale study*

Maureen Perkins

**Over the last two decades, the use of photographs in assessment documentation has accompanied a shift towards Learning Stories in early childhood education (ECE). This was modelled within the assessment exemplars in *Kei Tua o te Pae* (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2004, 2007, 2009). Many positive changes have been reported as a result of the use of photos and narrative assessment, including greater involvement of whānau and children in centre assessment and planning processes (Hatherly, Ham & Evans, 2009; Stuart, Aitken, Gould, & Meade, 2008).**

However, there appears to be a lack of literature available on the use of photos in centres, especially in assessment documentation (see Perkins, 2009). This practice appears to have developed organically without any widespread or research-informed professional debate. It is possible both academics and teachers are assuming that research findings have informed evaluative reports on assessment in e.c.e. (such as Education Review Office, 2008) as well as MoE-funded guidance given on assessment (such as Ministry of Education, 2004, 2007, 2009).

In fact, little evidence exists to support the efficacy of either narrative assessment or the use of photos (Perkins, 2013), with no firm evidence that these practices improve learning outcomes for children (Blaiklock, 2008).

There is also little research-based information about what might be important pedagogical aspects such as the impact of photography on children’s play, and technical choices such as which device is best, the use of close-ups, group photos, and photo curation. Such a lack of information makes it difficult for teachers to meet their professional responsibilities under the Practising Teachers Criteria to be able to “systematically and critically engage with evidence and professional literature to reflect on and refine practice” (Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, n.d.).

The most useful research for NZ ECE teachers to date is the Centre of Innovation work at Roskill South Kindergarten (Ramsay, Breen, Sturm, Lee & Carr, 2010). That research looked at the integration of ICT in teaching and learning and includes work relating to assessment documentation, in particular, to Learning Stories.

This paper aims to provide some baseline information about how cameras – and photos – are used in early childhood services. Hopefully the research will spark some debate.

### The research

To find out how cameras – and photographs – are used in early childhood settings, a small scale, anonymous online survey was distributed by email to Auckland ECE teachers’ centres or to their umbrella organisations, as well as through several ECE Facebook pages. A total of 86 teachers responded to the survey although some questions were answered only by 50–60 of the participants. Because the survey was anonymous and several teachers from any one centre may have participated, these numbers could represent a smaller number of centres.

The specific types of services (e.g. Kindergarten, Montessori, corporate, private or community-based) were intentionally not identified by this survey to reduce any potential concerns services may have had about the study making negative comparisons between types of services.

The survey gathered anonymous demographic data about qualifications and approximate ages of respondents. The term ‘teacher’ is deliberately used although some respondents were unqualified, or students in training. Their role in the centre was still that of a teacher.

*Figure 1: Qualifications of respondents*

NZ ECE Qualification	Student teachers in training	Other teaching qualifications
46 (77%)	11 (18%)	4 (6%)

Unqualified	Total # responses
4 (6%)	65 (100%)

These findings are very similar to government statistics that show 76% of NZ ECE teachers are ECE qualified or have primary teaching qualifications (MOE, 2015).



Accessible portfolios can tell children their e.c.e. story

## Findings and Discussion

The survey asked a range of questions:

### 1. The number and types of photographic devices available in a centre/room for the use of adults and children

The first choice in photographic tools was overwhelmingly a digital camera (Figure 2) and most of the teachers used a device owned by the centre (Figure 3). The high use of centre-owned digital cameras – rather than phone cameras – could be related to centre guidelines for privacy. For the rest of this paper the term camera will be used to cover all devices that take photos.

