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stitching lives together

Developing an understanding of Pākehā teachers’ practice, pedagogy and philosophy in culturally responsive secondary classrooms

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

The aim of this project is to illuminate and understand the subtleties and intricacies of Pākehā teachers’ practice and personal philosophy in culturally responsive classrooms. It was about identifying what teachers were experiencing in the classroom where culturally responsive practice and pedagogy are considered important factors for increasing student engagement and achievement. This research project is important because classrooms in New Zealand continue to increase in student ethnic and cultural diversity yet remain the same for teacher ethnicity, over 70% self-identify as Pākehā.

This is a critical autoethnographical study. Throughout the study my role as the researcher was central as I reflected critically on my own practice through creative writing and craft making in the Te Kotahitanga programme. Collaborative autoethnography was also employed to juxtapose other stories alongside my own. Six secondary teachers, who self-identified as Pākehā, spoke about their practice, pedagogy and personal philosophy in the classroom during two sets of semi-structured interviews. The participants, who volunteered, were from the same school. In the analysis phase, creative writing and collaborative stitching were used to further analyse and make sense of the research data, with the researcher in the role of a/r/tographer. This project sought to reveal culturally responsive teacher processes as a way to understand them further, hoping to create a way in for other educators to understand their own experiences further.

The study confirmed that there is a need for teachers to know their students as diverse individuals, to be invested in the school’s philosophy and to feel valued in their role as a teacher. However, the unexpected finding in the data revealed that...
teachers also need to discover and know who they are. They need an opportunity to critically explore their own cultural and ethnic identity before they can fully lead students on their own journeys.
Dedication

To my children and husband,
my Grama Jean,
and my mother Iris.
And to all the other
teachers and students
I have been, and have had.
Acknowledgements

I heartedly acknowledge the many people who have been on this journey to a thesis with me. I would like to thank the research school, its principal and participants who gave of themselves without reservation and supported me throughout this project. Thank you to my family and friends who arrived with hugs, playdates, conversation, and encouraging words. And thank you to everyone at the University of Auckland who gave of themselves, and their time, so freely.

To TeachNZ. Thank you for the study grant, which gave me the time and space to create this work and for supporting this project in its initial stages.

To my Grama, Jean. For teaching me to stitch and to bake. And that in stitching and baking there is loving, living and being.

To my husband, Michael, and children, Reed and Indie. Thank you for giving me time, space, cuddles and care like no one else can. You were all so encouraging and saw only possibilities, even when I was too busy to play. I am immensely grateful for you.

To my supervisors extraordinaire, Esther Fitzpatrick and Fetaui losefo, for their unwavering dedication, kindness, and belief in me as a researcher and educator and this project. You both guided me through this project, through my tears, fears and self-doubt, and encouraged me to believe in the importance and value of my research. Your critical eye, boundless possibilities and positive affirmations were always what I needed… “I know right?” There are not enough thank you’s for you both. I am in awe of your generosity, your spirits and your belief in me.

And finally, to my mother, Iris. You have been with me every step of every journey, this one was no different. You inspire me still.

Aroha nui.
Figure 1. A/r/tographic 'stitches and fragments.'

Figure 2. A/r/tographic 'fragments, frays and stitches.'
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Chapter One:  
Introduction

The Stitch Ripper
The quilt was almost complete. My joy at completing the final stitches on the quilting blocks quickly reminded me of what I had known for some time…some stitches were out of place. When I first saw them, I knew. I knew they were too close, too close to the edge, and I would not be able to forget them, no matter how hard I tried. But I kept going, thinking I could forget them. As I tied the knot on the last thread, smoothed out the blocks in front of me, they were still there. Too close, too close to the seam. They stared at me, called me to recognise them.

In that moment of one thousand thoughts, I grabbed the stitch ripper, and ripped. I revealed the quilt’s inner-most secrets. I revealed how the quilt works, how it keeps you warm, how it connects, how it comforts, and how its layers work together. I revealed that it can go back together in a new way. It was like my Grama was with me, truly speaking and stitching with me. Her last words to me echoed in my heart, “If it doesn’t work, it’s ok, just [go] back.”

Stitching Together
The making of a quilt is a central metaphor for this study. Like the making of a quilt, student/teacher relationships require careful stitching together. This research project stemmed from my desire to understand student/teacher relationships better. I wanted to explore what it meant to be a Pākehā teacher in a culturally responsive classroom and I wanted something tangible to speak of, to embody what this was, once discovered. The decision to use quilting was an instinctive one that spoke of,
and to me, as an educator. I see the relationship between students and teachers much like the creation of a quilt. They both involve construction, adaptation, progression, and addition. As teachers embark on relationships with students they adapt their behaviour, language, and processes as they get to know them, adding to their own knowledge, and ability to interact with them, in a positive way.

I began with Barry Goldenberg’s (2014) literature review on recognising cultural capital in the context of teaching and learning which argues “that educators must grapple with the complexity and importance of identifying students” (p. 114) culture. He notes that American classrooms are experiencing an opportunity gap where students of colour are struggling to gain momentum in their achievement, which is stagnating. Goldenberg (2014) believes that the teacher is responsible for recognising and pedagogically utilising cultural capital to enhance student learning in the classroom. This teacher responsibility intrigued me. I have many times referred to myself as “the mom in the classroom,” always checking up, checking in and checking out what students are doing or not doing. I care about them and want them to know about it, unashamedly. I believe this care has strengthened my student/teacher relationships and I wanted to explore this idea formally.

Culturally responsive teaching can be described as a critical pedagogy. Defined by Joan Wink (2005) “critical pedagogy leads us to advocacy and activism on behalf of those who are the most vulnerable in classrooms and in society” (p. 165). I further wanted to investigate the idea that there is a power advantage in the classroom, wherein Pākehā educators teach students from their own middle-class advantage (Gay, 2010). Do Pākehā teachers really do this in their teaching, in their classroom? What role do Pākehā teachers play in classroom achievement?
The findings of this research are important, not only important for an under-researched area in education, or because the majority of students are learning in classrooms with Pākehā teachers, but because New Zealand classrooms are becoming mosaics of cultural identities which teachers can use to engage and enhance learning outcomes (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2007). The ability of Pākehā teachers to connect with and engage students in ethnically diverse classrooms does not only display culturally responsive pedagogy and practice, but it also directly works towards four out of the ten national Ministry of Education strategic goals for learners (NEG 1, 2, 3 & 10; Ministry of Education, 2015). In essence, these ministry goals outline an educational environment that has high standards for all learners, and in which they are taught as individuals; which is an equal-opportunity learning environment for learners to develop and be successful in; and where there is respect for the ethnic and cultural role of New Zealand people.

**Motivation of a Quilt Maker**

I am a Pākehā. I was born in New Zealand and left, at age 4, to spend 17 years with my mother’s family in Canada. Coming back to New Zealand, I completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Elam at the University of Auckland and then trained to become a secondary teacher at the University of Waikato. I have taught in two New Zealand secondary schools which both supported culturally responsive teaching practice and pedagogy. Both schools had implemented the Te Kotahitanga programme prior to my arrival; therefore, I have only been exposed, as an educator, to teaching that supports culturally responsive philosophies. I am heartened by the overlap within culturally responsive teaching philosophies between family, community, and school, and the difference these relationships can make for students. Soon after I began my teaching career I became curious about educators
who did not want to participate in culturally responsive practices and wanted to understand them better. After some initial research, I decided to look at the practice of teachers who were demonstrating culturally responsive teaching practices. I wanted to not only highlight their experiences but to understand them as educators. There is little research on the experiences of Pākehā teachers as culturally responsive teachers.

**Aim of the Research**

The purpose of this study is to understand and explore the experiences of self-identified Pākehā teachers and their students, from the teachers’ perspective in culturally responsive New Zealand secondary classrooms. These relationships have the capacity to initiate and sustain success in the classrooms in which teachers build reciprocal relationships with students (Berryman, 2008). This study sought to understand the subtleties and intricacies of how teachers begin building and creating relationships with students and discover the specific practices and strategies that sustain them. In particular, it focused on gaining an understanding of how Pākehā teachers use pedagogical strategies to engage and reach all students. It aimed to address a gap in literature and explore how Pākehā teachers’ own understanding and experiences with culturally responsive pedagogy are expressed in the classroom.

**The Research Question**

The research question that guided this project was:

What do Pākehā teachers experience while creating and sustaining relationships in the culturally responsive secondary classroom?
This thesis is a critical autoethnography. It explores my own stories of creating and sustaining a culturally responsive practice, and juxtaposes these alongside the stories of six research participants. Data was generated through semi-structured interviews and creative writing practices. Thematic analysis and art-based methods were employed to make sense of the data, including, as an a/r/tographer, the making of a quilt.

Stitched Beginnings

This project really began when I met my supervisor. I had just read about a student completing part of their PhD using practical methods, and arrived at our first real meeting carrying a basket of fabric swatches with no idea how I was going to use them and only the whiff of possibility. I told the story of the fabric swatches and how I had gathered a piece from every woman my daughter is related to so I could embroider their names on them and finally quilt them into a blanket for her. I wanted my daughter to have a piece of everyone who loved her, every woman she was part of and who would forever be part of her. The quilt, their fabric and their names made them real, tangible, even when out of sight. I did not know how I could incorporate fabric into my thesis but I was inspired to somehow merge my belief in culturally responsive teaching, my belief in craft, and my belief in the embodiment of everything I do.

My supervisor questioned my decision to use the fabric, rather than painting, as a method, as I am also a painter. Without missing a beat, I said “because painting is more emotional than quilting.” Not only was I very wrong in saying this, but I am not sure I really believed it. The inclusion of quilting in this process has been very emotive and has reconnected me to my ancestors, to my future and to myself. As I
reflect on this project, I see that everyone came into the quilt: the participants, myself, my students, my mentors, my ancestors, my daughter, her future and mine. We are all there. The quilt became a way to include my past and the participants’ voices. Looking back, I do not believe it was easier or any less emotional than painting would have been. But it was the right way for this project.

**Outline of Chapters**

As a guide to answering the thesis question and outlining the project, I have offered seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the project and its beginnings. Chapter 2 is a literature review, outlining and defining key terms: culturally responsive teaching, the Te Kotahitanga programme, the achievement gap, and progress made in New Zealand classrooms. In Chapter 3, the methodology of the project is outlined and described in detail. Chapter 4 is my own quilting story. This chapter further locates the researcher in the project and explains the use of autoethnography, collaborative autoethnography, and collaborative stitching, in this study. Chapter 5 analyses the participants’ data, my own experiences and creative writing, to further answer the thesis question. Finally, Chapter 6 is the conclusion which reconfirms the project and its processes and offers recommendations for future research.
Chapter 2:

Literature Review

Introduction
Underpinning this project is a desire to understand culturally responsive teaching practices and where they fit within the classroom. While much of the current literature focuses on students’ experiences, this project seeks to understand the classroom from the teachers’ perspective: what their experiences are, their ideas, and their beliefs. This chapter details what culturally responsive teaching is and how one New Zealand programme, Te Kotahitanga, has operated within some secondary classrooms.

Culture and Ethnicity Defined
Throughout this project, culture and ethnicity have been important terms to define. They seemed to be woven into each stage of the project, and often became entangled with each other. In this thesis, culture and ethnicity have been defined separately; however, there are overlaps within these definitions which incorporate many ideas and identities. I came to realise that although important to define, here, for this project, these definitions do change and alter over time and with experiences. As Hall (1990) suggests, identity “is a matter of ‘becoming,’ as well as of ‘being’” (p. 225).

Culture can be defined as the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society, or, as Hall (1997) states, “simply, culture is about shared meanings” (p. 1). Culture is the way of life for a group of people, their general customs and beliefs, including laws, the arts, moral expectations and common
behaviours. Ethnicity can be thought of as an inherited status based on a shared ancestral link to homeland, language, religion, ancestry and food (Jimenez, 2010). The word culture is used to define people, groups, and attitudes, and is related to ethnicity, which is linked to ancestry through birth, which is also defined by some as race (Barot, Bradley, & Fenton, 1999).

**Project Introduced**

This project originally sought to understand culturally responsive pedagogy and practices which teachers use in the classroom to create and sustain relationships with students. It is considered that Pākehā educators have a power advantage in the classroom, where students are taught from “middle-class, Eurocentric frameworks that shape school practices” (Gay, 2010, p. 22). Therefore, it is important to understand what Pākehā teachers believe culturally responsive teaching to be and how they, as teachers, create and sustain relationships in the classroom. Turner (2013) suggests that teachers require a “pedagogy….that is holistic, flexible and complex, that will allow children to present their multiplicities and complexities and their individual collective diversities, rather than a pedagogy that perpetuates teachers’ images” (p. 35). While May (2016) agrees, he also speaks of the “airbrushing” of New Zealand history, “we don’t know our own history very well and that when we do we are not particularly comfortable with it” (May quoted in Fitzpatrick, 2016, p. 247). Likewise, Howard (2006) suggests “white” teachers:

- acknowledge [our] own complicity and privilege, as well as racism in [ourselves] and our family. [We have] to learn to move with some degree of grace and style to these new rhythms, without stumbling over guilt, denial, or rejection of [our] own Whiteness. (p. 26)
For this to happen, it is also important to not only understand how teachers include a student’s culture and ethnicity in the classroom but also how they understand and include their own diversity.

This project investigates culturally responsive teaching practices of Pākehā teachers who make up 71% of teacher ethnicity in New Zealand classrooms (Education Counts, 2015). With such a high percentage of teachers who identify as Pākehā, it is important to understand their thinking around relationships with students, culturally responsive pedagogy, and their role in a multicultural classroom, as well as their concepts of their own culture and ethnicity. Fitzpatrick (2016) asks us to remember “that identity is a complex and multifaceted becoming” (p. 3). As teachers support the culture and ethnicity of those they teach, they also need to interrogate for themselves, who they are culturally and ethnically; they must lead where they ask students to go. Iris Glenn (1994) further states that “only through a real exploration of ourselves...with real knowledge to be gained and the determination to achieve it, will positive change take place” (p. 112).

**What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?**

*It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.*

*Maya Angelou (Voices Education, n.d., para. 15)*

Culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that recognises the importance of, and utilises, the student’s culture in the classroom. It is the inclusion of “prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds and ethnic identities of teachers and students” (Gay, 2010, p. 22) to support teaching and learning. William Ayers (2001) describes three key phases to a culturally responsive teaching space:
A first step is becoming a student to your students, uncovering the fellow creatures who must be partners to the enterprise. Another is creating an environment for learning, a nurturing and challenging space in which to travel. And finally, the teacher must begin work on the intricate, many-tiered bridges that will fill up the space, connecting the dreams, hopes, skills, experiences and knowledge students bring to class with deeper and wider ways of knowing. (p. 122)

Culturally responsive teaching practices used within the classroom empower students so that their own cultural identity plays a role to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Santamaria 2009). Recognising cultural identity in the classroom means that the whole student is considered with regard to planning, learning objectives and student outcomes. Hall (1990) states that cultural identity refers to the:

one, shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’…which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as ‘one people,’ with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning. (p. 223)

Hall (1990) offers a second, different, but related, definition of cultural identity that further serves the paradigm of this project. He adds:

The second position recognises that, as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute “what we really are”; or rather…“what we have become”….Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of “becoming” as well as of “being.” It belongs to the future as much as to the past. (p. 225)
In the classroom, Hall’s definition would mean that the student is placed at the centre of the learning, where they are taught and recognised as an individual, with valuable prior knowledge to bring to the learning conversation (Gay, 2010; Santamaria, 2009). I believe that both of these definitions offer insight into the interactions between students and teachers. First, when the student’s cultural identity is not just known by the teacher, but strengthened in the classroom, and used as a platform from which the student works. Second, when the teacher also seeks to know and use who the student is as an individual, as a person, and works with that identity also, for the “becoming” of the student and their future.

Being a culturally responsive educator is more than just recognising or understanding the student’s culture or ethnicity. It means that the teaching and learning validates and affirms the student while acknowledging the “legitimacy of cultural heritage,” [it] “builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences,” “uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles,” “teaches students to praise their own and one another’s cultural heritages,” [and] “incorporates multicultural information, resources and materials in all subjects and skills” taught. (Gay, 2010, pp. 31-32)

Thus, by using examples that engage students, and encourage exploration and curiosity, with opportunities to identify with the learning from their own vantage point, the teacher demonstrates that s/he recognises the importance of racial and cultural diversity in learning. It is the “behavioural expression of knowledge, beliefs and values” (Gay, 2010, p. 31) by the teacher. Developing a knowledge base for culturally responsive teaching means acquiring rich, detailed experiences about the
cultures and ethnicities of students, coupled with developing a caring, consciousness, community-orientated classroom steeped in communication. Further to this, May (1999) argues that critical multiculturalism encourages children to “engage critically with all ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including their own...allowing both minority and majority students to explore the complex interconnections, gaps and dissonances that occur between their own and other ethnic and cultural identities” (p. 33).

In the New Zealand context, this manaakitanga, or care for students as culturally located individuals, means teachers care, for example, “for Māori students as Māori, as being culturally located, that is, as having cultural understandings and experiences that are different from other people in the classroom” (Bishop & Berryman, 2009, p. 30). Bishop and Berryman (2009) further add that this is done in observable ways within manaakitanga whereby “mana refers to authority and āki is the task of urging someone to act [referring] to the task of building and nurturing a supportive and loving environment” (p. 30).

Culturally responsive teachers seek to understand and teach to the whole student: intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically (Webber, 2013). Knowing one’s self, as an individual and as a teacher, in these ways, prevents deficit thinking from playing a role or being a barrier to learning, but rather supports the teacher. However, “new ideas are not merely ends in themselves, but tools to assist in the larger project of social change” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 80). Webber (2013) asserts that getting to know students beyond their categorised identity printout is imperative, as is not being afraid to raise gritty questions about how students feel and relate to their ethnicities and those of others, and “being confident to respond to whatever
comes to light, both in terms of taking the conversations further and in creating learning opportunities to suit” (p. 67). Teachers who understand themselves as intellectual, social, emotional and political individuals with cultural and ethnic identities, are able to understand the role ethnic identity has for students, which is helpful as they create classrooms that have significant implications for their learners (Webber, 2013, p. 67).

**How do Pākehā Teachers Become Culturally Responsive?**

*We should help teachers know their minds, rather than our minds.*

*(Duffy, 1998, p. 780)*

While exploring what it means to be a culturally responsive teacher, for this project, it also became important to understand specifically how Pākehā teachers incorporate cultural and linguistic heritage in teaching and learning that is not their own.

Santamaria (2009) believes that creating a space in the classroom that allows views and beliefs to be shared and represented can happen when genuine relationships between teachers and students are created. These relationships can be defined by their ability to “create power-sharing contexts wherein self-determining individuals work together to both share and construct new knowledge” (Bishop & Berryman, 2009, p. 184). According to Webber (2011), this would require Pākehā educators to discover their own ethnic and cultural backgrounds, challenging them to define what a “normal” teacher is. This would enable Pākehā teachers to become *identity agents* in the classroom, who actively participate in the identity formation of youth and who “mediate larger social influences on identity formation” (Schachter & Ventura, 2008, p. 449).
Teachers are encouraged to understand not only their own cultural identity but to “critically question their own understanding(s) of diversity….to better meet the unique needs of their students, restoring dignity and pride along the way” (Santamaria, 2009, p. 222). In order to understand cultural and linguistic diversity, educators require opportunities to explore “much of what is usually unexamined in the tightly braided relationships of language, culture, and power in schools…inevitably [beginning] with [their] own histories as human beings; [their] own experiences as members of particular races, classes, and genders” (Cochran-Smith, 1995, p. 500).

Hunan and Warley (1999) further argue that “before [white] teachers and students join the [Indigenous] circle…they need to have knowledge of the particular historical and cultural contexts represented….to make the ‘other’ comprehensible without erasing difference” (p. 69). For many New Zealand teachers, this means acknowledging the bi-cultural relationship with Māori that is entangled with post-colonial racial dominance. Fitzpatrick (2016) recounts her study findings in which she understood “the significant influence [her] own beliefs and subsequent actions had on classroom environments” (p. 97), but also “that for many Pākehā …there existed a struggle to articulate an ethnic identity, and for most of us this was difficult knowledge [emphasis added]” (p. 97). Britzman (2013) defines difficult knowledge as “painful and traumatic” (p. 100) for students and teachers as they seek to examine, identify and resolve the past, while creating a new present for themselves from the “ravages” of the past (p. 100). Being part of a dominant culture creates a sense of normalcy for the dominant cultural practices, where anyone outside of these is seen as not “normal”. To disrupt the power created by a dominant identity we need to “peel back the layers of whiteness that have coated over cultures of a diverse range of peoples” (Fitzpatrick, 2016, p. 67), and discover our own identity.
Further to this, Turner (2013) states that “it ought to be the teacher who makes the cognitive adjustment...to critically reflect upon their own discursive positioning and the implication of this positioning for their own agency and for...students learning” (p. 61). Thus, being a culturally responsive teacher is not about teachers erasing their own cultural or ethnic identity in the classroom and solely focusing on the students. It is about the teacher knowing their own cultural and ethnic identities, and using that knowledge within the context of learning, as a resource and as a tool for success. It is about teachers having the tools to grapple with difficult knowledge, and to use that knowledge as they encourage students to journey this path of discovery as well.

In New Zealand, educators who are confident in themselves, culturally and ethnically, play an important role in the positive identities students construct for themselves in multicultural and multiethnic communities (Fitzpatrick, 2016). This ability to model is about the shared journey to become. Conversely, according to Malcolm X, “You can't lead where you won't go,” (as cited in Fitzpatrick, 2016). In the classroom, teachers must also walk this journey of self-discovery and determination, which the tenets of culturally responsive practice and pedagogy ask them to do with students. Therefore, this same application should be used with cultural and ethnic identity. How can teachers enable students to walk, to journey, to places they either do not have the opportunity to go or are not willing to walk to themselves?

**What Does a Culturally Responsive Teacher Do?**

Connecting with students is an important part of a teacher’s role and, while this can happen with a variety of techniques, I believe the most valuable, and long lasting, way is through genuine relationships. These help students to feel welcome in the
classroom, engage deeper in work, ask questions, feel more confident, be part of the learning and know they are valued members of the class (Webber, 2013, p. 67).

This idea is supported by Gay (2002), Villegas and Lucas (2002), and Ladson-Billings (2008). Their definitions of culturally responsive teachers further include the idea that culturally responsive teachers design culturally responsive curricula, believe that students are capable, and have classrooms that focus on learning. Gay (2002) adds that teachers will develop a cultural diversity knowledge base, while Villegas and Lucas (2002) add that culturally responsive teachers are socioculturally conscious and know there are multiple ways of perceiving reality. Ladson-Billings (2008) further notes that culturally responsive teachers’ classrooms are challenging and exciting, with students interacting with one another and focusing on the work.

Being a culturally responsive teacher is not a tick box list of motions to go through. It is possible this may be the case when teachers are learning about this practice or pedagogy, but it is not a long-term strategy. A culturally responsive teacher is someone who embodies their own culture, ethnicity and individuality - it is about knowing, and being able to articulate, who they are. I believe that when teachers are able to do this, they are able to open a pathway for students to explore their own culture and ethnicity. Culturally responsive teaching programmes ask teachers to question their processes in the classroom, to question the dominant discourse they may unknowingly adhere to, and to seek to “establish a sense of connection and continuity” (Blyth, 2008, p. 73) with students. Webber (2011) believes Pākehā need to be educated about their own racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in order to be able to challenge their position as the “normal” New Zealander, thus making way for a multicultural classroom. It is further asserted, by Brown (2011), that teachers who are able to critically explore and engage with the history of Pākehā and Māori, are
then better able to “make the conscious choice to free [them]selves from the imposition of dominant thinking and become fully Pākehā” (p. 251).

**What is an Achievement Gap?**

Since the 1960s, American politicians, educators and governments working on education have been researching theories and creating programmes based on closing the *achievement gap*. The achievement gap can be defined as “the persistent disparity in academic achievement between minority and disadvantaged students and their white counterparts” (Porter, 2015, para. 3). The primary goal, when looking at the achievement gap, is to close this gap quickly and have all ethnicities achieving, with comparable outcomes. However, many programmes created with the desire to close the gap have a short-term focus, and often the results are also short-term, as Snell (2003), citing the work of Williams asserts:

> The cumulative effect of these “fragmented” interventions, is minimal over the long-term, even when student achievement is boosted a little in the short term. Rather than instituting single programme quick fixes in response to the problem of the achievement gap, she advises school leaders to concentrate, instead, on implementing a coherent and broad range of strategies that are designed to improve “teaching and learning” over time. (para. 10)

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) agrees, stating “these gaps persist over time” and “that this all-out focus on the achievement gap moves us towards short-term solutions that are unlikely to address the long-term underlying problem” (p. 4). Ladson-Billings further explains that the achievement gap is not the real issue in the classroom, it is the development of an “educational debt” which she describes using four facets of debt related to education: historical, economical, socio-political and moral.
The historical debt is defined by a historical lack of access to formal public education for certain groups of people; … the economic debt is defined by historical and contemporary inequities in-school funding, income disparities related to different levels of education, and the more general wealth disparity; … the socio-political debt is defined by the disenfranchisement of people of colour at local and national levels; … and the moral debt is defined by the disparity between what we know is right and what we actually do. (pp. 5-8)

Te Kotahitanga - A New Zealand Culturally Responsive Teaching Space

This school is like the opposite of racism. (Alton-Lee, 2014, p. 33)

Literally translated as unity, Te Kotahitanga was the name given to a programme implemented in 17 New Zealand secondary schools intending to raise the achievement levels of Māori students. The Te Kotahitanga project was defined as “a collaborative response to the rising problem of underachievement among Māori students in mainstream schools” (Te Kete Ipurangi [TKI], n.d.-c, para. 2), and as “a research and professional development project based on kaupapa Māori theory [that] has an explicit focus on raising the educational achievement of Māori learners” (Bishop, Berryman, Wearmouth, Peter, & Clapham, 2011, p. 4).

Kaupapa Māori is defined as a position or theory that locates “structuring or agenda clearly within Māori aspirations, preferences and practices” (Berryman, 2008, p. 51), it “is about being fully Māori” (Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002, p. 30). The essence of kaupapa Māori theorising and positioning is identified by Smith (1997) as relating to being Māori; it connects to Māori philosophy and principles; takes for granted the legitimacy and validity of Māori, and of the Māori language, beliefs, and practices;
and is concerned with the struggle for Māori autonomy, both cultural and political.

Pihama (2015) expands:

Kaupapa relates to notions of foundation, plan, philosophy and strategies.

Kaupapa Māori, therefore, indicates a Māori view of those things. It relates to Māori philosophies of the world, to Māori understandings on which our beliefs and values are based, Māori worldviews and ways of operating. (p. 8)

The team which created Te Kotahitanga began by researching and identifying what students, their whānau (families) and teachers felt was required for Māori students to succeed in English-medium, secondary school education in New Zealand in 2001. The research programme included professional development for teachers and school leaders, while drawing theoretically from models of learning to form and support its progress. Te Kotahitanga has evolved through more than ten years of research and five phases of implementation. Te Kotahitanga founders Russell Bishop and Mere Berryman (2006) believe that, in the New Zealand classroom teachers need to “examine and challenge their assumptions, practices and discursive positionings in relation to Māori students” (p. 275). They further assert that to create a culturally appropriate, responsive, and effective context for learning, teachers must “positively and vehemently reject deficit theorising as a means of explaining Māori students’ educational achievement levels” (p. 275). Deficit theorising in the classroom was identified within Te Kotahitanga research:

deficit theorising by teachers is the major impediment to Māori students’ educational achievement for it results in teachers having low expectations of Māori students. This in turn creates a downward spiralling, self-fulfilling prophecy of Māori student achievement and failure. (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2003, p. 3)
Bishop et al. (2009) do stress “that fundamental to the development of discursive classrooms that include Māori students is the understanding that deficit theorizing by teachers must be challenged” (p. 741). They believe that creating effective relationships and partnerships between Māori students, their whānau and their teachers was key to addressing deficit theorising in the first instance. The creation of these relationships allows the culture of the child to then be “brought into the learning context” (p. 741). Interestingly, early on in the project, Te Kotahitanga researchers found that 80% of students identified their relationship with their teacher as having a crucial influence on success in the classroom. In contrast, 60% of teachers identified a student’s home and family background as the major influence on student’s success in the classroom. Through the professional development elements of Te Kotahitanga, teachers were able to recognise that they could make a difference to student outcomes and needed to change their beliefs and practices in order to realise this (Alton-Lee, 2014, p. 8).

Te Kotahitanga completed five phases of development between 2001 and 2013. Each stage built on the findings of the previous one, by reconfirming its aims and goals and using the results of research to inform its next steps. The aim of the project was to promote the self-determination and agency of everyone involved in teaching Māori students, leading to improved teaching and learning and educational achievement of Māori students in mainstream New Zealand classrooms (Bishop & Berryman, 2006). Researchers:
suggested that this will be accomplished when educators create learning contexts within their classroom; where power is shared between self-determining individuals within non-dominating relations of interdependence; where culture counts; where learning is interactive, dialogic and spirals; where
participants are connected to one another through the establishment of a common vision for what constitutes excellence in educational outcomes. (Bishop et al., 2009, p. 1)

The overarching aim of Te Kotahitanga continued to inform all five phases of development. The professional development programme for teachers and school leaders included the creation of an effective teacher profile (ETP) with the use of the GEPRISP (initial implementation model) and PSIRPEG (classroom implementation and evaluation model). Both models are elaborated on later in this chapter.

The ETP states that “relationships and interactions between teachers and students in the classroom are key to effective teaching of Māori students” and that “effective teachers take a positive, non-deficit view of Māori students, and see themselves as capable of making a difference to them” (Bishop & Berryman, 2009, p. 27). In developing the ETP, researchers spoke with students, whānau, teachers and school leaders. The ETP was implemented in classrooms in 2004 through the Te Kotahitanga Professional Development Programme which consisted of an “initial induction hui (gathering), followed by a term-by-term cycle of formal observations, follow-up feedback, group co-construction meetings, and targeted shadow-coaching” (TKI, n.d.-b, para. 2). This in-school professional development cycle involved teachers, school leaders and classroom specialists working together to re-build a classroom culture based on the success of Māori students at levels comparable to non-Māori. The ETP consists of six elements –

*Manaakitanga* - where teachers care for their students as culturally located human beings above all else;

*Mana Motuhake* - teachers care for the performance of their students;
**Nga Whakapiringatanga** - teachers are able to create a secure, well-managed learning environment;

**Wananga** - teachers are able to engage in effective teaching interactions with Māori students as Māori;

**Ako** - teachers can use strategies that promote effective teaching interactions and relationships with their learners;

**Kōtahitanga** - teachers promote, monitor and reflect on outcomes that in turn lead to improvements in educational achievement for Māori students. (Alton-Lee, 2014, p. 31)

The ETP is integral to the success and achievement of Māori students and those who teach them.

Within the ETP are two models used for teacher development. The GEPRISP model forms a framework to remind teachers of the project-focus goal, and PSIRPEG is used to implement what the hui has taught teachers to focus on in the classroom (Bishop, O’Sullivan, & Berryman, 2010). Both of these models work in conjunction with the ETP to support teachers through the critical cycle of learning (unlearning and relearning). This cyclic process involves *conscientisation* – a change in thinking, with the addition of new knowledge; resistance – addition or deletion within practice due to a change in thinking; and transformative practice – reflection, review and action.

GEPRISP is the initial implementation model used within the classroom to begin the ETP for the teacher. It is an acronym for the **goal** of improving Māori students’ educational achievement it…..commences with an examination of Māori students’
experiences of school and of teachers’ discursive positioning in relation to the goal and Māori students’ experiences. The importance of relationships, interactions, strategies and planning that can be used to reach the goal is detailed (Bishop et al., 2010).

When used in reverse, PSIRPEG, enables teachers to use lesson planning that will use a range of strategies to promote discursive interactions in their classrooms, which in turn will develop caring and learning relationships, and thus reinforce teachers’ agentic discursive positioning...improving Māori students’ educational experiences and promote the goal of improving Māori students’ educational engagement, participation and achievement (Bishop et al., 2010).

With the use of the ETP and the professional development programme to guide teachers, and GEPRISP and PSIRPEG to help create a clear pathway for their goals and review, teachers are able to look objectively and critically at their practice. This works directly towards the overall aim of Te Kotahitanga to identify ways to improve Māori success in schools, through teacher self-reflection. This encapsulates the ideology of kaupapa Māori through which Māori affirm their cultural philosophies and practices (Pihama et al., 2002, p. 30).

Te Kotahitanga has now become Kia Eke Panuku, a professional learning and development model for New Zealand secondary classrooms that builds on the understandings gained from five previous programmes: Te Kotahitanga, He Kākano, the Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success, and the Secondary Literacy and Numeracy Projects (Kia Eke Panuku, n.d., para. 5).
The Achievement Gap and New Zealand Te Kotahitanga Classrooms

Ladson-Billings (2006) coined the term “education debt” to support her concept of a debt to African Americans and Latina/o in relation to education, that can be defined as in deficit or in credit (p. 5). The attempt to raise Māori achievement levels in the secondary classroom, with Te Kotahitanga, also sought to lower the educational debt to Māori students, by changing student outcomes as well as the teaching strategies and techniques used by teachers. For example, the Te Kotahitanga programme sought to address a historical and moral debt by not only educating teaching professionals about New Zealand history, but also about the implications of the Treaty when applied to teaching in the classroom. This allowed for secondary teachers to understand the long-standing disparities in New Zealand education as well as the role they play in addressing these disparities. This was not just a history lesson, or one interpretation of the Treaty, it was an attempt to re-educate teaching professionals. This type of action works to lower the educational debt for both students and their families. In theory, this debt could either be paid or begin to grow. Te Kotahitanga sought to create classrooms where students, family and whānau felt welcomed and included, and were an important part of the learning conversation and success in the classroom.

The widening achievement gap of the 1990s, in New Zealand secondary classrooms, has been changing since 2006 when Te Kotahitanga was widely used and recognised amongst educational professionals as a teaching strategy for raising Māori engagement, achievement and participation levels. Alton-Lee’s 2014 interim report on the effectiveness of the programme in Phase 5 details notable gains in achievement levels, retention, and wellbeing, for Māori students at schools.
implementing the Te Kotahitanga programme when compared with other schools. In summary, the data revealed that:

- the achievement of Māori students (as measured by NCEA levels 1-3) in Phase 5 schools improved at around 3 times the rate of Māori in the comparison schools;

- while the achievement of the comparison group deteriorated following the realignment of NCEA achievement standards, the achievement of Māori students in Phase 5 schools improved;

- by 2012 the achievement of year 12 Māori in the Phase 5 schools (mean=decile 3) was on par with the achievement of year 12 Māori compared across all deciles;

- the proportion of Māori students returning/enrolling in year 13 (in 2012, equivalent to two-thirds of the 2011 year 12 cohort) increased markedly in Phase 5 schools;

- by 2012 the number of year 13 students achieving NCEA level 3 in Phase 5 schools was nearly three times what it had been four years earlier;

- the proportion of Māori students from Phase 5 schools who were at least 17 at the point of leaving increased at twice the rate for Māori nationally;

- a very high proportion of year 9 and 10 Māori in Phase 5 schools (87%) reported that it felt good to be Māori in the school (“always” or “mostly”), and over 60% reported that their teachers (“always” or “mostly”) knew how to help them learn. (Alton-Lee, 2014, p. 4)
The data gathered also revealed that from 2009-2012 NCEA Level 1 achievement increased by 10.8%, Level 2 by 14.7%, Level 3 by 10.0% and university entrance by 3.1% (Alton-Lee, 2014). Co-ed and single sex girls’ and boys’ schools made up the 16 schools included in this report. By any standard, these are promising results from the programme, affirming its effect on the success of Māori students at secondary school.