Figure 2: Type of camera device used

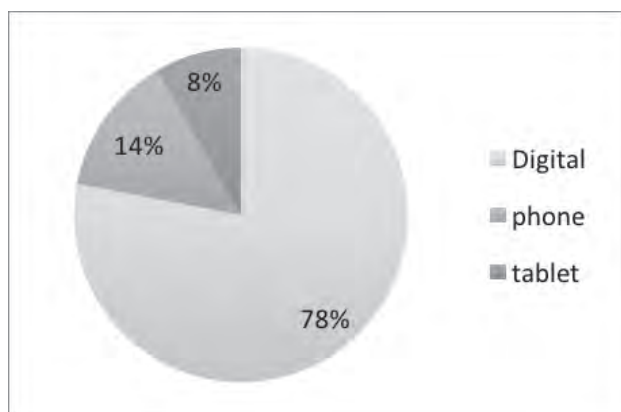
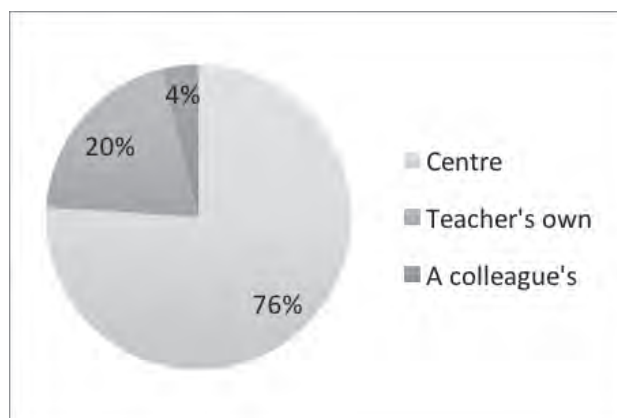


Figure 3: Camera device ownership



Although most teachers had cameras in their centres, there was a wide range of real access to these. The majority reported three or more cameras in a centre or room (Figure 4). This would mean that in most cases there was good access for the adults. For the 15% of teachers with access to only one camera, there could be problems capturing learning events as they occur. In more than 50% of responses, children had no ready access to cameras (Figure 5).

In a study done in New Zealand, Lisa Oldridge (2010) found some EC centres' reasons for not providing cameras to children included:

- a history of equipment damage,
- a perception that ICT was not an interest for the children, or concerns about the teaching time taken up



by teaching children safe,

- and effective use of the cameras.

Interestingly, one centre in her study acknowledged that on four of the five occasions they had to replace cameras, the damaging accidents occurred during teacher use (not use by children).

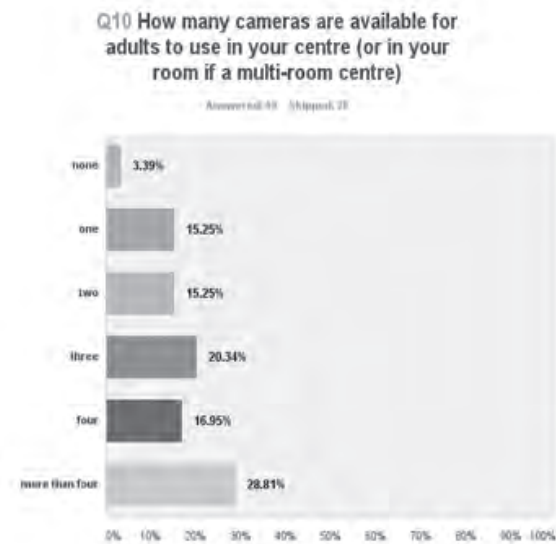
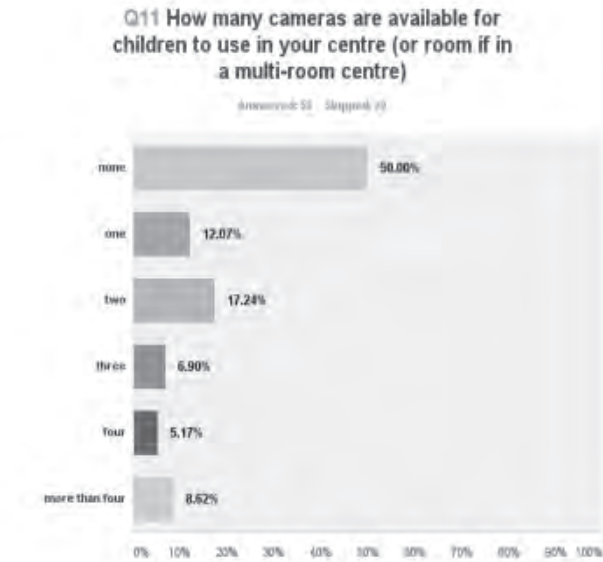


Figure 5: Camera access for children



In some centres, giving cameras to children and allowing them to choose the subjects of their photos has informed both assessment and transition processes. In a major study of ICT use in ECE centres, an example is given of change in how devices are used and understood:

We began to notice how the ICT was becoming more a tool for the children rather than the focus. ... Children have taken more ownership of their work, deciding for themselves what is 'valuable learning', and what learning/interests they want to follow on with. By trusting the children, allowing them to control their

own use of ICT equipment [...] children are able to build a sense of worth and pride about themselves.