As mentioned, founding programmes in New Zealand which sought to redress the achievement gap, like Te Kotahitanga, have developed into Kia Eke Panuku. Ministry of Education initiatives Tataiako – Managing for Success, Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners 2008-2012, and Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013-2017 further support educators in raising Māori achievement in the classroom. These three programmes have a long-term focus on changing teaching strategies and learning dynamics to a more discursive, inclusive environment that includes educators, students and their whānau.

Currently, in New Zealand education, work is being done to counter the residual effects of substandard educational opportunities offered to Māori over the past 175 years. For example, schools that teach Te Reo, build maraes (traditional Māori meeting houses), and support teaching from culturally responsive perspectives, have made the achievement of Māori a priority. Programmes are supporting Māori students and their whānau for their continued levels of raised achievement. This can be seen in a detailed report by the Auditor-General about the progress made in Ka Hikitia as the programme continues into Phase 2 - Accelerating Success. The report states:
Changes in teachers' awareness of the success of Māori students and knowledge about Māori students were reported through our survey. The main shifts that respondents perceived were in teachers' awareness of Māori identity, language, and culture, the use of performance information to improve Māori students' achievement, and teachers' knowledge about their Māori students. (Office of the Auditor-General, 2013, para. 5.7)

**Critical Pedagogy**

Culturally responsive teaching can be described as a critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is complex and evolving; it is not finite and it is not fixed (Wink, 2005). Defined by Joan Wink (2005), “critical pedagogy leads us to advocacy and activism on behalf of those who are the most vulnerable in classrooms and in society” (p. 165). The *critical* is to think deeply, while the *pedagogy* is the visible and hidden interactions between teachers and learners. Critical pedagogy seeks the *why* that leads to action within a teacher’s practice and is a way of challenging assumptions whereby teachers take action within their pedagogy (p. 1). Wink asserts that we are called by Paulo Freire “to name, to reflect critically, and to act” (p. 3) our actions in the classroom, if we are to be culturally responsive. As we seek the *why* that leads to action, and challenge our assumptions, we are unlearning and relearning. This process of learning, unlearning, relearning, and personal discovery based on our experiences, is a cyclic, spiralling action and is a reminder that not only does critical pedagogy evolve, but it is a process. It is a dialectic one, not about doing critical pedagogy but about living it as a way of life, rather than as a method (Jasso & Jasso, 1995). This mirrors what Bishop et al. (2007) detail, in *Te Kotahitanga*, as a spiral discourse that can be created in the classroom where “learning is interactive,
dialogic and spirals, participants are connected and committed to one another” (p. 15).

Bishop et al. (2007) describe Te Kotahitanga as a set of three spirals (see Figure 3 below – Te Kotahitanga) which has the Māori student represented as the centre spiral, surrounded by their whānau, hapū (sub-tribe) and their iwi (tribe); the spiral to the left represents Māori educators and the spiral to the right non-Māori educators. It can be read, in a line, as by Māori, for Māori, and for non-Māori. The wavy lines at the base come from the Ministry of Education logo and represent the waterways and life blood of New Zealand. The zig zag lines on top represent the teeth of the taniwha (mythical, Māori water dwelling creature). These teeth are the Māori symbol for ‘niho taniwha’ making a “metaphoric reference to relationships, guardianship and leadership” (Bishop et al., 2007, p. iii).

Figure 3. Te Kotahitanga. (Bishop et al., 2007, p. 48)

Spirals are also deeply rooted in Kia Eke Panuku. Both Te Kotahitanga and Kia Eke Panuku use the double spiral image or kōringoringo (see Figure 4 below) to guide their professional development where programmes are spiralling and recursive, as they are in nature, rather than sequential (TKI, n.d.-d, p. 27). The spiral in Kia Eke Panuku (n.d.), “often depicted in whakairo (carving) illustrates the coming together of
the active (talking) and quiescent (listening) dimensions of working together, when one partner is willing to listen and learn from the other (para. 6).

Figure 4. Kōringoringo. (Berryman, 2008, p. 258)

Conclusion

Since 2011, when I trained as a secondary teacher, my own understanding of culturally responsive teaching has been transformed, and I have become committed to this transformation. This has had a huge impact on my practice, planning and reflections, as I seek to include a Māori conscience in my classroom teaching. As a Pākehā teacher working with Te Kotahitanga, Ka Hikitia and Kia Eke Panuku, I see how our generation is beginning to acknowledge an educational debt to Māori by being more culturally responsive. I also see more education professionals considering the Māori position when creating programmes, working with students and engaging whānau within the school and wider school life. With this in mind, I see a future where there is much work to do, but also one where acknowledgement is the first step towards repaying an educational debt to Māori.

As referred to earlier, the findings of this research project are important to all New Zealand classrooms as they become more ethnically diverse, or as I call them,
mosaics of cultural identity. Further, culturally responsive pedagogy is directly working towards four out of the ten national Ministry of Education (2015) strategic goals for learners. In essence, these ministry goals outline an educational environment that has high standards for all learners, who are taught as individuals; is an equal-opportunity learning environment in which learners can develop and be successful in; and which has respect for the ethnic and cultural role of New Zealand people.
Chapter Three:
Methodology

Introduction
This research project was designed to bring to story the experiences, of secondary teachers creating and sustaining culturally responsive relationships in the classroom. I believe teachers, either new to teaching or new to culturally responsive philosophies and practice, could use the stories shared in this thesis to encourage and support their personal journey in the classroom. With those aims in mind, I created a qualitative study, one that used an autoethnographical approach, with my own stories and experiences juxtaposed with participants’ stories. I used thematic analysis and arts-based methods to analyse the data generated. The purpose of this work was to explore “true meaning” through generating rich stories of culturally responsive teaching. Neuman (2003) states that “true meaning is rarely obvious on the surface. We can reach it through a detailed examination and study of the text, by contemplating its messages and seeking the connections among its parts” (p. 101).

Research Paradigm
Paradigms “may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs that deal with ultimates or first principles…. [representing] a worldview that defines for its holder, the nature of the ‘world,’ [and] the individual’s place in it” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 107). This research project is situated in a constructivist paradigm. The constructivist paradigm assumes that there are “multiple, apprehendable and sometimes conflicting social realities that are the products of human intellects” (p. 111). These social realities are constantly being shaped and reshaped by the individual, due to new experiences or information they acquire, influencing how they see and process the world.
The constructivist paradigm allows the experiences and beliefs of the participants and the researcher to be presented and understood, and then added to by the reader’s own experiences, reconstructing their world view (Neuman, 2003). From an ontological position, this paradigm allows the reader to accept the research as real, not something scientifically legitimate or asserted to be (Crotty, 1998). The reader experiences this research as memories and interpretations of the participants’ own stories, as understood by them.

As the researcher, I am also a participant and reader, formulating and reconstructing a more complete understanding of the data. The semi-structured interviews allowed participants to respond based on their own experiences and beliefs that were both valued and given pride of place while gathering data. The methodology of this study meant the data was unpredictable and allowed a delving in, a digging down deep into the interviews where rich stories could emerge. The constructivist paradigm of this project made participants both the “orchestrator and facilitator of the inquiry process” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 114) and allowed for their stories to open up the research for readers (L. Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2005), further emphasising the importance of stories in enabling us to make sense of our world.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to delve deeply into the interactions between teachers and students, to gain an understanding of how these important relationships are created, and sustained, from the perspective of the teachers. It is an attempt to untangle the intricate happenings between Pākehā teachers and students, both Pākehā and non-Pākehā. This project was not about measuring success in the classroom, from a grades perspective. It was rather a project seeking to discover
the subtleties and intricacies that support and foster positive, supportive and culturally responsive relationships in the secondary classroom. The experiences and beliefs culturally responsive teachers have constructed over time, about their relationships, are key to understanding how they are created and sustained by them. It is hoped that these stories will also enable others to juxtapose their own teaching stories alongside these experiences and enhance their understanding of their own practice.

The project aims to address a gap in literature by exploring how Pākehā teachers express, internalise and understand the dynamics of their student/teacher relationships in the classroom. In my teaching career, I have only taught in schools that actively support culturally responsive teaching, pedagogy and practice. This has not only greatly influenced my approach and experience in education, but also my understanding of the role culturally responsive pedagogy plays in the student-centred and student-defined success of the classroom.

**Autoethnography**

*People think that stories are shaped by people. In fact it's the other way around.*

*(Terry Pratchett, The Reluctant Speakers Club, 2015)*

In this project, I have used an autoethnographical approach to document my own stories. This was a way to include my stories and experiences which have impacted, shaped and tested me in my role as an educator. As described by Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011), “autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience in order to understand cultural experience” (p. 273). Further, autoethnography is the intentional highlighting
of personal experiences, in relation to culture and cultural practices, used by researchers within their work (Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013).

Collaborative autoethnography was also used in this project, juxtaposing my own stories alongside those of the research participants. This means that I used the combination of both our different experiences and stories to find difference and similarity, we were detailing being in the world, not just knowing about it (Ellis, 2004). I believe that using autoethnography and collective autoethnography has meant the research and my own stories did not just sit alone, but work together, to reflect and support the entire project. The collaborative-research approach allowed me and the participants to question and support one another’s practice, pedagogy and philosophy, as it highlighted our commonalities and our individual experiences.

With autoethnography, “language does not ‘reflect’ social reality but rather produces meaning and creates social reality” (L. Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2005, p. 961). This form of methodology is intended to allow the reader to construct ideas and create new knowledge, which, in turn, allows them to absorb the stories internally, interpret and lay them alongside their own, and possibly construct a new worldview.

**Autoethnography and me.**

I can remember being a student. I can remember having the support and experience of the teachers around me when I became a teacher. I can remember being able to offer advice to a new teacher struggling to find their way. These memories and experiences helped me to shape and better understand my personal beliefs and philosophy of teaching practice and pedagogy. Upon reflection, these experiences were an *ethnographical dimension* that I entered into with other teachers to
understand and support each other as we continually shaped and reshaped our practice and presence in the classroom. We were using each other’s experiences to interpret and construct our practice and pedagogy, albeit often at the staffroom table. The autoethnographical process has been a way for me to detail my own epistemological viewpoint and present it alongside, with, and in-between the participants. By doing this, I opened up a discursive space (Allen-Collinson, 2013) where stories are not only able to inform and transform beliefs, but also a space where new beliefs are constructed.

Autoethnography and critical autoethnography are both qualitative approaches to data generation and gathering that place self-inquiry at the centre of the project (Chang, Ngunjiri, & Hernandez, 2012). This project specifically uses critical autoethnography as a theoretical approach to autoethnography, collaboratively linking theory and stories. The theory “asks and explains the nuances of experience and the happenings of culture” and the stories are the “mechanism for illustrating and embodying these nuances and happenings” (Holman Jones, 2016, p. 229). This research project juxtaposes the participants’ stories with my own, then uses critical autoethnography to theorise and question, “linking the concrete and abstract, thinking and acting” into what Della Pollock (2006) describes as “living bodies of thought” (as cited by Homan Jones, 2016, p. 228). These living bodies of thought remind us that theory is not an add-on story in this approach, but a “language for thinking with and through, asking questions about and acting on” (p. 229).

Participants and Participant Selection
The participants in this project are also my colleagues at a decile 6 school in New Zealand. Deciles are a rating out of ten used to determine state funding by
measuring the economic position of the school’s student community, relative to other schools throughout the country (Ministry of Education, 2016). The lower the rating, the higher the amount of funding. Having taught at the project school for two years, I felt that my knowledge of the school, its staff and processes would not only afford me a level of trust with the participants, but would also be personally rewarding, allowing me to understand my own workplace better.

The project school was suitable for several reasons. First, it participated in a culturally responsive teaching programme, Te Kotahitanga, from 2005 until 2013 when programme funding was discontinued. Second, the school has continued to support the philosophy of Te Kotahitanga through the staff appraisal cycle, staff professional development and learning, school goals, the current building of a school marae and the co-opting of Māori community representatives onto the Board of Trustees. Third, it is a founding member of a Te Kotahitanga cluster group in the schools area. While funding for Te Kotahitanga has ceased, this cluster group has continued to run the programme as a fundamental component of their schools’ strategy to raise the achievement of Māori students. The project school has further confirmed its belief in culturally responsive teaching by introducing, in 2015, Kia Eke Panuku, a culturally responsive programme for secondary schools, successor to Te Kotahitanga. The school has been very supportive of my research which not only aims to support the school’s ongoing efforts as a culturally responsive place of teaching and learning, but also to help inform next steps for staff professional development and training.
Ethics

This research project was granted approval by The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics committee on 11th April 2016, Reference No. 016983, for a period of three years. All colleagues at the project school were invited to take part in this project by a neutral third party, to avoid anyone feeling that they must or must not participate in this project (see Appendix D). The first six colleagues to complete the consent forms were included as participants. Participants and the project school were informed that the name and location of the school, as well as identifying characteristics, would not be included in the study (see Appendix A & C). To further protect participants’ identities, they chose pseudonyms for themselves. The pseudonyms have been used in all correspondence and transcripts to avoid identification (see Appendix B & E). The true identity of the participants remains confidential, unknown by the school or by each other. To reinforce this anonymity, participants were asked to sign confidentiality agreements in addition to participant consent forms (see Appendix C). All transcripts and consent forms have been stored on password-protected computers, with access available only to my supervisor and myself.

Maintaining confidentiality whilst still being true to the research can be a hurdle when researching with colleagues. Throughout this project I continually ensured that I was fair to all participants, giving equal time to them and their transcripts. I sought clarification throughout interviews so I was clear on participants’ meaning; I avoided collecting harmful information, deceiving, or exploiting participants; and respected any potential power imbalances my research may have posed (Creswell, 2014). I personally transcribed all the interviews. Once completed, each participant had the opportunity to verify their transcript for clarification, to add or delete any data.
collected, or withdraw partially or fully from the study without giving a reason for doing so.

**Process Methods**

The autoethnographical component of this project allows for “multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural” (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 739), to be explored and presented. The inclusion of my own stories or “personal narratives” allows for my own experiences to be used “reflexively, to bend back on self and look more deeply at self-other interactions” (p. 740). Using autoethnography as a starting point, this project first examined my own practice as a teacher. I explored my personal approach to practice and pedagogy, detailing my ideas, reasons, and experience, and how and why I think the way I do about relationships and education.

In the second stage of research, I held two 30 minute interviews with participants. If they wished, they could request a further interview. Each participant was asked the same questions; however, elaboration and clarification were required by the researcher at different stages of individual interviews, due to their responses. These interviews were semi-structured, meaning that the questions were pre-determined yet open, so participants could use them as a prompt for storytelling and the interviewer could explore particular themes or responses further. This meant that participants were able to generate their own stories throughout the interview. After transcribing the interview transcripts, I applied a thematic analysis to further generate data from the interviews. This data became material for the final stage of the project, the arts-based analysis.
The final stage of the project used three arts-based methods: quilt making, creative writing, and found poetry. The quilt was a collaborative stitched project, physically made by me but contributed to by the participants, with language and fabric chosen by them. The creative writing and found poetry was derived from the transcripts themselves and the autoethnography of the researcher.

**Analysis**

This qualitative project used *thematic analysis* in order to translate, group and decipher the data. Thematic analysis allowed the data in the interviews and collected stories to become apparent and rise out of the data for grouping, rather than using the interview questions as a way to analyse (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis made way for themes to be identified and the data to be made sense of in “the patterning of responses” (p. 94). Being able to review and understand the data using the responses themselves, as a guide, allowed me to stay true to the stories shared with me.

I originally began using coding as a way to sort and group the data. I felt this was a sound way of identifying common themes (Creswell, 2014); however, the opposite was true for this project. While I do see the validity in the coding method of data analysis, it was not enough for this project. I kept restarting the coding process, searching for different themes or codes that represented what I had gathered, trying to help the data find its voice. But the coding didn’t work, it didn’t fit. It seemed that identifying and using the common codes from the data limited the depth of what was revealed. I realised that I needed to change my method for sorting, I needed to go deeper into the data than the coding was able to do. I decided to try a thematic analysis to see how that would fit. I created a table that included my question in the
first column, and a further column for each participant beside it, with all the elements of their answers given in their named column. This way, each point within a participant’s answer could be included, not just the points that were in common with other participants. The data revealed not only the commonalities of participants’ answers but also the importance of individual answers in their entirety. This way of analysis became the participants’ own autoethnographies, as referred to earlier.

What I found, by creating this initially crude chart and switching to a thematic analysis, was that the subtleties and intricacies I was hoping to find and present in my thesis were suddenly revealed. These *revelations and themes* that emerged from the data not only spoke about the teachers themselves, but also about their experiences, personal beliefs, wishes for the future of education, and frankness about the culturally responsive programme implemented at the school they worked in, in a holistic way, in an encompassing way.

To further analyse and make sense of the data generated, I employed two arts-based methods (Sullivan, 2010). Through employing arts-based methods as artist, researcher and teacher (*a/r/tographer*), I focused particularly on creative writing and quilting, as art forms, to respond to the data generated. Irwin and Springgay (2008) describe *a/r/tography* as what happens when “research becomes a process of exchange that is not separated from the body but emerges through an intertwining of mind and body, self and other, and through our interactions with the world” (p. xxi). Both the writing and quilting were created using data from the participants and myself, in an effort to merge our ideas, realities, beliefs and experiences as Pākehā educators. “Aristotle articulated three kinds of ‘thought’: knowing (theoria), doing (praxis), and making (poesis), the latter including poetry as well as other productive arts” (Irwin, 2004, p. 27). These three kinds of thought have echoed in me
throughout this project. My role as a/r/tographer encompasses the knowing and doing, to form the base of the making.

**Creative writing as analysis.**

Creative writing for this project included poetry, found poetry, the juxtaposition of my own stories alongside those of the participants, and creating collaborative pieces. Laurel Richardson (1997) believes

> that writing is a theoretical and practical process through which we can

(a) reveal epistemological assumptions, (b) discover grounds for questioning received scripts and hegemonic ideals – both those within the academy and those incorporated within ourselves, (c) find ways to change those scripts, (d) connect to others and form community, and (e) nurture our emergent selves. (p. 295)

This project has confirmed L. Richardson’s (1997) writing process for me, in which the participants and I were autoethnographers, story tellers, a/r/tographers and in the process of transformation.