Barnados Early Learning Centre report (cited by Hatherly, et al., 2009, p.53)

The same study also found that digital cameras were particularly important for children who have difficulty settling into new environments and large groups, but also for children and families who have English as an additional language. The photos "become 'a way in' to shared conversations about things the child knew about or was interested in" (Hatherly, et al, 2009, p.73). In addition, discussion of photos with children was often a stimulus for conversations with children about their play and learning. Such conversations may not only increase opportunities for language and cognitive development but also provide teachers with informal and formal assessment opportunities. Children's involvement in the selection and analysis of photos, as well as their access to cameras is likely to be a worthwhile self-review topic for centres (Hatherly, et al., 2009).

## 2. Do teachers feel they need additional knowledge or skills?

Although 56 participants said they had enough skills and knowledge all or most of the time, there were 33 additional comments to this question. The most common need identified was for pedagogical knowledge (36%), followed by a need to know how to take a good photo (23%). Other responses included a desire for pre- and in-service professional learning (PL) on the topic of assessment photos in general.

There appears to be little evidence available on pre-service teaching on this topic. Arizona State University West has a programme for preservice early childhood teachers that has focused on upskilling students, lecturers and practicum mentor teachers in the use of a range of digital tools including the use of digital cameras to document children's work for assessment purposes (Kelley, Wetzel, Padgett, Williams & Odom, 2003). The main focus of the programme, however, was on the use of computers for student teacher learning, online teacher portfolios, and the use of technology with children. Other literature about preservice teacher technological education appears also to be focused on the in-centre use of computers, tablets and software rather than on the specific use of digital cameras for assessment purposes.

Although I am aware of Professional Learning available to ECE centres on topics such as learning stories and general assessment, as well as management, leadership, and curriculum, there does not currently appear to be any specific support offered on a critical pedagogical approach to the use of photos in ECE assessment and documentation.

## 3. Are centres and teachers covered by cyber safety, privacy and device use policies?

Of the 57 teachers who responded, 17 reported that their centre had a policy or signed agreement on cyber-safety,

as well as the use of cameras and photos, but nine teachers either indicated that their centre had no policy or they did not know if there was one.

Although this is a relatively low percentage, the numbers are still cause for concern, especially since these respondents were qualified teaching professionals. All of the unqualified respondents knew about centre policies. A lack of such documentation or even a lack of awareness of it could be unsafe for both teachers and centres, as well as families. These findings appear to align with the ERO (2015) findings that many ECE centres need to review how well their staff understood privacy regulations and processes in the centres.

Figure 6: Centre policies and agreements

Privacy and/or cybersafety	Camera and Photo use	Use of ICT tools
17 (30%)	17 (30%)	11 (19%)
Don't know	None	
9 (16%)	3 (5%)	

#### 4. What do teachers photograph and why?

Most photos were taken of children, activity within the centre, or children's creations/artwork. These were followed by photos taken on trips, and photos of whānau. The least common subject for photos was the teachers themselves.

Forty-eight percent of respondents reported taking photos:

- when a child was engaged in their activity,
- when there was evidence of a child's interests, or
- when there was evidence of learning.

Respondents described trigger moments and events as "magic", "wow", "special" "joy", "significant", or "memorable". Other respondents had no particular recurring reason to take photos other than to take them 'as needed'. Some teachers took photos to fulfil an assignment requirement (student teachers) or at the request of the intended audience e.g. for parents.

A small percentage of responses indicated that photographs were taken mostly for accountability purposes e.g. to provide evidence of planning. No details were provided by respondents about how this was done. Of course many of the other responses about documenting children's learning and interests could well have been for the purposes of accountability as well. Approximately two thirds of respondents could clearly articulate their rationale for taking photos.

#### 5. How teachers use and curate the photos?

More than half the respondents reported that they took at least 10 photos per day. This raises issues of what is done

with the photos, how they are curated, how they are stored as well as how they are interpreted. Effective management and review of photographs is likely to be a challenging issue with large numbers of photos being taken in centres.

All respondents use photos in more than one way. Nearly everyone who responded uses photos for Learning Stories. In addition, photos are used for online communication, as well as for display purposes (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: How assessment photos are used by teachers.

Learning Stories	Wall displays	Online portfolios
58 (98%)	56 (95%)	21 (35%)
Emails to parents	Blogs/webpages	
27 (45%)	26 (44%)	

In their comments, respondents indicated that photos were used in in photobooks, centre Facebook pages, information folders and transition to school portfolios. Some centres were using photos at group mat times via a data projector or centre television, in slideshows, in a digital photo-frame, and in daily journals for infants and toddlers.

When asked whether photos were shared with teaching teams or whānau for discussion *before* being published in documentation, the majority said that this only occurred sometimes or never. Only 15.5% indicated that they always discuss photos before they are published. This is cause for some concern as it suggests that it is easier to take photographs than to find the time to prioritise thoughtful and inclusive interpretation of their meaning.

Anne-Li Lindgren (2012) wrote on the ethical aspects and power relationships involved in photography for pedagogical documentation. In particular, she wrote about the importance of considering whether our current fascination with photos as a tool in ECE documentation included a view of the child as a participant in the learning process, or as an object to be viewed, discussed and displayed. In an English study, Caroline Bath (2012) reported that children were often confused about why certain photos had been used. She found that many children disagreed with interpretations teachers had made – especially in documentation about group learning or events where children reported not really being involved or even not actually enjoying the activity they were reported as learning in being involved in. Our position as the taker of photographs is one of power, and we need to consider how we are viewing the children we photograph.

Time to interpret photographs brings into focus the working conditions for ECE teachers. How much non-contact time do teachers have? And is interpreting photographs the best use of that time? Can interpreting photographs thoughtfully and reflectively be prioritized in the context of producing a certain number of pieces of documentation per child per month? If reflective conversations about photographs are to occur, it may require changes in the ways photos are used and documentation is created.

Photos should also be revisited over time to allow for differing perspectives as patterns emerge over time, and the viewer brings new insights and experiences to the memories. Revisiting assessment is important in order to see patterns and trends in children's interests, learning styles, schema etc. which can allow teachers to investigate and implement better evidence-based planning over time (Hatherly et al., 2009).

Being able to revisit photos efficiently requires organised digital storage systems. Of the 55 teachers who responded to a question on how photos were stored, 63% reported that photos were stored on a centre computer with 24% of respondents taking individual responsibility for the photos and 13% keeping them on the device and deleting them after they have been used in documentation or were no longer wanted.

## Implications – where to from here?

Cameras have become a tool of early childhood teachers. This small survey has focused on practical aspects of camera use in early childhood centres. It documents how widespread the use of cameras and photographs in early childhood settings and can provide a basis for further research, as well as discussion amongst early childhood teams.

This research has not focused on interpreting photographs for assessment purposes. Such research would require a qualitative study about the thought processes and choices that teachers make when using photography for narrative assessment.

This research suggests that as a tool, the camera – and the photos taken with cameras – has potentials that are not well understood by early childhood teachers. The knowledge that exists about using cameras and photographs appears to be learned in early childhood contexts. So teachers learn from other teachers. Arguably, there is a place for teacher education to include more about photographs and their place in narrative assessment. Meanwhile there are online forums and social media opportunities for teachers to collaborate in this area.

The use of centre policies and agreements on how photos are used and stored is a topic for urgent discussion in centres. The inclusion of families and other teachers in reflective discussion of assessment photos would be an important area for self-review in a centre, as would the issue of children's access to cameras.

In general there needs to be more critical discussion of this everyday practice, to ensure it is carried out reflectively, in ways which improve learning opportunities for children and partnership with whānau. By reflecting individually, within teaching teams, and with the wider teaching community about how we use photos, we can ensure we are not abusing our power as teachers, while also ensuring the most reliable assessment information possible.

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# 'PISA' for five year olds?

## *A position paper on OECD plans for a global testing tool*

Lia de Vocht, Glynne Mackey and Diti Hill

**Many of us are familiar with PISA, which is an abbreviation of the Programme for International Student Assessment that since 2000 has tested 15-year-olds in many countries, including New Zealand.**

PISA was developed by the Organisation for Economic Development (OECD) and its results are highly influential in the delivery of education for young people. The PISA results effectively create league tables of student achievement levels allowing for comparison, and a degree of competition across countries. (See Alexander, 2015.)