The writing process and the writing product are interconnected. Even as some writers seek to suppress themselves within their writing, they are always there (L. Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2005, p. 962). The creative writing in the project was purposeful and the different formats sought to speak of the participants, their experiences and stories, and of the researcher. The stories were produced using creative analytical processes that are not “alternative or experimental” but that “invite people in” with “open spaces for thinking about the social” (p. 962).
Poetic inquiry - Poetry and found poetry.

Poetic inquiry is an arts-based research method that uses poetic devices and techniques to gather, analyse, and create, within the methodology of research (Butler-Kisber, 2010). The poetic pieces created and included in this project sought to reveal, discover, incorporate, change, connect and nurture, as L. Richardson (1997) believes writing can do. The use of poetry can make research more accessible to the reader, who “longs for fresh language to describe the indescribable emotional and intellectual experiences in and beyond the classroom” (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2009, p. 26). Using poetry in this project was an opportunity to present the experiences of participants, and myself, as way to entice, and to speak with, and to, the reader.

Prendergast (2006) defines found poetry as the “imaginative appropriation and reconstruction of already-existing texts” (p. 369) that has the “unique ability to capture and present aspects of the past (in memory), present (in experience), and future (in hope/fear)” (pp. 369-370). Using the participants' transcripts as a source for found poetry, I reconstructed the six voices from interviews into poetry. Faulkner (2009) found that “some poetry published as academic research…seemed sloppy, ill-conceived, and unconsidered” (p. 19). While sloppy, ill-conceived and unconsidered work can appear in poetic attempts at research, I believe that the found poetry presented in this project not only speaks about the participants, but speaks with a compelling truth, revealing something tangible about what it means to be a culturally responsive Pākehā educator. The found poems created, revealed and merged the past, present and future of the participants, and of myself, as our words worked together to create collective happenings.
The product of the creative writing included in this project became *factionlisation*, as I used our own stories, thoughts, and ideas, and wove them together to create something from us all.

Faction is a blend of fact and fiction, of observation and imagination. It is a form of representation that must be methodologically rigorous, theoretically informed, ethically reflexive and interesting to read, see or hear. Its aim is to dissolve the arguably artificial line between fact and fiction. (Bruce, 2014, p. 1)

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) argue that *faction* attempts to “create the conditions for “deep emotional understanding” (p. 506, quoted in Bruce, 2014, p. 1). Factionalising stories enabled me to delve in deeply, reflexively and in a more embodied way, to generate rich stories that speak to the essence of what it means to be a Pākehā educator. Using myself as the researcher/collaborator in an autoethnographical project, I was able to create collaborative stories using data from unnamed voices, revealing themes, questionings and beliefs “directly linking the micro level with the macro cultural and structural levels” (Allen-Collinson, 2013, p. 282) of classroom and culturally responsive pedagogy.

*Stitching as an art form.*

In my second analysis as a/r/tographer, I created a stitched, collaborative piece using the fabric participants chose, to represent themselves, as discussed in the first interview and brought along to the second. The participants contributed a word, stories, memories and fabric, of their choice, to this piece. I felt that making a collaborative piece resonated not only with the philosophy of unity behind culturally responsive teaching but also resonated with the premise of patchwork, in which, I believe, you build something, bit by bit, adding pieces of fabric and yourself, until you have created something much larger than yourself, larger than its origin.
Art making as a visual arts-based participatory method involves research through which the participants create the art that “ultimately serves both as data, and may represent data” (Leavy, 2015, p. 232). Leavy (2015) continues, “researchers may use visual imagery when traditional methods cannot fully access what they are after” (p. 232). The arts-based elements of this project are clearer, more defined and further developed because of the art-making processes employed. They reach the audience not through a window, but with a created perspective (p. 224).

The creative writing, poetry and stitched work presented in this project demonstrate my reflexivity of me as a researcher and a/r/tographer. It is an extension of the circular relationship between self, autoethnographer, and experience that generated the data in this project between the participants and myself and created the resulting art. Leavy (2015) asserts that the arts can “uniquely educate, inspire, illuminate, resist, heal and persuade” (p. ix) as arts-based research. Arts-based research is used “during all phases of social research including data generation, analysis, interpretation and representation” (p. ix) where “arts-based researchers are not ‘discovering’ new research tools, they are carving them” (Leavy, 2015, p. 3).

Limitations
The key limitations of this study could be understood as the small number of participants, with only one male. The study was also conducted on one site only, therefore the findings cannot be generalised. However, the intentions of the study were to deeply interrogate the stories of a few individuals so others could juxtapose their own stories alongside them.

As the researcher, a/r/tographer and common creator, I am the only participant that is constantly in the project. Keeping a world view of the data and what it revealed
has been paramount in this project. I did not want to monopolise or skew the data. The following chapter details my history with quilting and explores the use of quilting in this project.
Chapter Four:  
My Quilting Story

Quilting as part of the process method.
Quilting connects us to the women who preceded us and binds us to our contemporaries, a connection without conflict and filled with joy of beauty, creativity and friendship.
(Cory & McKelvy, 1995, p. 11)

History of Quilting
Quilting was a common activity, in the 18th and 19th centuries, for women in the USA, England and Europe with flowers and feathers being popular designs often used to show a woman’s handiwork (Lipsett, 1985). During the 19th century, American patchwork quilts grew in popularity and were very much associated with the traditional roles women had in the household and in the family. The first American quilted items were utility blankets for warmth which developed in appearance and skill once the industrial revolution brought colourful thread and cotton, and affordable supplies, to the USA. Towards the end of the 19th century quilting started to become pieced and appliqued together (Freeman, 1983) which resulted in the more familiar forms and patterns of today.

The purpose, art and act of quilting.
Patchwork quilts were used as a necessity for warmth, as keepsake gifts, to represent kinship, to show mutual support and as a hobby craft for women. Quilts became a way of telling a story: they became a way to document people, family and history. In the changing times of the late 1800s, women found “comfort in affirming family, friendship and love” (Cory & McKelvy, 1995, p. 11) with quilt making, as a
feminist activity and as a way of coping with their lives, and “serving to strengthen [their] relationships” (p. 11). This example of stitched embodied practice is further demonstrated in Chile, where women collectively create arpilleras - colourful pictures, made out of fabric that became a form of resistance during the Pinochet dictatorship (Moya-Raggio, 1984, p. 277). These arpilleras allow a woman to speak with no words, using a skill traditionally considered feminine, “where [her] needlework becomes testimony based on the daily happenings of the inner history of a people” (p. 279). This feminine activity is an embodied practice and voice of a deeply human activity used as “their response to the reality which surrounds them [and] comes through their collective work” (p. 280). The quilts of the 1800s and 1990s were very much a history and documentation of family, home and life.

My Quilting Story
From a young age I enjoyed various arts and crafts. While my mother was not skilled in needle crafts, there were two very influential women in my family who were – my Grama (my mother’s mother) and my Auntie Fran. My Grama was a hand quilter. And they were beautiful. I remember looking so closely at the fabric and examining the closest detail of the patterns. She was always making something with fabric. She made me cooking aprons and painting smocks, sleeping bags for a new puppy, and one day when I was 7, a Holly Hobbie quilt arrived in the post. It had 16 Holly Hobbie profiles inside a light-yellow grid. I adored Holly Hobbie and was careful with this special blanket. When I see it now I can remember each fabric pattern like an old family photo. I retrace the bonnets and dresses remembering each one. I look closer at each stitch, knowing my Grama did each one by hand. I do this still, now, with my own daughter, as the quilt lies on her bed. I can draw a line from my daughter now, back to me, back to this quilt, and back to my Grama and
my love of stitching and creating, and back to a skill I have from her. This line is direct.

I don’t remember my Grama sitting me down and showing me what to do, showing me how to quilt. Somehow that just happened. I do remember threading her needles because her eyes couldn’t find the eye for the thread anymore. I would sit very close to her, standing-lamp on, squatting on the couch, as I tried to see over her shoulder and getting in the light. I remember asking her what the needle looked like through her eyes, and trying to imagine the needle and thread a wee bit blurry, but still a needle and thread. This is how I learned to quilt. Watching her, while watching TV, and threading her needles. As an adult, someone asked me how I learned to quilt and I’m not sure. There was no moment it happened. I said I was self-taught, by watching and remembering my Grama. That is still the best way I can describe it.

Auntie Fran became part of my family when I was 5 years old and she married my mother’s brother, Uncle Les. She is very no-nonsense, and very crafty. I spent many summer holidays and Christmas breaks with her teaching me to weave, knit, and make anything imaginable stitching on plastic canvas - and when I was 10 she finally taught me to cross-stitch. I remember how special that moment was. I remember when we chose a pattern, my colours, looped my thread around a cut up cereal box and bought some aida cloth to stitch on. I sat on her couch and stitched for the next week - solidly. And I went home with something I had made to proudly show my mom. Throughout my teenage years, I continued to cross-stitch, mainly gifts for my mom and family. But, as with my Grama, I don’t really remember the tuition, but the process of making and watching. As an adult I am still very crafty and
continue to quilt and cross-stitch every year. This is not just something that I love to do or get joy from. It is not just the making of something for a new baby born into my family as a way to welcome them or for the parents to cherish. This is part of who I am. There is a part of me in each piece, part of my connection to my family and to my Grama that I continually revisit in this making process. This is my embodiment.

**Collaborative Quilt Making in this Project**

*Material behavior includes not only objects that people construct but also the processes by which their artisans conceptualize them, fashion them and use them to make available for others to utilize….*material behavior encompasses matters of personality, psychological states and processes and social interaction in relation to artefacts. *It also comprises ideas that people associate with objects, the meaning they attribute to them, and the way in which they use them symbolically and instrumentally.* (Owen Jones, 1998, as cited in Horton, 2005, p. 3)

At the end of the first interview, I spoke to the participants about creating a quilting project together, as a way to further analyse and respond to the data. They were overwhelmingly positive about the project and about being able to contribute in a creative and collaborative way. One participant had prior quilting experience. I explained that they would be able to contribute language and fabric of their choice, as well as contribute to the pattern to be used for the stitched project that I would then create for us all. I could feel their interest to participate in something new and something tangible. This was unexpected.

Participants were given three options to obtain fabric: one - I could bring in my personal collection and they could choose from it; two - they could go to a local fabric
shop and choose; or three - they could bring some fabric from home. Three participants went to a local quilting shop and chose their own fabric, and three brought in fabric from home (see Figure 5 below). I had originally planned to present one quilting pattern for this collaborative stitched work to each participant. However, immediately prior to the interviews, I realised that, in doing so, I was totally going against the ethos of what it means to be culturally responsive, what it means to be collaborative. I, in the role of interviewer, was dictating to the interviewee what our project would be and what it would look like. I was surprised at myself. I decided that I would present the three patterns I had chosen while researching, and ask the participants individually which one they would like to create, instead of leaving them out of this part of the decision-making process. This felt much more like my philosophy of teaching and my process in the classroom.

![Figure 5. Swatches of fabric participants contributed to project.](image)

At the second interview, participants discussed their fabric choices and spoke about what the fabric meant to them or how it represented them. They also contributed a single word about their practice or pedagogy, and wrote it onto a separate piece of fabric I had brought along. I was not exactly sure what I was going to do with these words on the fabric, but it felt appropriate to do this. Traditionally, blankets, cross stitching and needlework includes the names of their makers, who the piece is for or
what the purpose of the piece is, i.e. wedding quilt. As this is an anonymous project, it seemed fitting to add a word for each participant as a way to include them visually within the work, and to document their presence. The second interviews were a collaborative autoethnography: ethnography being the study of a cultural group (teachers), and an autobiography as the study of self (me; Chang et al., 2012). Our ideas, thoughts, fabric and history became one collaborative stitched project that would speak of us all.

Participants were given the history of the three traditional quilting patterns that I had researched beforehand, including images of each one. They were asked to choose one they felt represented both themselves and what culturally responsive teaching meant to them. I presented them with the friendship star, the nine patch, and the log cabin, as three possibilities that could speak to what it means to be a culturally responsive educator.

*The quilting block options.*

*Figure 6. Friendship star quilt block.*

The *friendship star* block originated with pioneer women in America who had received the quilt as a parting gift from other women, typically before they travelled from the East to the West towards the uncertainty of a new life. These quilts were a
group effort, often done in secret, with each block sewn by a friend or relative, with her name embroidered in the centre as a way to keep alive the memory and sense of connection to the recipient’s former life (Eddy, 2005, p. 152). I chose this pattern because I felt that, as teachers, we rely on each other in the same ways these pioneer women did, for advice, comfort and companionship. This project is collaborative, as the lives of pioneer women once were. I also view culturally responsive classrooms this way, as spaces where teachers work together in collaborative ways for a larger purpose. Teachers also seem to trace their practice and pedagogy back to specific moments or specific individuals, possibly to names that we would put on a quilt of our teaching career.

Figure 7. The nine patch block.

The *nine patch* block was also a pattern popular with pioneer women who did not have a lot of time or fabric to spare. Quilts were often sewn together quickly, for necessity. The nine patch is one of the simplest patterns to make and was typically the first quilt made by girls as young as three or four when they were taught, what is traditionally considered, the essential skill of sewing (Quilting in America, 2009, para. 5). I chose the nine patch as a possible pattern, as I felt that, in the classroom, teachers often have to improvise or throw something together quickly to suit a particular purpose. I believe culturally responsive teaching is improvising, it is
putting together what you have, to match what someone needs. As with the nine patch, teachers work with what they have, to meet the needs of those in front of them.

![Figure 8. The log cabin block.](image)

The final possibility was the *log cabin* block. It is a well-known patchwork pattern used by pioneers to symbolise home, warmth, love and security. The centre square was red and represented the home, the hearth, and the fire as the centre of life in the home (Eddy, 2005, p. 130). I felt that culturally responsive teachers strive to create warm, welcoming spaces for students to create and learn in. This pattern spoke to me as also representing the classroom physically—suitable wall displays, furniture placement and the ambience a teacher creates in classrooms. I was also moved by the historical assertion that a log cabin quilt created with a black centre, and hung in a window or on a clothes line, symbolised a safe place for African Americans to stop along the “Underground Railroad” during the American Civil War (Tobin & Dobard, 2000). Schools can also often be a safe haven for students to discover their interests and to learn who they are as they embark on their life journeys.
After I showed the participants each pattern and gave them a brief history of each, they were given time in the interview to reflect and choose the pattern that they felt best represented them or their teaching philosophy. Individually, and independently of each other, participants chose the log cabin. I was incredibly surprised by this, but also felt very heartened about the symbolic representation of the log cabin and how the participants saw their role as teachers. Serendipitously, this was also the pattern that I had originally chosen. This seemingly small, synchronistic event somehow further connected us and made me believe that I was truly creating a project for, and of, us all.

**What was created?**

After the interviews, I worked with the fabric, the word contributed by each participant, and the log cabin pattern and its history. It did not feel right to just quickly use our fabric to make a log cabin block, that was too easy. As an artistic component and reflection of this project, I felt that the fabric, the words, and the pattern, needed to sit with me for a while. It required contemplation while I transcribed the interviews, worked with their data and processed the combination of it all. As an artist, I do not just walk up to a canvas, and paint something because I am asked to. Creating, for me, is a very internal process that, ultimately, reveals itself externally. While the action of creating art itself can be rushed, the internal processing behind it, for me, cannot. I approached this collaborative stitched project in the same way, in an embodied way, as something not to be rushed, as something that needed to simmer and to reveal itself once developed.

Throughout this project I sought to have the data, the participants, and myself come together in a way that could speak of us all equally, separately and together, in the
arts-based responses. How could fabric represent us and convey our messages, ideas and beliefs? Denzin (2012) believes, albeit in relation to sports studies, that “an embodied [sports study] project that matters must locate the body within the radically contextual politics. It must focus on the active, agentic flesh-and-blood human body” (p. 298). I wanted the quilting to speak of teaching, teachers, cultural responsiveness, relationships in the classroom, the tradition of stitching and the very emergent and innovative way of using it within academic research. Pelias (2004) describes this desire of mine, to create this way, as a methodology of the heart, located in the researcher physically, through which “a body is deployed, not as a narcissistic display but on behalf of others, a body that invites identification and empathetic connection, a body that takes as its charge to be fully human” (p. 1).

While it can be argued that in the 19th century “sewing [is] oppressive” and “women who [become] socially and politically more assertive [tend] to abandon it” (Freeman, 1983, p. 16), Freeman (1983) argues that “group sewing in quilting, drawing women together in work and friendship, seems to offer a setting in which a new social consciousness could develop” (p. 16). The collaborative stitching in this project represents all of the participants, our fabric, our language and our philosophy of teaching from a culturally responsive standpoint. Koelsch (2012) suggests that the self is perhaps best understood metaphorically, and an adequate metaphor is one that captures the tensions between the historical Western viewpoint of the self as functioning somewhat independently and the contemporary social-science understanding of the self as at least partially shaped by larger cultural forces. One such metaphor is that of a patchwork quilt (Koelsch, 2012).
Quilting – A Metaphor of Becoming

Art is partly communication, but only partly. The rest is discovery.

(William Golding, 1959, Free Fall)

Quilting became a significant aspect of embodied knowledge, through the process of this study, as I analysed the data. The process of making a quilt resonated with the storied experiences of becoming an educator. Using the fabric participants contributed during the interviews, I created three quilted blocks as a collaborative stitched response to this project. During the initial interviews, participants had each individually chosen the log cabin pattern as their choice for this project. They had also each contributed two swatches of fabric. The participants’ further contribution included one word for me to work with that they felt was part of their pedagogical practice or possibly a word that defined their educational philosophy.

Throughout this project, I found myself being drawn to the spiralling and dialogic theories and elements that were reoccurring in the literature (Bishop et al., 2007; Duffy, 1998; Jasso & Jasso, 1995; Wink, 2005). These included the two images representing Te Kotahitanga (see Figure 3) and Kia Eke Panuku (see Figure 4). These spiralling and dialogic theories are based on the idea that “learning is interactive, dialogic and spirals; where participants are connected to one another through the establishment of a common vision for what constitutes excellence in educational outcomes” (Bishop et al., 2007 p. 1). Spiralling is a reminder that not only does critical pedagogy evolve, but it is a process. It is dialectic. It is about doing and living as a way of life rather than as a method (Jasso & Jasso, 1995).

I continued to find spiralling and dialogic elements in the participants’ interview data. Their shared stories detailed how they worked with students in circular models of
communication rather than linear transmission models. The spiralling was part of their own learning as it represented ako, where ako means to teach as well as to learn. Metge (1983) defines ako as a “unified cooperation of teacher and learner in a single enterprise” (p. 2); it is the reciprocity of being both a teacher and a learner at the same time. Teachers were able to see their practice as not only a way to teach but also as a way to learn with students. I saw the action of ako, the spiralling of knowledge, and teaching and learning between teachers and students, as a long, never-ending process, where knowledge was interactive and co-constructed. I also saw it within myself, as a researcher, as I learned just as much about the participants as I did about myself throughout. I saw cultural responsiveness echoed in the spirals, and reflected, as this project spoke of one of us, of all of us, and of our students, all at the same time.

Figure 9. Spiralling log cabin - #1.

With these images in mind, I sought to incorporate them into the quilting blocks - to have that idea resonate with the viewer and reader. I started experimenting and looking at variations of the traditional log cabin design and felt that the quilt pattern needed to become the spiral itself (see Figures 9, above, & 13, below). This, in turn,
reflects the participants’ stories and experiences, their choices for the project, my findings within the literature as well as the theories related to culturally responsive teaching.

**Get Stitching**

The spiralling and dialogic ideas in this project became a significant aspect of my study and the creation of knowledge. Once I had the pattern for the spiral log cabin, I went to a local quilting shop to explore how I would stitch the pieces together. While I have made many quilts, I felt that I needed some expert advice to ensure I was using the appropriate technique for this pattern. Arts-based research implores the researcher to respect their *craft*, as Adamson (2008) states people “value the integrity of the well-made object, the time and care it demands. Therefore, what we most want out of our craft is something like perfection” (p. 38). The word *craft* itself denotes something well made. Something that is *crafted* is created with care, time, diligence, skill and technique, whereas the word *mastery* is associated with skill and technique (Shiner, 2012) further elevating the perfection of craft work. I wanted to ensure that I not only honoured the tradition of quilting, to myself and this project and its participants, but executed it to the highest technical standard in order to honour my lineage and my connection to my Grama as my teacher.

To create the log cabin blocks, a technique called *foundation piecing* was used, which was new to me. My local quilting shop expert patiently explained this technique while a line of fabric lovers slowly formed behind me, interested yet growing impatient to get to their own projects. I agreed with the expert who suggested I contact another local quilter who ran classes in her home, for advice and tuition on foundation piecing. Inspired and curious about foundation piecing, I went
home and searched YouTube, hoping to find something to view so I had an idea of
this technique before attending a class. The top result for foundation piecing on
YouTube had already been “watched.” This was strange. I clicked on the video and
realised I had viewed this video before. The memory of the video, the voices and the
quilting came back to me. Prior to this moment, I had no recollection of foundation
piecing or this video. I found this to be such an interesting intersection in this project
as it reverberated within me: the whole underlying process of classroom interaction,
and the quilting component of this project, where we gather information, experience
and technique whose value may not be known or used right away but will be, at
some point in the future. All our interactions and experiences are spiralling, one on
top of the other, building our knowledge so when we need to use it, it has been
woven, stitched into our existence, it is part of our memory that we can recall.

I spent two mornings a week for four weeks at the quilting classes. While I was just
seeking some guidance from Lyn with this particular project, I found so much more.
There was a bond between these women in these classes. While everyone did
attend to quilt, the friendships, support, advice and dialogue they experienced was
just as important to these women. It was a coming together of women to create
stitched artefacts that I found reminiscent of women’s quilting groups from over 100
years ago. This “need for others,” as described by Mitchell, Reilly and Logue (2009)
in relation to education, is “particularly apparent when teachers attempt to engage in
reflection or conversation about their practice” (p. 5). The group becomes the
listeners, the sounding board, the advisors, the questioners, and the support, as we
make our way through new or difficult situations. The quilting classes were a time to
create keepsakes, gifts, support one another and pursue a hobby craft where the
quilts told stories, documented lives, and the people around them. This was women
supporting women, and as referenced earlier in this chapter, it was quilt making as a feminine activity and as a way to cope with their lives “serving to strengthen relationships” (Cory & McKelvey, 1995, p. 11). In my small town, I had found the stitched embodied practice demonstrated in Chile by women who collectively work together on arpilleras (Fitzpatrick, 2016, Moya-Raggio, 1984) as a reflection of their lives, their history and as a way to connect family, lineage and places. I also found a way to reconnect with myself and with my Grama and Auntie Fran. They were there with me as I built on the skills I had learnt from them.

**Back in the Stitch of It**

Foundation piecing is created using a paper pattern of what you want to create and sewing fabric onto the back. Both of the “right sides” of the fabric and pattern are facing out (see Figures 10 & 11, below). This process entails building up the block one piece of fabric at a time, constantly flipping the paper making sure it all fits together; it is done in a seemingly backwards way to how you would normally think about quilting. This process of quilt making reflected back to me the classroom experience of building up your practice and pedagogy as a teacher. You have patterns of function and expectation from the school, and also the Ministry of Education, that you need to adhere to. So, as a teacher, you try to add parts of yourself to that, one layer at a time, figuring out who you are and how you can create something beautiful, something that means something to you, out of these patterns and pieces, like layers of your own cultural identity.
Figure 10. Foundation piecing.

Figure 11. Foundation coming together.

At the beginning, it doesn't feel as though they will fit; you are constantly asking your mentor, other teachers or experts - “is this right?”, “how does this look now?”, or
saying “oops, I think I have made a mistake”, constantly flipping pieces back and forth trying to make sense of it all. Duffy (1998) describes this process for teachers as something like trying to “balance round stones”, where classroom teachers “must bring seemingly incompatible forces into harmony” (p. 777) as they figure out who they are as educators, and the philosophy they adhere to. As quilting is a process of becoming, nothing is ever a mistake, every stitch can be unpicked and re-sewn, every piece of fabric can be re-cut or changed with another while creating anything you choose. Just as in the development of your practice. No teaching moment is ever a mistake, they all build up to knowing who you are, informing how and who you want to be in the classroom, as you take pieces from yourself, from others and from your experience, to create the foundation piece of who you are becoming as an educator. This struggle and attempt to balance round stones, teaches you who you are as an educator, what works for you and how you get those stones to balance.

As I created the spiralling log cabin, I knew it could not sit alone. I decided to add in a second block, a traditional log cabin (see Figures 8, & 12, above), to show how the stitched component was formulated and reconstructed, and informed by the project

Figure 12. Traditional log cabin with words
and the literature, how teaching practice can be informed and transformed. The third block, a second spiral log cabin, became necessary, like the learning, unlearning and relearning experienced in the classroom. I felt that the three blocks reflected the three spirals in Te Kotahitanga (see Figure 14, below). I added the words participants’ contributed in the interviews which became, in the quilt, the wavy lines, the sea and the taniwha as support on the journey (see Figures 15-21, below). The centre spiral represented the trained teacher, with the students, and the teachers’ practice, on either side. These two spirals supported the teacher in their journey to knowing who they were as an educator, helping to inform their next steps. The three blocks seemed to embody this project, the participant’s stories, the literature and my journey through it as I realised I sought not just to understand Pākehā teachers and culturally responsive pedagogy, but my own self as a Pākehā, as an educator, and as a quilter (see Figure 14, below). This was me leading, possibly enabling, students and fellow educators to also find their way. This was part of my own foundation piece, part of my own becoming.

Figure 13. Spiralling log cabin #2.
My own becoming as an educator has been a communal journey, informed and developed along the way. I can remember where I distinctly began my journey as a culturally responsive teacher – with the principal on my first practicum. I had to interview them as part of an assignment and I naively and innocently asked the question “so why are the Māori students segregated by their grades and race from everyone else?” I can only really remember the look on their face as they answered the question, saying “this is not segregation,” but I cannot remember anything else they said, as I quickly shuffled out of the room. Soon after, I asked my associate teacher to help me understand, in a genuine attempt to understand my new profession and to help form my emerging teaching philosophy. Their reply was “listen, this is the way it is, it’s not going to change, so just do it.” I sensed hostility and exasperation and I did not know why. It was not until I had my first position and attended a hui on Te Kotahitanga that I started to really understand what culturally responsive education was, why it was needed and important, and what my role was as an educator. Five years later, I now feel I can engage and speak to that beginning teacher, to myself, and can also reply with what my role is and has been as a Pākehā educator in a culturally responsive environment.

Figure 14, below, is the final quilted piece for this project. The spiralling and dialogic patterns are on either side of a traditional log cabin block, in the centre, with the participants’ contributed words embroidered around the centre block. This final piece tells the story of Te Kotahitanga, of the past and of the future of the participants’ practice, pedagogy and philosophy. All the participants are included, with their chosen pattern, fabric and words for everyone to read, interpret and add to their own stories. This quilting block story is as much of one of us, as it is of all of us.
Figure 14. A/r/tographic, collaborative stitched cabins.
Chapter Five:

Stories & Analysis

The fact that I still find so much beauty in a handicraft is because my mother taught us to see not just the craft as a product but the craft as an embodiment of human creativity and human labor.

(Vandana Shiva, as quoted by David Barsamian, 2004, p. 193)

Introduction

Looking through the interview transcripts, I was surprised by what I was reading. My thesis was supposed to explore transformative practices that culturally responsive teachers experience and create in the classroom. I had come to my question in a roundabout way. Originally, I wanted to understand the reasoning, motives and decisions of teachers who did not or would not teach from a culturally responsive pedagogy. It was a real puzzle that I wanted to understand, especially in a school whose philosophy was to support students’ success in a culturally responsive environment. I quickly realised that staffroom banter would never make it to a thesis. I did not expect that anyone would sign up to share and display negative or resistant types of practice and pedagogy in the classroom. I therefore decided to explore what teachers who were creating and sustaining culturally responsive relationships in the classroom were doing. While this was the intended direction, and the data gathered did reveal the positive side of a culturally responsive classroom, it also highlighted the complexity for teachers working with an externally implemented programme that did not address their own philosophies, beliefs and practice. Hence, unexpectedly, the thesis also discloses the negative experiences, and practices of resistance to particular programmes, experienced by teachers.
The following are a series of creative writing pieces that represent my key findings in this thesis. Through using the method of writing as inquiry (L. Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2005), I have analysed and presented the data from the transcripts in a series of narratives, short stories and found poems. I subsequently interrogate each of these creative pieces with relevant theory and literature. The writing presented uses the voices of all the participants, sometimes woven, sometimes entangled, representing their thoughts and ideas, along with my own, and exploring issues such as teachers knowing who they are, both in and out of the classroom; student/teacher relationships; school leadership; collegial relationships; and self-care. Throughout this chapter I have included close up images of the embroidered words participants offered, in the interviews, for the finished quilt (see Figures 15-21). These words reflect the participants’ philosophies and experiences, adding depth to the stories revealed in the interviews and to the creative writing process undertaken in the analysis. Participants did not include an explanation for their chosen word and so I find myself further exploring my own practice through their included word and what they could mean to us both. This chapter contains three separate analyses. Each analysis has an introduction to the piece of creative writing, the creative writing itself, and then the analysis.

*Figure 15. Growth.*
Story One: First Year Pedagogy be Like?

While first going through the data and trying to get an overall view and understanding of it, I found that I kept returning to the participants’ answers to the first interview question. I was drawn to it, almost haunted by it. What were they really saying in this first response in an interview about culturally responsive teaching practices? I decided to isolate their responses to gain a clearer picture. I created a word document with only their responses to the first question and then read it as one. In that moment, I saw their frustration and disassociation. I saw their struggle, defeatism and triumphs, as well as many sides of their practice and pedagogy.

I used the participants’ answers to the first question and placed them in a pub scene, a weekly occurrence for many at this school on a Friday night. I wove their responses with my own words and experiences, seeking to create a narrative that was accessible and relatable, one that spoke of what was rising out of the data. Holman Jones (2016) describes this theorising element of critical autoethnography as “an ongoing, movement-driven process that links the concrete and abstract, thinking and acting, aesthetics and criticism” (p. 229). Further to this, Holman Jones describes stories as our “way in to understanding – to theorizing, and thus to knowing and working to change – our culture and ourselves” (p. 230). When re-reading this narrative, I find myself in the pub, with them, recounting the day, the week, and the experiences as a teacher and as someone new to the profession.

First year pedagogy be like?

“Bells are ringing,” I think much longer than usual.
I’m tapping my foot, hoping it will speed up the kids packing their bags.
“Bye, have a great weekend” I say, yet the door shuts before I could finish.
There is a steady stream of teachers and students from every orifice as we all make our way out of the school for the weekend. I myself, am heading for the pub! Oh God, let there be good people there tonight. On the way to the car, I realise that I have left some marking, but I keep going, marking will not stop me now!

There is a huge sense of relief as I make my way through the pub door and see a few welcoming faces. Reports, new comment structures and a student teacher have plagued my week. I sit down and start to relax. After a few minutes, as the wine dissolves the haze, the conversation comes into focus. “Um it was extremely formulaic and it wasn’t particularly deep.” Oh, what are they talking about to that first year teacher? “There was very little variation in that, very straightforward, not a lot of customisation, not a lot of extension.” Oh lord, here we go, Windsor is talking about work again.

I start to zone in to the conversation “Um I remember being quite insecure, I worried a little bit too much if kids liked me, so I had loads of worksheets and stuff,” George says as he stares straight ahead at the newest teacher brave enough to take time out from planning for Friday drinks. I’ve worked with George for years, surely he was never that insecure about his practice? “So pedagogy was….. I did what I was told. I would honestly say that I was kind of weak” he says as if to squash any ideas that he knew what he was doing as a new teacher. I always thought him invincible as an educator.

I turn to the new fish, trying to understand where this is coming from, and ask how her week was. New fish replies “I’m a first year, um….yep, full on. It’s really full. It’s a steep learning curve.”
“Next year you will forget you felt like this, what happened?” I cheerily add. “It’s the things that they teach you at uni versus what it’s actually like in the classroom…. um, yeah, I guess.”

I give her the knowing nod, as does the table. We all remember the university teaching degree we wore like a coat of armour and a seal that we knew how to teach. This armour literally crumbles by the end of day three. Four years of training and you’re still not prepared for the reality of period five.

“Maybe we all feel that way,” Windsor says. “I spent a lot of time on tasks rather than thinking more about how children actually learn! So yeah, a lot of fly-by-the-seat-of-my-pants, a lot of anxiety, a lot of hard work and a lot of ineffective practice.”

The words have barely left my mouth as I feel the need to wash them out with more wine. Was my first year really that hard?

We all turn to new fish……this trip down memory lane isn’t helping.

New fish sits there with an “oh goodness” look on her face. Whatever else happened in my first years as a teacher, I remember having that look.

As I gaze around the table at my colleagues, I realise we all remember. Self-doubt, not enough time, forgetting everything we ever learned, losing power on the laptop at the precise moment you need it, and leaving your beautifully planned lessons at home…..we have all been there without the safety net of experience and confidence to dream up a lesson while the class sits down.

Miss Pringle says she remembers being very busy, very frantic, and not knowing an awful lot.

Miss Pringle thinks this!? Not sure that this is possible for me to comprehend coming from her, she’s an awesome teacher.

George arrives just in time with another round of drinks. Great, let’s forget this week! He raises his glass and drinks to completing junior reports, for the 8th time in his career, and still not knowing what he was doing.

Nope, let’s dwell on this week.

He says “It’s actually teaching and learning at the same time, every time I think I know what to do we get a new directive. I just do what I want now.”
New fish is in awe of this brazen snub to the 42 page booklet we received last week on how to write junior reports in the “new format.”

Everyone savours George’s thought……….. do your own thing.
We all do it, we just hide it better as time goes on.
We avoid the traps and do what we want.
Kids are happier and so are we.

Plaid lad arrives and he’s polished off his first drink before he finally adds to the conversation,
“Ooo, fear. Ummm, lol, I remember the fear, oh I didn’t have a mentor.”
We all look at him, safe in the knowledge that none of us had a mentor that actually was one in either body or presence.
“I didn’t have a mentor, I was supposed to have a mentor but I didn’t,” he continues,
“I don’t know if I am allowed to say this, rip shit and bust.
That’s how it was, I was just keeping myself from drowning most of the time.”
Plaid lad has offered a sobering moment, we all remember nearly drowning at the beginning.
We had no idea, we hadn’t even learnt what we needed to know at teacher training college.
We learned a lot at training college that we don’t actually use,
And there is a lot at training college that you don’t learn.

Windsor is still reflective, she says “First couple of years as a teacher I think I struggled.”
We all look over in shock.
Of course we all struggled. Isn’t that part of being a teacher, constantly struggling to do it all?
This thought sits with us, we do all struggle. Then it goes round the room:
“I was very much about safe-guarding myself as a beginning teacher”;
“I think I am a bit more open after 7 years”;
“I think my pedagogy is around my at-risk kids”;
“I mean, in your first couple of years you are taught not to share and keep yourself closed off from what you actually do.”
“The pedagogy and stuff you get taught in reality, it’s actually quite different.”

I sit and sip my wine as it goes around the group, tit for tat in a round robin that’s making my head spin.
We all had it hard.
We all learned.
We all cried.
We somehow survived.

Figure 16. Puddles.

**Story one: Analysis.**

“Bells are ringing,” I think much longer than usual.
I’m tapping my foot, hoping it will speed up the kids packing their bags.
“Bye, have a great weekend” I say, yet the door shuts before I could finish.

It is a familiar feeling at most places of employment on a Friday afternoon, when leaving for the weekend. While not necessarily for teachers to “get away” from students, traditionally, Friday night drinks is a shared time for staff to mix socially, wind down from a week’s work, seek new ideas for the classroom, gain creativity, moral support and bond with colleagues (Wiley, 2001). Denzin (1984) reminds us that teaching is “people” work, it is an emotional practice. Teachers feel very
emotional about their work, their students, and their own effectiveness as educators (Salzberger-Wittenberg, Henry, & Osborne, 1983). Having strong emotional collegial relationships between teachers should not be “underestimated or belittled [as they] sustain teachers in the face of emotional stress, crisis and difficulty” (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 517). Hargreaves concludes that teachers “seek and enjoy the rewards of affiliation with colleagues – seeing personal support and social acceptance as strong sources of emotion in their work” (p. 523).