For children aged five years old, OECD is well advanced in developing a similar international testing regime. It is called the International Early Learning and Child Wellbeing Study (IELS). Its purpose is:

*... to provide countries with a common language and framework, encompassing a collection of robust empirical information and in-depth insights on children's learning development at a critical age. With this information, countries will be able to share best-practices, working towards the ultimate goal of improving children's early learning outcomes and overall well-being (OECD, 2017).*

A scoping pilot that included New Zealand has already taken place and the study has moved to the next phase of field studies to develop the final standardised testing instrument. According to the OECD website, the final instrument should be finalised by 2018 and it is expected that the tests will be implemented in the southern hemisphere in 2019, with a report planned for 2020.

The IELS tests will:

- “Provide robust empirical data on children's early learning
- identify factors that foster and hinder children's early learning
- inform about children's skill levels and provide valid and comparable information on children's early learning” (OECD, 2017).

According to the OECD website, benefits to countries will include the ability to:

- improve parenting programmes and support for parents,
- identify key factors that drive or hinder children's early learning,
- to assess children's learning outcomes through a wide range of

critical domains; and

- to learn from each other by developing common frameworks and benchmarks.

In addition, early childhood services with the best results can be identified with this tool (OECD, 2017).

The OECD's study involves at least 3000 children aged between 5 and 5.5 years-old in at least 200 settings per country and with up to 15 children per setting. The study will collect information on cognitive and social-emotional skills, and children's individual backgrounds both at home and at the early childhood service. Children will be asked to complete 15 minute tests on tablets related to four early learning domains:

- children's emerging literacy,
- emerging numeracy,
- executive function,
- empathy and trust.

A trained “study administrator” will be present. Indirect information will be collected from parents and teachers through questionnaires (OECD, 2017).

The main concern raised by academics and educators both overseas and here in New Zealand is that standardised assessment, ranking and decontextualized comparisons will be used to inform the education of our youngest citizens (Moss et al., 2016; Urban & Swadener, 2016; Carr, Mitchell & Rameka, 2016). Moss et al. (2016) are critical how the OECD study reduces early childhood education to purely technical practices, completely ignoring inequality and diversity.

Urban and Swadner (2016) cite a large body of research that shows that the reliability and validity of standardised testing is low and that league tables tend to lead to oversimplification, ignoring different sociocultural contexts.

Noddings (2002) argues that there is no place for universal assessment in education; she emphasises the importance of a moral curriculum which allows for learning to be focused on the issues and questions that answer the key issues that impact on and concern children.

Carr, Mitchell and Rameka (2016) also believe that the greatest danger of an OECD international assessment tool is that it presents a ‘one-world view’ and that the rich sociocultural

assessment for learning that we have been developing in Aotearoa/ New Zealand since the introduction of *Te Whāriki* in 1996 and all that the document stands for may be at risk.

We, the authors, are all members of the Executive of OMEP Aotearoa. It is our position that standardised testing such as proposed by OECD is contrary to the UNESCO recommendations that assessment in early childhood should foreground the importance of context and cultural relevance (Pramling Samuelsson & Kaga, 2008). Early childhood contexts are so integrated with culture that any universal assessment would advantage some societies and disadvantage others. Thus this type of universal assessment is invalid and of serious concern when it is used as a basis for early childhood education policy.

Focusing on the local enables children, families and communities to work together. It allows for diversity of provision, curriculum and pedagogies. This emphasis on the local is recognised as integral to pedagogies such as the highly acclaimed early childhood curricula, for example *Te Whāriki* (Aotearoa New Zealand), and Reggio Emilia (Italy). These pedagogies position children as citizens with the right to participate and have agency in issues that impact on their lives.

As an international framework, the OECD's IELTS shifts emphasis away from pedagogies which focus on that which is meaningful and relevant in children's lives and in their learning. As seen with previous similar assessment initiatives, minority groups score poorly which disempowers them and so perpetuates the gross injustice that these children are viewed as less capable and less competent citizens in the community (Smith, 2013).

During children's early years there should be more emphasis on how children develop their identity as learners by strengthening their dispositions for learning throughout their life. At this very significant stage in children's lives, where the best learning is with and alongside others within a sociocultural framework, individual assessment would be counterproductive and unnecessary. No individual child reaches her/his potential alone: it is always within a community of learners, where participation and exploration are encouraged.

In addition, we are concerned the IELTS will lead to competition between public, private, and corporate provision, as early childhood education centres would use assessment results for marketing purposes. Because they want the best for their child, parents will be (mis)guided to enroll their children using IELTS results, believing that success in this international assessment, is first and foremost, in the best interests of the child.