*Um it was extremely formulaic and it wasn’t particularly deep.*

*There was very little variation in that, very straight forward, not a lot of customisation, not a lot of extension.*

During the interview process, I found the participants’ stories relayed their concern for the students they taught, the lessons they planned and the development of their practice as culturally responsive teachers. It was more than staying late or arriving early, it was a commitment to improving their practice, pedagogy and student outcomes, or what Duffy (1998) describes as “thoughtful adaptation rather than technical compliance” (p. 778). Wiley (2001) details her study on the hallmarks of school faculty relations that “positively influence teachers to improve instructional practices” (p. 2) which identified professional community and transformational leadership as the two key shared values and beliefs that supported teachers (p. 2). Working in a supportive, collegial environment allows teachers to take on the role of mentor, mentee, coach, specialist, advisor and so on (Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008) as their practice develops.

*I spent a lot of time on tasks rather than thinking more about how children actually learn! So yeah, a lot of fly-by-the-seat-of-my-pants, a lot of anxiety, a lot of hard work and a lot of ineffective practice.*
Duffy (1998), who writes of his own journey as an educational leader, came to the conclusion that his own “stance on professional knowledge should be secondary, and [his] priority should be helping teachers develop their stances” (p. 78). Cornu and Ewing (2008) postulate that high-quality professional experiences for teachers have been “characterised by the evolution of a more sophisticated understanding of the need for reciprocal relationships amongst early career and experienced teachers (p. 1799).

There is a lot to juggle as a beginning teacher – class planning; getting to know staff, students, and processes at the school; data collection; meetings; extra-curricular commitments...the list goes on. Hargreaves (2002) asserts that “in the past, teachers were both imprisoned within and protected by a state of classroom isolation that shielded them from scrutiny but also bred conservatism, individualism and uncertainty” (p. 503). Teachers now realise that “having at least one close relationship...can be so important...actively seeking it out, feeling out their colleagues for potential soul mates” (p. 514). I personally can identify with this reflection and support-process. I was taken under the wing of an experienced teacher, quite automatically, and in turn I have felt myself instinctively support a new teacher I recognised as like myself, desperately seeking guidance to find their way.

As I gaze around the table at my colleagues, I realise we all remember.

Self-doubt, not enough time, forgetting everything we ever learned...

Teacher stress and burnout has long been argued as the main reasons for poor teacher retention rates. The teacher induction process is regarded as important to the success and retention of teachers long-term (Cameron, Lovett, & Berger, 2008). The key to enhancing a schools' capabilities and retaining teachers is the principal
(Mulford, 2003), who affects the environmental and organisational conditions of the school and classrooms (Cameron et al., 2008). New Zealand has comparatively generous funding, within the OECD, for induction processes, yet is losing nearly four out of every 10 teachers (37%) within three years of graduation (Elvidge, 2002). To create positive, collegial places of work requires strong professional communities of teachers who confer praise on one another, who support one another, who have the opportunity to work collaboratively, who develop close friendships and deal well with issues of professional difference and disagreement, who use debate and inquiry as an explicit part of a school’s professional culture; who use open sharing practices for data; and who embrace diversity amongst teaching excellence (Noddings 1992). I believe that underpinning all of these points is the idea that colleagues then actively care for each other as individuals who bring a diverse set of skills and knowledge to the profession, which is acknowledged and actively used.

Great let’s forget this week!
He raises his glass and drinks to completing junior reports, for the 8th time in his career, and still not knowing what he was doing.
Nope, let’s dwell on this week.
He says “It’s actually teaching and learning at the same time, every time I think I know what to do we get a new directive. I just do what I want now.”

While working with the interview data creating these stories, I was reminded of the collegial trust evident within my participant interviews. I also became aware of an “us and them” disposition when the participants spoke about school management or the Ministry of Education directives. The eight dimensions Ashton (1984) writes of (see below) were evident within teacher-teacher relationships; however, these were not evident or felt by participants in their relationships with their superiors or with the Ministry of Education. Van Maele and Van Houtten (2008) assert that “trust is related to the effective functioning of a school” (p. 557). Throughout the interviews,
participants made comments that revealed how they believed the school was being run. Participants spoke about the school being data-driven as a result of ministry directives; they spoke of teacher voice being overlooked, and they spoke about a lack of collegiality amongst staff. Van Maele and Van Houtten (2008) further state that trust can “positively affect the attitudes, perceptions, behaviours and performance outcomes of organisational members. Because organisational members need to realise collective goals, they are dependent on one another. In such situations of interdependence trust may reduce uncertainty and enhance cooperation” (p. 559). These ideas are further represented in the next part of the story, below, where staff state they are constantly wondering about their tasks and roles. Staff expressed their confusion and uncertainty, and chose, instead of understanding, to create their own processes, to create their own collegiality with staff, taking them further away from the management and processes of the school and nearer to their own set of rules created in order to cope.

Miss Pringle says she remembers being very busy, very frantic, and not knowing an awful lot.

Everyone savours George’s thought……… do your own thing.
We all do it, we just hide it better as time goes on.
We avoid the traps and do what we want.
Kids are happier and so are we.

Having collegial trust within a school and its professional relationships is the belief “that teachers can depend on one another in a difficult situation; teachers can rely on the integrity of their colleagues” (Hoy & Kupersmith, 1985). Ashton (1984) further lists eight dimensions that teachers with high self-efficacy in the classroom are distinguished by:

- sense of personal accomplishment with students
- positive expectations for student behaviour and achievement
• personal responsibility for student learning using reflective practices
• strategies for achieving objectives for students and themselves
• positive affect with students and their place in the classroom
• confident they can influence student learning
• commons goals between teacher and students
• democratic decision-making practices

These eight dimensions denote teachers to be caring, supportive educators willing to go the extra mile for students.

Using Hall’s (1990) two definitions of culture here can also help make sense of teachers’ beliefs in the culture and collegial trust at a school. Hall’s (1990) first definition relates to “one, shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’…which people with a shared history hold in common” (p. 223). By using this definition, I believe that teachers seek to be part of a school/workplace culture that mirrors their own, a culture that reflects their beliefs in practice and pedagogy and how they wish to be treated as a member of staff. The narrative’s lines above clearly demonstrate a disenfranchised staff who have sought their own sub-culture, within the school, that reflects their beliefs and processes as well as offers professional and emotional support, where who you are personally reflects how you are professionally.

*Figure 17. Compass.*
Hall’s (1990) second, yet related, definition of culture acknowledges that, while there are points of similarity, there are deep points of difference related to “what we really are”; or rather “what we have become”. Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being.’ It belongs to the future as much as to the past” (p. 225), as teachers’ practice and pedagogy evolves from the experiences with students as well as with colleagues. Teachers must be able to trust one another to make changes and evolve, whether they find that trust within colleagues or within the functioning of the school. Teachers must be able to explore and understand their own culture of teaching, and who they are within that culture, knowing that their culture, their being, is not stagnant, but evolving, for real change to emerge.

These lines in the narrative demonstrate how staff have lost confidence in their school leaders but they are also creating a dilemma for the “new fish.” Whose lead do they follow? How do they attempt to find success in their new workplace and school? While it is the principal’s responsibility to ensure all teachers are delivering quality instruction, they cannot be in everyone’s classroom. They do, however, need to “design a system that provides this support” (Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008, p. 459). It is clear that for these teachers “trust positively affect[s] the functioning and effectiveness of a school” (Van Maele & Van Houtten, 2008, p. 560) and their attitudes and responsiveness to school directives.

That’s how it was, it was, I was just keeping myself from drowning most of the time.
Plaid lad has offered a sobering moment, we all remember nearly drowning at the beginning.

Every teacher wants to be confident in the classroom, teachers crave appreciation (Hargreaves, 2002). Hollywood movies such as Dead Poets Society, Stand and Deliver and Lean on Me tell us schools only have one teacher who really cares about
its students. This one teacher is touted as the students' saviour, willing to risk everything for their students’ success, while “movies put teachers and schools in the position of saving children from drugs, violence, their families, and even themselves” (Ayers, 1993, p. 147). While teachers know this is mere Hollywood scripting, and not the case, we none-the-less hope that we will be that teacher who supports student success, pushing students to their capabilities, while sometimes feeling we are the only one doing this. These movies do not offer a realistic portrayal of what it is like to be a teacher and consistently send the message that giving up on some kids, the ones you cannot save, is okay, but that teachers are “bad” have already given up on all kids – “that is their sin” (Ayers, 1993, p. 147-148). As beginning teachers, I believe that we still have some of this Hollywood dream to grapple with and let go of as we are faced with the reality of the classroom, the school, ourselves as educators and the actual job of teaching. How is it possible to save all the students? How do we give up on some, committing a professional “sin”? How do we choose which students to “save”? I believe this mental and emotional distraction prevents teachers from developing their practice as they stay rooted in this Hollywood stereotype of what a teacher should be which is exacerbated by poor support and poor professional relationships within schools.

_We all had it hard._
_We all learned._
_We all cried._
_We somehow survived._

In this reflective section, participants expressed their memories of being a beginning teacher, their inner struggles and the resilience to stay in the profession. By highlighting their resilience, I seek to illuminate and question what enables teachers
to persist in the profession when faced with unending challenges, stress, burnout and isolation.

Beltman, Mansfield, and Price (2011) describe teacher resilience as the “outcome of a dynamic relationship between individual risk and protective factors” (p. 1) where “individual attributes such as altruistic motives and high self-efficacy are key individual protective factors” (p. 1). According to Day (2008), “teaching demands significant personal investment” (p. 250), with behaviour management, disruptive students, and a lack of institutional, collegial and parental support requiring high levels of teacher resilience for longevity in the profession. Castro, Kelly, and Shih (2009) further assert that teachers require self-efficacy, confidence and strong coping strategies in order to overcome challenging situations or recurring setbacks so that they are able not just to manage situations but “bounce back successfully” (Malloy & Allen, 2007, n.p.) with “high expectations, meaningful participation, and caring [being] the most commonly referred to protective factors emerging from resiliency research (Malloy & Allen, 2007, n.p.).

While I do feel a sense of resignation to the process that teachers go through, in this last stanza I can also see the future. Their resilience is there, they “survived,” they learned, they made it through. This level of resilience, this openness is necessary for them, as well as for new teachers. It demonstrates that there is a pathway where “caring and support,” “high expectations” and “meaningful participation” (Malloy & Allen, 2007, p. 19) are the three dimensions of resilience-building needed to reduce barriers to retention, self-care, efficacy and job satisfaction.
Story Two: Interview with a Teacher

After the first two interviews, I specifically spoke with my supervisor about my interview questions. Previously, we had gone through them and felt they would offer a guide for the participants to the overarching research question, allowing them to contribute openly without being led. But after the first two interviews, I felt maybe we had made a mistake, maybe the questions needed to be changed. I had re-examined them and could not figure out why the participants needed me to re-ask the questions, to get to their responses to the actual question. After a short review, we realised that the participants were in fact answering the questions, but that their answers and what they revealed were unexpected. Their answers disclosed the reality of what they were experiencing. I recall telling my supervisor that it felt like the participants had so much to say, and someone was finally listening to them, that they had a lot “on top” to get through before they could get to their actual answer. Upon making that hypothesis, I found the remaining interviews supported it. It also made their first answers ones unanticipated and out of my control. Their “on top” was solely about them and their experiences. I could not direct it or ask for it. I decided the questions were valid and to continue with them.

Story two at times can feel like the ramblings of a frustrated teacher. But with further inspection, I propose that it is the left, the unsaid, the unheard and not listened to, that these teachers were dealing with. Because the thesis is about culturally responsive teaching, I feel that the participants were also responding to their own internal journey, one that they may not have looked closely at or fully understood. Some responses felt like they were part of the friction created when people are becoming, i.e., they are learning, challenging, or questioning who they are and the happenings around them – they are making sense of it all. Frankenberg (1993)
states that we are in a time where white people are supposed “to view [them]selves as racially and culturally ‘neutral’ rather than as members of racially and culturally privileged or dominant groups” (p. 51). With the teachers working in an environment of culturally responsive practices, I sensed their fear, aggression, aversion, and lack of support and know-how to make the transition through this difficult knowledge as they become. While each participant has a different journey in culturally responsive practice and pedagogy, this story includes all of us, creating a common voice of a moment.

Interview with a teacher.

Te Ko...Te Koaahheee...ummmm I can’t even say it.
I thought it was about community? Isn’t it?
Well, I have my tokenism up on the board, lol
WHAT’S IT SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE ANYWAYS?
Well, the way they say it should look like looks like tokenism to me, even my Māori kids know its tokenism.
……Im not very good at this stuff eh?
Hang on, hang on, I’m looking back, I’m thinking.
Ok, ok hang on.
I was extremely formulaic, I wasn’t particularly deep and I was hoping to teach something in the middle of that.
I had a starter, an instruction, an activity and a plenary.
I checked they learnt what I had taught and ticked that box.
My box and the ministry box were always ticked.
I was definitely ticked off.

You know it’s a lot different here than what they teach you at uni.
I mean, here, everything is on paper, very little else is being done.
There is no collegial push for it, cultural responsiveness I mean.
And I have always been a bit dubious about it. Racist. That’s right, I would call it racist.
It’s about positive discrimination and I just want to be fair to everybody. But Te K has taught me to respond, you know to actually respond to the cultures in front of me and not pretend they don’t exist. Or pretend we are all the same. We need to respond, you know, respond to the philosophy, of you know, Māori, the Māori students.

But I didn’t sign up for this! I played along, I went along, I paid lip service to it. I paid lip service to it and a lot of weird sounding acronyms and names and multisyllabic words, which I didn’t understand, in a book I didn’t read when I needed someone to sit down and explain it…...in time I didn’t have or with a commitment I didn’t want. But I get it now. But now Te K is diminishing, its fizzing out and being replaced by other things. But yeah.

It fits the goals and the board wants it. Very little is being done here. Colleagues have amazing ideas but they have no power or authority in the hierarchy so they get overlooked. Very little is being done here. We need to shift, we need to shift towards colleagues that have amazing ideas not goals that enhance paper. Culturally responsive, schmulturally responsive, I’ve ticked that box.

We’ve got strategic plans and we’ve got principals and I guess they align. Te K is becoming….not redundant not redundant. Superseded. Our school is data-driven. We want to improve. We want to reduce disparity. We want to improve learners’ outcomes. We want an 85% pass rate.
And none of this includes getting to know students. Really. This is what we want. And when I say ‘we,’ I mean ‘them.’ It’s all data-driven, driven by the ministry. It all seems a bit cold and I see Te K as something warm.

I mean I was thinking of the whole priority learners’ thing. It’s all the Māori and Pacific students, regardless of their educational abilities, its all of them. The whole school. That’s not a priority learner to me. How is that culturally responsive? That’s ministry responsive. I had a whole different understanding of priority learners. It’s all data-driven, driven by the ministry. It all seems a bit cold and I see Te K as something warm. Culturally responsive, schmulturally responsive, I’ve ticked that box.

Figure 18. Straight Up.

Story two: Analysis.

Well, I have my tokenism up on the board, lol
WHAT’S IT SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE ANYWAYS?
Well, the way they say it should look like looks like tokenism to me, even my Māori kids know its tokenism.
There is something of a nervousness, a tension in these lines, a justification. I sense the teacher’s own discomfort because they feel they have “tokenism” on the wall, and that I may judge them if they draw my attention to it and they hope I will move on. But I did not see it as tokenism, and wonder how the Māori students feel about the teacher leaving tokenism openly on the wall. Le Roux (2001) contends that a teacher’s effectiveness, or the lack of effectiveness, with culturally diverse students “is a direct reflection of the quality of their professional preparation” (p. 45). I do not believe the teacher set out to put up tokenism to tick a box on their lesson plan but rather the teacher feels uncomfortable and lacks confidence in their attempts to be inclusive and, as a result, alienates students further. What is and what is not tokenism to the teacher and these students? I again refer to Webber (2013) who states that when teachers are able to understand their own cultural and ethnic identities they are more able to understand the significant implications of the role ethnic identity has for students in the classroom. Creating a classroom space that includes students and teachers’ culture and identities exemplifies the theories behind culturally responsive practice, as further defined by Gay (2010) as “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (p. 31). Turner (2013) further states that “it ought to be the teacher who makes the cognitive adjustment...to critically reflect upon their own discursive positioning and the implication of this positioning for their own agency and for...students’ learning” (p. 61)

I had a starter, an instruction, an activity and a plenary.
I checked they learnt what I had taught and ticked that box.
My box and the ministry box were always ticked off.
I was definitely ticked off.
You know it’s a lot different here than what they teach you at uni.
While this teacher is recounting their previous practice and processes in the classroom as something clinical, I also feel that it is said with a sense of “I was doing everything I’m supposed to do, what more is there?” While teachers, especially those new to the profession, are “too often…thrown in at the deep end, and while they may survive to teach another day, their dropout rate is worrying, as are the lessons they are learning about teaching” (Cameron et al., 2008, p. 32). The participant’s memory from their beginning practice also demonstrates that, although the teacher was completing their duties, there was already clearly a resentment building. Cameron et al. cite Bubb (2007) who further notes, “The first year is the most formative period in a teacher’s career and support is crucial if they are to develop the competencies, confidence and attitudes that will keep them happy and successful in the job” (p. 1). Learning more about themselves, and their educational philosophy, and incorporating this into the classroom, would help teachers gain more autonomy over their practice, thus feeling more ownership of their classroom experiences for themselves and their students.

*And I have always been a bit dubious about it. Racist. That’s right, I would call it racist.*

It was such a shock to hear Te Kotahitanga, a programme based on cultural responsive practice and pedagogy, called racist, so I will try to put these comments into context. Of the six research participants, two used the word *racist* and two others insinuated it in the interviews. With further discussion, I formed the opinion that participants felt Te Kotahitanga was meant to be inclusive but was actually ironically exclusive, as the focus of the programme, the school and most notably their classroom observations and interactions with students became solely about the Māori students’ success in the classroom. One participant noted
I have had a little bit of negative feedback from some of my Māori kids…over the fact that they feel targeted and sometimes they feel like Te Kotahitanga, when the observations are occurring in particular and stuff that they are kind of targeted and people spend more time with them and as soon as that goes away it doesn't happen [anymore].

From these comments, I understood that the pedagogy expected within Te Kotahitanga at the research school had not been embedded within the teachers’ practice, but became a surface set of actions. While the teachers knew the objective of the programme and that the observations were to support their practice with Māori learners, in reality it translated into spending more time with Māori students in order to tick a box which resulted in positive observation feedback. While the Te Kotahitanga programme was specifically about raising Māori achievement, the observation process did not support overall teacher-practice development. Duffy (1998) states that “classroom life requires thoughtful adaptation rather than technical compliance” (p. 778). He further details that the prevailing notion of teacher development is to tell teachers what to do, regardless of the particular philosophy, programme or stance desired, and that “teaching excellence is seldom limited to the use of a single philosophy, programme, or technique” (p. 780). Duffy (1998) believes that we should be seeking to allow teachers to know their own minds where they create their own professional vision using “combined philosophies, modified methods, and altered programmes as demanded by a given situation” (p. 780).

From the story lines above I sense the teachers’ frustration at feeling they have to put themselves aside to comply with a particular programme, or gain a single view in the classroom, rather than a holistic method using themselves, their experiences and
parts of many practices and pedagogies they identify with. In these lines that follow I again felt frustration:

It’s about positive discrimination and I just want to be fair to everybody. But I didn’t sign up for this! I played along, I went along, I paid lip service to it. I paid lip service to it and a lot of weird sounding acronyms and names and multisyllabic words, which I didn’t understand, in a book I didn’t read when I needed someone to sit down and explain it……in time I didn’t have or with a commitment I didn’t want.

For programmes to be implemented and embedded, “teachers need support from beyond the classroom and the capacity to develop curriculum facilitating the inclusion of students’ culture” (Blanchet-Cohen & Reilly, 2013, p. 2). Senior school leaders play an important role in creating teacher buy-in to school initiatives and reform where teachers need to be “assisted and encouraged to identify school-level problems and to consider how the various reforms may help address these problems” (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000, p. 14). While school leaders or the Ministry of Education may want to implement programmes in a definite time-frame, Datnow and Stringfield (2000) contend that a process of critical inquiry plays an important role in choosing the reform for long-term teacher development (p. 14). This can be due to differences in value systems, different life and educational perspectives, and political positions, that place teachers in “paradoxical positions” (Blanchet-Cohen & Reilly, 2013, p. 2). Schools must create systems for teachers to not only understand the schools’ need for reform but create teacher ownership and understanding of the processes to combat the issues where reform is needed. With the story here, while the teacher may have learned to “respond to the Māori students,” I again sense they have not committed to the programme, regardless of their personal beliefs.

Colleagues have amazing ideas but they have no power or authority in the hierarchy so they get overlooked.
We need to shift, we need to shift towards colleagues that have amazing ideas not goals that enhance paper.

Even confident teachers find it difficult to maintain high self-efficacy when they work in isolation and lack collegial and administrative support to know their effectiveness as educators (Ashton, 1984). Principals are tasked with the responsibility of allowing emergent leaders the opportunity to develop. There is broad industry support for expanding teachers' leadership roles and responsibilities in schools (Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008) yet “change is not always easy and must be led by principals who are clear in their vision and committed to promoting learning for teachers as well as students” (Day, 1999, p. 97). It is clear from the story lines above that the teacher feels their colleagues are marginalised and not reaching their full potential, not only as educators, but as leaders of change within the school. Day (1999) further asserts that “collegial cultures and critical friendships are central to the successful promotion of continuing professional development… which support rather than erode teacher autonomy, and which encourage teachers to respond positively to change” (p. 102). This collegial support means teachers do not work in isolation, but have opportunities to develop their practice in which teacher identity is acknowledged.

The teacher’s comment, “goals that enhance paper,” also confirms that their own personal values are not in line with the current “politicking” they are experiencing. Gay (2005) claims that “systemic changes must occur that affect policies, programme, personnel, pedagogy and power at institutional levels” (p. 223) if we are to address politics in teacher education. How are teachers able to work effectively at a school where its values and goals do not align with their own?
We want to improve.
We want to reduce disparity.
We want to improve learners’ outcomes.
We want an 85% pass rate.
And none of this includes getting to know students.
Really. This is what we want. And when I say “we,” I mean “them.”

These lines above further demonstrate the teacher’s frustration at the schools’ direction, in that it stresses the schools’ desire for an 85% pass rate but not the need to build relationships and get to know who students are. It is imperative that teaching not be reduced to test scores and scripted lessons (Cochran-Smith, 2004) in aiming to meet targets for achievement. Bishop and Berryman (2006) affirm that “when teachers developed positive relationships of respect with their students… their self-esteem and self-identity improved, and this resulted in increased effort and engagement, with improvements in achievement” (p. 128). The value placed on student/teacher relationships, in this teacher’s experience, are not only diminished but create a divide in the relationship between the teacher and the school leadership. The teacher has placed themselves outside of the schools’ policies, processes and goals, inferring that they are not their own. So what becomes of a disenfranchised teacher? Teaching is emotional work (Denzin, 1984) and teachers are often emotional about their students, their practice and their interactions with colleagues in both passionate and disengaged ways (Hargreaves, 2001). The negative emotions of dissatisfaction, for teachers, appear in their professional relationships more often in times of rapid, systemic change, and relationships with other teachers generated “the most heightened expressions of emotionality among [teachers]” (p. 507). To avoid the negative emotions associated with teaching, it is important for school leadership to ensure schools and teachers are change-ready “by striving to improve their leadership skills, by modelling risk taking and a willingness to change, and by earning teachers’ trust” (Zimmerman, 2006, p. 241).
I mean I was thinking of the whole priority learners’ thing. It’s all the Māori and Pacific students, regardless of their educational abilities, its all of them. The whole school. That’s not a priority learner to me. How is that culturally responsive? That’s ministry responsive. I had a whole different understanding of priority learners.

This stanza demonstrates the extent of how disenfranchised the teacher has become, to the point their professional as well as emotional practice has been affected. The teacher has lost faith in their leadership and continues into the last stanza thus:

It’s all data-driven, driven by the Ministry.
It all seems a bit cold and I see Te K as something warm.

For the teacher, there are two philosophies at work in the school and they are drastically different. They are opposites: there is an “us” and “them.” I sense the teacher’s dilemma in wishing to complete their job, and be true to their own personal practice and philosophy, while trying to meet differing obligations they see as opposing. The final line, “I’ve ticked that box” tells me the teacher has moved on from their obligations and are now going to work how they want. They have lost faith in the school and its vision. Hargreaves (2001) asserts that “most instances of conflict [are] ostensibly provoked by differences of educational purpose in the delicate moral geographies of teaching” (p. 521). While the school leadership has differing obligations in the school as a workplace, whatever programmes they have, or philosophies they subscribe to, must have teacher buy-in to be implemented fully (Zimmerman, 2006). For this teacher, the tenets of culturally responsive teaching have not been applied in their relationship with the school or its leadership and the teacher has, as students have, disengaged.

These ideas and comments were not expected in the interview process. I sought the positive happenings in student/teacher relationships, yet the interviews have
illuminated often hidden aspects of teacher engagement, experience and difficulties whereby “teachers and administrators alike, who truly want to collaborate to improve achievement for all students, must reconsider their historical ‘us versus them’ mental models” (Zimmerman, 2006, p. 247).

**Story Three: Values that Underpin Success in the Classroom...So Say I**

When I began this project, I thought I would have something, at the end, like a manual for teachers new to culturally responsive teaching that they could use as a guide for support in their own journey. The interviews did highlight the practice of culturally responsive teachers but they also revealed the complexities of inner momentum, understanding, compliance and beliefs of the participants working with an externally devised culturally responsive programme.

While sorting the interview data I was drawn to the adjectives participants used when describing their practice. It seemed the teachers could not include enough, could not say enough, could not verbalise enough of the skills, values and qualities that they felt encapsulated culturally responsive teaching. I used their words and juxtaposed them in an inner monologue with the compulsory Ministry of Education appraisal document with which teachers, in effect, show that they are competent in their role as a teacher. This inner monologue is meant to show what the teacher feels they are bringing to the profession and the classroom, as well as the politicking I felt was an underlying hum during the participant interviews, as the participants sought to reconcile the two.
Values that underpin success in the classroom…so say I.

“Perseverance,
Persistence,
Respect for others’ learning,
Student learns something new each day,
Hard work,
Respect for others,
Different for each student
….phew! that’s 7!”

There is only room for “5 priorities in the classroom” on this appraisal sheet. Ok, so get rid of two. Uummmmm, ok. I have no idea how to do that! They are all so important. How do I squash my practice into those five tiny lines? I squish and squash and squish and squash but they won’t fit. I decide to write them all in using the margins and sides for the page. I write up the page, first angling my pen, then neck, then just turning the goddam book. Not possible to fit this all in on five tiny lines, who even writes this small?

“Feeling safe and secure, gotta be there,
Genuine care for students, how did I forget that?,
Students decide their success, they ultimately do”…now 10.

Ok, so I forgot these three. I jam them in the margin and hope the writing doesn’t look too ad hoc and unimportant. These are all important, regardless of their order. Ok, ten. Ten, I’ve got ten now.
“Relationship building, of course!!, knowing your learner, a must, ako, yes! My every day. manaakitanga, empowering students, success on their terms……
how did I not have all these up first?” oops, 14.

I decide to draw an arrow from the five allocated lines, to the top margin. This line kind of swirls up and around, the margin already bulging with more ideas and priorities than I am allowed to have. How can five values define my classroom? Define my students and how I interact with them? Is this a top five scenario? I refuse to whittle my practice into 5 short phrases……and so I commit to adding more!!

“Every child is capable of success,
I value education- this is apparent by my growing list, so I leave it out.
All students have potential, maybe this is too obvious? Nope, it stays.”
Passion, gotta have passion, teachers and students.” Oh lord, 17.

Curiosity to question everything, 18
Critical thinking, 19
Creating lifelong learners, 20
Empowerment of students, 21
Broadening their perspective to a global citizen’s view…..22!

22 values that underpin classroom success, that’s less than 1 per student in my class, more than 1 per
allocated contact hour, more than 1 per day each month I teach. And nearly 5 times more than I am allowed to have. Well I have come this far….. let’s put it all out there.

The teacher is not the fountain of all
knowledge. The teacher facilitates the learning in the room, but they are not in control of it. And 1 more…..
I enable individual students’ learning journeys.

My page is a road map, a road map to success. To theirs, mine, the schools and the communities. So let’s be honest about what it takes to get there and not demean it by omission.

Story three: Analysis.

 Teachers use everything at their disposal in the classroom when teaching students (Coatney, 1999). New Zealand teachers are required to complete annual appraisal cycles, setting goals for themselves and reflecting on them at the end of the appraisal process. The appraisal document seeks to embed a professional understanding of the Practising Teacher Criteria for certification; improve appraisal practices sector wide; strengthen the depth of evaluative abilities; and develop a culture of self-responsibility, accountability and professional growth; while increasing the professional ability of educators, leaders and principals to thoroughly engage in appraisal conversations, including difficult ones that identify gaps in practice and how those gaps are addressed (Education Council, n.d., para. 3). The beginning stanza in this inner monologue opens with the teacher’s dilemma - wanting and needing to demonstrate best practice. In the appraisal document, they will explain and reflect
on their practice, ultimately being asked to define themselves as educators in five lines.

Teachers are “continually growing and learning new teaching techniques, and revising and updating their teaching skills. They are continually practising these skills by teaching, reflecting and revising” (Coatney, 1999, p. 5). One research participant stated:

I think there is a natural push now for our questioning to be a lot more reflective on self and I think our appraisal cycle and things get us to question what we are doing in a safe environment rather than before if you had a question or an observation, it was like you are doing this wrong, whereas now it is more of why are you doing it and if you can justify it, it’s part of your practice and that’s something, that shift in thinking is really important. (Trish)

The inner monologue created, sought to illustrate that although the teacher values more priorities than lines allocated in the appraisal document, they are willing, they are eager and they are adamant that they still share their entire progress. The monologue shows that “in a climate of school self-management the potential exists for tensions between bureaucratic systems and the professional autonomy of teachers to surface” (Fitzgerald, Youngs, & Grootenboer, 2003, p. 91).
When writing this piece, it was my intention to show what can happen when examining one’s practice in a supportive environment, and the power that individuals can feel about their progress. Yet, this examination also can have another effect whereby “the increasing level of bureaucratic control on teachers’ professional work and activities by central government within a decentralised system [has become] inherently problematic” (Fitzgerald et al., 2003, p. 93). How can teachers accurately demonstrate who they are or what is important to them? The appraisal process places teachers in a contradictory position whereby they are asked to work and develop their practice in collaborative, collegial, supportive environments and are then asked to adopt a hierarchical stance in where they are appraising/representing their practice or others in a “performance-driven, performance-managed” system (Fitzgerald et al., 2003, p. 94). I am reminded, here, of the teachers’ culturally responsive relationship with students. Culturally responsive teachers are expected to act, behave and respond in ways to enable learning, positive connections and relationships with students for their achievement (Bishop et al., 2009). But is this same logic being applied to a schools’ relationships with teachers? Are teachers being afforded the same time, support and encouragement from their superiors to enable learning, positive connections and relationships for their own success and development? Are teachers being treated with the same culturally responsive
processes that they are being asked to use in the classroom? Are teachers being supported and treated as Webber (2013) believes teachers should treat students, by seeking to understand and teach to the whole person intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically?

Research from the 1990s asserted that most teachers resisted change to their practice and curricula (V. Richardson, 1998). Change was generally suggested by those “who [were] external to the setting in which the teaching is taking place: administrators, policy makers and staff developers” (V. Richardson, 1998, n.p.). Researchers believed “teachers resisted doing whatever is being proposed because they want to cling to their old ways. Change makes people feel uncomfortable…change hurts” (n.p). These ideas were both confirmed and questioned in the research data. Interview one asked participants about their practice before Te Kotahitanga; data revealed that the participants “just kind of went along” (Bert), “used to teach very formulaic (Alison) and taught in “black and white” (Trish). Positively, participants further revealed they felt that since learning about culturally responsive pedagogies they “encourage students now to actually work things out for themselves, to relate things to their own experience, to find their own meaning” (Bert), and are “far more organic and student-centred” (Trish) and “pretty much everything [they] do is led from the heart, [they put] more time into education plans…a lot more time [is] invested in kids” (Trish). Participants were able to see themselves as drastically changed practitioners in the classroom; they had once “led from the front of the room and [were] in control of the learning” (Alison), and now start the learning with students by “finding out where they feel powerful in their own lives while seeking prior knowledge” (Alison).
Despite this change in pedagogy, participants expressed their frustration at the implementation of Te Kotahitanga and at not feeling involved in the process of philosophic change at their school, saying, for example, “In this school I don’t think it was implemented very well, I don’t feel we had the right people implementing it” (Miss Pringle), and “Not very successfully, a lot of lip service…there were some very enthusiastic people for it in it, but I don’t think it was ever fully embraced” (Bert). Yet even with this frustration, five out of the six participants recognised their practice had changed since being introduced to culturally responsive teaching practices. Participants felt they “knew more about students” (Trish), “where more themselves” (Alison), “were more effective as a teacher” (Bert), had “higher relationship status and respect status” (Trish) amongst students. Understanding how they had changed further embedded the changes in their practice as they invested more into the Te Kotahitanga programme and its philosophy. While widespread organisational changes are needed to create environments where teachers feel that they can make and create change in their classrooms and practice, their personal learning will further add to the ability of schools to make and support complex changes (Fong, 2006). One participant commented that “they spent a lot of time selling me on the programme…but I was like you can stop selling it on us now, [I] believe, now let’s get to the nitty gritty of it” (Alison), and further, when commenting on their classroom observations, that “the hui and information were great but that real life [critiques, affirmations and observations] of where it is occurring in your classroom was invaluable” (Alison). These comments demonstrate that the participants were very self-reflective in the interviews, even when they did not initially support or feel ownership over the change and direction that took place in their school.
V. Richardson (1998) believes that for change to teachers’ practice to last there needs to be “the creation of a sense of autonomy and responsibility that goes beyond the individual class and moves to the school, programme, and community levels” (n.p.). The appraisal document allows for reflective positioning of teachers and forward planning for their next steps, but how does it create lasting change or a sense of autonomy in the school itself? V. Richardson (1998) labels this process as a “reflective and collaborative” (n.p.) development model that further engages staff development models.

This story of a teacher who could not fit all their values into the allocated space demonstrates the dangers of bureaucratic controls becoming counterproductive (Duffy, 2008). In this teacher’s case, the appraisal process could have disengaged them instead of encouraging them to be themselves and to understand the truth and depth of their progress. Fitzgerald et al. (2003) assert “that teachers want to be accountable for their professional work, their direct and continued involvement in the development, implementation and review of any performance management process is critical to its success and longevity” (p. 103).

Figure 21. Be authentic.
Conclusion

The writing in this chapter was created using the data generated in the participant interviews and my own autoethnographic writing. I have used creative writing and found poetry to discover and present the essence of our stories and experiences, making way for the reader to share in the stories also. As referred to earlier, stories are our “way in to understanding – to theorizing, and thus to knowing and working to change – our culture and ourselves” (Holman Jones, 2016, p. 230). These stories have become living bodies of thought that are a “language for thinking with and through, asking questions about and acting on” (p. 229). The embroidered words from the quilt further add to the writing, revealing themes, questions and assertions, prompting the reader to link to their own experiences, or possibly understand them in a new light. While what the data revealed was unexpected, it illuminated areas for further consideration and understanding to support teachers as culturally responsive educators, role models and identity agents in the classroom.
Chapter Six: Conclusions

The Re-Stitcher

I plugged in the iron to heat up while negotiating with the ironing board to open. Once again, I smoothed out the blocks by hand on the ironing board, testing the folds where the new stitches would go. The lining was too fat in places and had to be trimmed. There is no going back once you actually cut fabric at this point in a project – once you go back into the fray. I folded and cut and flipped and flopped the quilt about. I could not speak. I could not verbalise what I was doing or why it was so important to me to do it. I pressed the folds, pinning them safely in place. With the needle threaded, I began to hand stitch the base of the quilt. I was careful not to let the thread go all the way through to the front, I was careful to make my stitches the same length, the same distance apart. I was very careful.