Commercial education – which is widespread in Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood sector – has recently been under the spotlight at the United Nations. Last year a resolution was passed that urges States to support public education and to regulate providers. Public education is seen as key to meeting children's right to education without discrimination and with dignity for all.

The UN resolution, which was adopted during the 32nd session of the UN Human Rights Council (13 June to 1 July 2016), urges all States to “address any negative impacts of the commercialization of education”, in particular by putting in place a framework to regulate and monitor education providers (Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2016).

If States are serious about raising the quality of early childhood

education, it would be better to invest time and funds into the provision of quality early childhood education that is locally responsive, culturally sensitive and democratic, rather than into the development of a universal assessment tool and international league tables. In this way, the right to education without discrimination and with dignity is most likely to be met.

Universal assessment is seen by the OECD as a tool to improve economic outcomes. Economic outcomes, however, will be best realised through communities who understand the potential of learning and working together to nurture and support their children within a social and cultural education context and where teachers and children are not subjected to universal testing.

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# Navigating language diversity

*Review of 'Teachers voyaging in plurilingual seas: Young children learning through more than one language'.*

Edited by Valerie N. Podmore, Helen Hedges, Peter J. Keegan, and Nola Harvey.

Published by NZCER Press, Wellington, 2016.

Cost \$44.95

Available from <http://www.nzcer.org.nz/nzcerpress/teachers-voyaging-plurilingual-seas-young-children-learning-through-more-one-language>

Reviewer: Mee-Ling Ting

***Teachers voyaging in plurilingual seas* reports on a major study documenting the learning experiences of bilingual and multilingual young children in four early childhood settings in Auckland.**

As part of a project funded by the Teaching and Learning Research Initiatives (TLRI), the study also documents the families' expectations and aspirations regarding the heritage/home languages, ways that educators engage in opportunities in promoting and extending children's heritage/home languages, and addresses the challenges of deficit discourses including misguided beliefs about speaking more than one language. Last but not least, the study provides educational implications that validate and nurture children's heritage/home languages, not only in early childhood settings, but also in the family and in the community.

According to the 2013 census, ethnic and language diversity is particularly evident within Auckland region in New Zealand. For a nation state that only recognised biculturalism barely 40 years ago (Stewart, 2016) with first bicultural education policies in place in the 1980s (Lourie, 2016), significant effort has been made to include the Māori language into English-dominant education settings.

Despite the continuing argument that biculturalism is very much symbolic rather than a genuine acceptance and validation of Māori language and culture by non-Māori (Lourie, 2015), the greatest achievements are perhaps the rejection of deficit theorising about Māori within mainstream education (Bishop, 2015) and the increased recognition of Māori culture, language as relevant and important.

Currently, a movement to transition New Zealand into a multilingual and multi-literate country is pushing the country's education sector into yet another level of challenge. Although early childhood education has a significant responsibility to ensure all children have the right to learn their language, there is

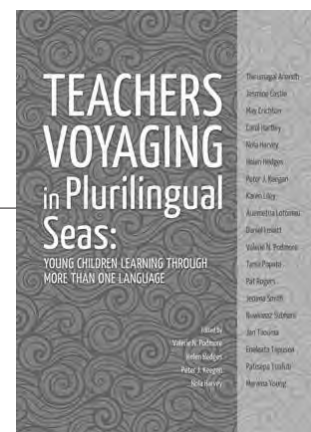
a shortage of research literature about bi/ multilingual early childhood education. The early childhood educators who are working with many children from bi/ multilingual backgrounds in plurilingual contexts, are basically navigating through uncharted territory. Therefore, the research findings documented in this book serve to provide some useful insights and directions for teachers also venturing through the 'plurilingual seas' of multicultural/multilingual early childhood education.

The metaphor of 'ocean voyagers who are embarking on a relatively unknown journey' is used to structure the book, and each chapter begins with a whakatauki that signals an optimism about this voyage despite impending challenges.

By 'scanning the horizon', the first chapter provides the background to the research: outlining relevant policy and early childhood curriculum considerations. The first concern which drives this research is the disappearance of indigenous languages that poses a threat to the diversity of cultures, identities and knowledges. It has been pointed out that educational institutions that are predominantly monolingual, privilege dominant languages at the expense of indigenous and immigrant languages and to further accelerate the extinction of languages, among which, the loss of te reo Māori poses the biggest concern in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Another concern is that the ways to address diversity of languages may be oversimplified without capturing the richness of language and culture – that is, a tokenistic approach to practice that denies the authenticity of the culture (Ritchie, 2003); diversity becomes invisible. The TLRI research sets out to consider the valued outcomes by teachers and families for children who learn in more than one language.

Chapter 2 of the book 'sets the navigation points' by





presenting three research questions drawn from literature reviews on language diversity, framed by two major theoretical concepts, which are ‘funds of knowledge’ and ‘additive bilingualism’. The concept ‘funds of knowledge’ recognises and embraces children’s languages and cultures, as well as validating children’s styles of learning which enable ‘self-determination’ (Bishop, 2015). ‘Additive bilingualism’ is a model that recognises that children can learn effectively in more than one language. In fact, language can be used as a resource for learning, enabling different perspectives of meaning-making.

A key myth that is challenged in the research is the misguided fear that speaking and learning more than one language impedes children’s English language learning. This myth is a relatively common belief in contexts where only one dominant language (predominantly English) is accepted and used (Espinosa, 2008). Therefore, the additive model of bilingualism provides an empowering, positive view with regards to bi/ multilingualism.

The third chapter of the book ‘charts the procedure’ by outlining the research design and processes, pointing out challenges faced by the teacher-researchers working with children who learn in more than one language. The transformative-emancipatory paradigm provided the research with a framework for addressing the issue using a sociocultural approach to mixed methods strategies. The sociocultural approach emphasises the importance of linking heritage/ home language with families and communities, therefore teacher-family partnership can be established and maintained while working collaboratively during data collection within the four different early childhood settings. This transformative mixed methodology addresses the complexities of research in culturally complex settings that can provide a basis for social change (Mertens, 2007).

Chapter 4 to 7 are written by teacher-researchers working in each of the four different early childhood centres. They documented bi/ multilingual children’s learning experiences, and discuss the research findings and the pedagogical implications for each settings.

What is significant is that the research enabled deeper teacher relationships with children, families and fostering more systematic, in-depth discussions about families’ aspirations for children. During the research, the teacher-researchers recognised there was a major shift from using heritage/ home languages as a transition tool, to using heritage/ home languages as a cognitive resource. As the research progressed, teachers came to realise and appreciate the values of including children’s languages and cultures. They set about learning more and engaged in reflective development of culturally responsive pedagogies.

The last chapter provides reflections on the theoretical insights across contexts before ‘negotiating landings’ as the study maps out the implications for teachers, families, researchers and policy makers to foster and validate children’s heritage/ home languages through intentional planning, innovative pedagogies, practices and policies.

The findings are of no surprise, confirming similar findings

in earlier research related to biculturalism in New Zealand’s educational contexts. These earlier studies have already confirmed and solidified the importance of the validation, acceptance and recognition of children’s heritage language, culture, practices and the knowledge that they bring with them into the education settings. They also confirmed the importance of working collaboratively with the children’s families and communities to expand and enrich learning resources and experiences. What this new research adds is that these insights are now extrapolated to plurilingual contexts.

However, there is still space for further exploration with regards to the effectiveness of these strategies and how practical it is for teachers (especially those who are monolingual English-speaking) to meet the existing bicultural expectations of revitalising Māori language and culture while also taking on the tasks of addressing the different educational aspirations of the parents of children from diverse array of cultures.

Overall, *Teachers voyaging in plurilingual seas* offers a new space of negotiating a new territory for plurilingualism within the bicultural context of New Zealand. It offers a starting point for conversation around diversity while still keeping New Zealand’s bicultural identity intact.

Providing a strong basis to address the issues of working with children of bi/ multilingual backgrounds, the incorporating of ‘funds of knowledge’ and ‘additive bilingualism’ approaches validate and nurture children’s heritage/ home languages. This book is highly recommended to early childhood teachers and student teachers, as well as to centre managers and owners.

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*Leeanne Marie Campbell*

Ko Ngāti Hine te iwi, Ngāti Te Tarawa te hapū, Manu Koriki te whare, Motatau te whenua

Until recently Leeanne tutored at Rangī Ruru Early Childhood College in Christchurch. She currently teaches in a Christchurch nursery and also leads the Ministry of Education 'Strengthening Early Learning Opportunities' professional development education programme. Leeanne's research interests include inclusive education and social justice from a bicultural/bilingual (including teachers' beliefs and practices) perspective.

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