This research was driven by the desire to discover the subtleties and intricacies of Pākehā teachers’ practice. I was motivated to unearth the actual processes secondary Pākehā teachers go through, using culturally responsive practice and pedagogy, as an anchor for relationships, achievement and positive experiences in the classroom (Bishop & Berryman, 2009). This was underpinned by my personal philosophy that genuine relationships and care are the key to positive happenings in the classroom for students and teachers (Bishop & Berryman, 2009; Duffy, 1998; Gay, 2010).

During the research phase, teachers shared their strategies for creating and sustaining relationships, particularly with Māori students, using the Te Kotahitanga
programme in the secondary classroom. The study unexpectedly highlighted issues with collegiality, self-care, industry disenfranchisement and lack of teacher care. Most striking was the absence of teachers'/schools' understanding about the importance of teacher identity and teachers knowing themselves as cultural, ethnic individuals whose identity plays an important role in building relationships in the classroom.

In this study, I juxtaposed my own autoethnographical stories with those of six participants then used a/r/tography to further analyse and make sense of the data generated, using creative writing and collaborative quilting. This enabled me to delve in deeply, reflexively, in a more embodied way to generate rich stories that speak to the essence of what it means to develop positive relationships as a Pākehā educator. Although the number of research participants was small, and limited to secondary teachers in New Zealand, the understanding I have gained from my research has opened a discussion about the need for teachers to discover their own identity, alongside students, for success in the classroom.

An Evaluation of the Findings
Programmes such as Te Kotahitanga, He Kākano and Kia Eke Panuku in New Zealand have focused on teachers learning about and understanding students’ cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This knowledge is an important factor for enabling students’ success, building relationships and demonstrating student care (Bishop et al., 2009). This study has revealed that such programmes will be most effective when teachers discover who they are, where they fit into New Zealand and that they come to terms with their own cultural and ethnic backgrounds to truly impact on student learning. This act of knowing oneself, of becoming, leads students. It shows
them how, and enables them, to discover and be who they are (Fitzpatrick, 2015), as students envision a journey for themselves through the journey of their teachers. Teachers must be able, and supported, to journey where they encourage students to go - to a place of self-discovery, knowledge and acceptance.

This project further confirmed my belief in the power of positive relationships in the classroom and how they can affect engagement, achievement and overall student experiences as well as teacher fulfilment. The participants all spoke of their desire to know and understand their students, seeking to raise their achievement as individuals, to support students and to feel pride in their role as a teacher. The teachers demonstrated genuine care and willingness to help and encourage wherever they could. The interview data revealed that hampering this idyllic classroom was an underlying lack of collegial care and support felt by teachers. The feelings of displacement expressed by participants is reflected in the literature on collegial care in the teaching profession (Duffy, 1998; Hargreaves, 2002). Participants repeatedly demonstrated in the data that they felt isolated, unsure and excluded from decisions that affected their practice and pedagogy and what they felt education was about. While all participants said they supported culturally responsive practice and pedagogy, some felt programmes, initiatives and directives were implemented without choice or consultation by school leadership or the Ministry of Education. Participants felt they did use culturally responsive teaching practices but their own prior knowledge and experience was not valued and considered as school policy changed. This became a sticking point for participants where Te Kotahitanga specifically asks teachers to understand and know their learner while seeking prior knowledge. Participants felt they lacked this type of professional relationship with their superiors. In effect, participants felt school leadership was not practising what it
preached. I believe the participants did not feel ownership of the schools’ direction, even when it reflected their own beliefs. The biggest issues participants felt they faced were workload issues, collegial support, care and wellbeing, and leadership acknowledgement and support. The participants wanted to feel valued, be acknowledged and part of the transformative work that was taking place at their school.

The participants in this study were at different stages of discovering their own cultural and ethnic diversity, which led to differing strengths and understanding in the classroom. Some struggled to be Pākehā or even decide what that meant. The teachers were invested in knowing and understanding their students, but not themselves. Critically questioning and understanding their own cultural identity is imperative to ultimately meeting students’ needs (Santamaria, 2009) and the school should address and support this by providing the space and understanding to do so.

**My Story**

The autoethnographical elements of this project further supported my understanding of the issues the participants raised, and also enabled and encouraged me to explore my own identity. Who am I as a teacher? As a Pākehā educator? I continually found myself on a journey with the participants, rather than leading a journey for us all. The writing as method (L. Richardson & Adams St. Pierre, 2005) encouraged me to seek to understand my own cultural identity and beliefs as a teacher and as a Pākehā.

The quilting in this project has been an appropriate metaphor for my own journey of discovery but also for this project as a whole. The project was not solely about the participants, or education, or about me. This project became about all the pieces we
brought to it and the whole it created. Like the thesis, I was not sure how the quilting would develop and each stage of the process added more layers, more dimensions, more of us as a collective that spoke of what it means to be Pākehā and educators. We are developing. We are finding our way. We are still coming together. As an artist, quilter and researcher the stitching has become the ultimate metaphor for this project.

I was heartened by all six participants choosing the log cabin to represent the project, with its warmth and hearth as a guiding light for practice as pedagogy. I was inspired by the fabric participants chose to represent and embody culturally responsive education and themselves. And I was convinced that the transformation the log cabin pattern took reflected the spiralling and dialogic literature that was reoccurring in this project. The adapted pattern not only reflected the past, and the present, but it also mirrored the images for Te Kotahitanga and Kia Eke Panuku Kōringoringo. As educators, we were building up our practice, our knowledge, our understanding of education, our students, and ourselves, in a spiralling motion that is continual and ongoing. There is no one programme or single philosophy to do this. It is multiple programmes, experiences and parts of self, developed over time. This learning and exploration should be encouraged by schools to create free and critical thinkers who know their own minds, rather than teachers who assume the same beliefs of a directive or school leader (Duffy, 1998).

**Summary**

The conclusions I have drawn from this project are limited to the six participants and one participating school and my own experiences. While the study is small, I found the participants’ experiences were reflected in literature, thus validating their
experiences as not unique. This project went beyond the original parameters of seeking to illuminate the intricacies and subtleties of Pākehā teachers to further understand their relationships with students and the cultural needs as Pākehā educators. The project made collegial care, school leadership support, and the need for teachers to understand their own cultural and ethnic identity relevant. This project further cemented my belief in the importance of student/teacher relationships for student achievement and how culturally responsive practice and pedagogy supports that.

Recommendations

Throughout this project, I have seen myself and participants as educators as well as learners. I recommend that teachers as educators:

- incorporate components into culturally responsive programmes that enable and support them to understand their own cultural and ethnic identity and how that impacts on their teaching practice
- embrace their identity and incorporate that into the context of teaching and learning in their classrooms

I recommend that school leaders and the Ministry of Education:

- seek the voice of teachers as they create policy and direction for their schools and profession;
- discover how collaborative, collegial, caring and supportive teaching workspaces are developed and maintained in an effort to retain teachers in the profession;
• support learning as a long process that one programme or initiative cannot fix. Multiple threads create teachers’ practice, built up over time. Allowing teachers to develop themselves as individuals, as we ask them to do with students, is imperative.

I suggest the following lines of inquiry for possible future research:

• establishing what school leadership and/or the Ministry of Education can do to enable teachers to have, and to participate, in their own cultural and ethnic journeys;

• understanding how confident, cross-cultural and/or ethnic teacher identities enable teachers to flourish in the classroom;

• discovering how can we encourage and support teachers to believe that to know themselves is a way towards student achievement;

• establishing ways in which school leaders can enable and motivate educators to know and use their cultural and ethnic identities in the classroom by choice;

• understanding how teachers can create classrooms where students are confident individuals with differing cultural and ethnic identities evident in the teaching and learning.

Final Thoughts
It seems so apparent to me now that teachers should know their own cultural and ethnic background and ties. I believe I always knew this but took for granted that teachers “all know who they are.” As I reflect on this project, I see a gap in teacher identity, a gap in teachers’ knowing how that supports students’ learning, and an
industry-wide gap in support for teachers as identity agents in the classroom. I can reflect and see how autoethnography created a space for me to explore these issues I did not know I was grappling with, and to seek to understand myself as a Pākehā educator. For me, this exploration was not only a grassroots look at teaching but also an exploration of myself as I sought to understand my own identity in the classroom and how that supports students’ learning and my own journey as an educator. A/r/tography was a way for me to embark on this journey.

Figure 22. A/r/tographic ‘stitched and fragment ends.’
Appendix A – Principal/BOT Participant Consent Form

School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice
Te Kura Whakatairanga i te Ako Ngaio me te Whanaketanga

Project Title:
Stitching Lives Together – Creating and sustaining relationships in the secondary classroom
Researcher: Julie Brien   Supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick

Principal / BOT Participant Consent Form
(This form will be held for six years)

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understand the time involved for the school’s participation in the project. The researcher has given me the opportunity to discuss the information and ask any questions I have about the project, and they have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand this form will be held for six years.

2. I give consent for the researcher to approach teachers who have expressed their interest in participating in this project to take part in the interviews. I understand that the interviews will take place at the school at a time that suits the participant and the school.

3. I give my written assurance that participation or non-participation of teachers will not affect their employment status, or relationship with the school.

4. I understand that the school may withdraw from the inquiry at any time without prejudice to the school’s relationship with the researcher, or the University of Auckland, now or in the future. The timeframe for the school’s withdrawal in the study will be until the end of the data collection phase, and the timeframe for withdrawal of any data will be until 31st August 2016.

5. I understand that the school will not be named in the research outputs.
6. I agree that research data gathered from the results of the study may be published using every effort to maintain confidentiality of the school and the participants.

7. I understand that only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the data that will be stored securely.

8. I understand that this form and all research data will be stored in secure cabinets for six years. At the end of the six-year period all documents will be shredded in a secure destruction facility and all digital recordings will be deleted.

9. I understand that if I have any questions relating to the school’s participation in this research I may contact the researcher who will be happy to answer them.

10. I understand that the researcher will provide the school with a one-page summary of the research findings, which the school will make available for participants, and other interested parties.

   a. I wish to receive a digital copy of the complete thesis  YES ☐ NO ☐

Please sign and return one copy of the consent form to the researcher.

Name: ______________________________

Signature: ____________________________

Title: ________________________________

Date: _________ / ___________ / ____________

When you have read this information, I will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact me, c/o University of Auckland, jtab007@aucklanduni.ac.nz or my supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick, University of Auckland, School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice, Office N111, ph +64 9 623 8899 ext 48518, e.fitzpatrick@auckland.ac.nz.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 11 April 11, 2016 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 016983
Appendix B – Principal/BOT Participant Information Sheet

School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice
Te Kura Whakatairanga i te Ako Ngaio me to Whanaketanga

Date: April 14, 2016

Project Title:
Stitching Lives Together – Creating and sustaining relationships in the secondary classroom
Researcher: Julie Brien Supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick

Principal / BOT Participant Information Sheet

The research topic
The purpose of this study is to understand and explore the relationships created within New Zealand secondary classrooms between self-identified Pākehā teachers and their students. This study seeks to gather the subtleties and intricacies of how teachers set out building and creating relationships with students and what their specific practices and strategies involve.

The researcher
My name is Julie Brien and I am seeking your permission to conduct interviews during 2016 with six teachers at XXX School. The teachers need to identify, or part identify, as Pākehā. There will be two, 30 minute interviews that will take place at the school, at a time that is convenient for the teacher and will not interfere with their school responsibilities. These interviews will provide data for my Masters of Education degree from the University of Auckland, under the supervision of Esther Fitzpatrick.

The school’s involvement
As part of my study I will be conducting interviews with teachers from XXX School, limited to six individuals who volunteer to take part in this study. The purpose of these interviews is to understand how teachers create and sustain relationships with students in the secondary classroom. The teachers will be asked to recall strategies, thoughts, practice, pedagogy and their personal journey as a teacher in their relationships with students. With consent, the interviews will be recorded for transcription. XXX School has been involved in the Te Kotahitanga program for over 8 years. This program has exposed all teachers to culturally responsive teaching practices and encouraged them to reflect on their own practice and pedagogy. XXX School has made a commitment to culturally responsive practices. These interviews will offer a further understanding of how the school and its teachers are responding to this involvement, over an extended period of time.

All interviews will be one on one between the teacher and the researcher. The school and the teachers will be assigned pseudonyms that will be used throughout the project. In a further effort to maintain confidentiality all teachers will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

The researcher would like to ask that a staff member with no units or responsibilities present the possibility of participating in this research project to the teaching staff. The researcher will outline in a letter the participant’s involvement in the project that can be distributed to staff. This would help to ensure teachers volunteer to participate rather than be approached by the researcher.

I would like your permission to conduct this inquiry at school, and to also approach staff who have expressed their interest, in order to seek their consent to participate in this research. I am also seeking your written assurance that the participation, or non-participation, of teachers will not affect their employment status or relationship with the school, and that neither will be singled out in any way.
Time required
Should you agree, both 30 minute interviews will take place in term two at XXX School at a time chosen by the teacher. Once transcribed, participants will receive a copy of their transcript to review for one week. During this time they can add to, or delete parts of the transcript. All participants will be offered a one page summary of the research findings which will be made available to them via the researcher. The school will be offered a copy of the completed thesis.

Withdrawal and confidentiality
The school will not be named and none of the school’s identifying characteristics will be included in the study. Although anonymity cannot be guaranteed, the participants will be assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity. Findings may be used in scholarly publications however all efforts will be made to protect the identity of the school and the participants involved.

Participants will be informed that every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality. All interviews are one on one and all participants are requested to sign a confidentiality agreement. It is the researcher’s intention to transcribe all the interviews herself. If for some reason this is not possible then a professional transcription service will be used and they will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Your decision whether or not to allow the school to participate will not prejudice your relationship with the University of Auckland, now or in the future. The school is free to withdraw their consent at any time, and to withdraw the data until 31st August, 2016.

All aspects of the inquiry, except findings, will be treated as confidential. Only the supervisor and I, as the researcher, will have access to the data. Unless in use, all hard copy information relating to the study will be stored in locked filing cabinets at the University of Auckland for a period of six years, after which time the documents will be confidentially destroyed. All electronic files will be kept on password protected computers. The participant consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet separate from all recordings and hard copies of the transcribed data.

Benefits
The opportunity to engage in professional dialogue is always beneficial. In this case, participation in interviews will potentially give teachers the opportunity to further develop and understand their own practice and pedagogy. This project includes teachers who have worked in the Te Kotahitanga program. A further benefit for the school would be to understand how culturally responsive professional development programs have been implemented and have enhanced the practice of the teaching staff. This can further inform next steps for the school, professional development and professional learning.

All participants will receive a one page summary of the research findings. I will also provide the school with a one-page summary of the research findings which can be made available to other interested parties. Upon request, I will also deliver an oral presentation of the findings.

When you have read this information, I will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact me, c/o University of Auckland jtab007@auckland.ac.nz, my supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick, University of Auckland, School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice, Office N111, ph+649-623-8899 ext-48518, e.fitzpatrick@auckland.ac.nz, the University of Auckland, Head of School for Education: Lorri Santamaria, Office, ph+649-373-7599 ext-46353, l.santamaria@auckland.ac.nz, or for any concerns regarding ethical issues you may contact the Chair, the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, at the University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142, ph+649 373-7599 ext. 83711, ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

Kind regards,

Julie Brien

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 11 April, 2016
FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 016983
Appendix C – Teacher Participant Consent Form

School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice
Te Kura Whakatairanga i te Ako Ngaio me te Whanaketanga

Project Title:
Stitching Lives Together – Creating and sustaining relationships in the secondary classroom

Researcher: Julie Brien  Supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick

Teacher Participant Consent Form
(This form will be held for six years)

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. I have read the Participant Information Sheet and I agree to participate in this research. I understand the time involved for my participation in the inquiry, which will be no more than two 30 minute interviews held at a time of my choosing at XXX School. The researcher has given me the opportunity to discuss the information. Any questions I have regarding the inquiry have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that this form and all research data will be stored in secure cabinets for six years. At the end of the six-year period all documents will be shredded in a secure destruction facility and all digital recordings will be deleted.

3. I understand that I will be audio recorded during the interview, and that I may choose to have the recorder turned off. I understand that the interviews will be transcribed by either the researcher or a third party who has signed a confidentiality agreement.

4. I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the interview(s).

5. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time without giving a reason. This will not prejudice my relationships with the researcher, my place of work, or the University of Auckland, now or in the future. I understand that I may withdraw any data traceable to me that is collected during the interview within two weeks after
receiving the interview transcript, should I wish to check the transcript for accuracy. I understand that I may withdraw any other data until 31st August 2016.

6. I understand that the researcher will maintain confidentiality for participants and the school at all times. The researcher will provide us both with pseudonyms that will be used throughout.

7. I agree that research data gathered from the results of the inquiry may be published, and all efforts will be made to keep my identity confidential.

8. I understand that if I have any questions relating to my participation in this research I may contact the researcher who will be happy to answer them.

9. I wish to receive a summary of the findings YES ☐ NO ☐

Please sign and return one copy of the consent form to the researcher.

Name: ______________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________

Date: __________ / ______________ / _________________________

When you have read this information, I will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact me, c/o University of Auckland, itab007@auckland.ac.nz or my supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick, University of Auckland, School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice, Office N111, ph+64 9 623 8899 ext 48518, e.fitzpatrick@auckland.ac.nz.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 11 April, 2016 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 016983
Date:

**Invitation to Participate in Research**

Dear teachers at XXX School,

I am currently working on my Master of Education research thesis at The University of Auckland. My thesis focuses on the relationships between students and teachers and what creates and sustains them. As part of my research I would like to conduct interviews with teachers who would be willing to comment and share their practice, pedagogy, personal beliefs, distinctive moments with students and/or mechanics in the classroom to create and sustain relationships with students.

I have chosen to work with teachers at XXX because the Te Kotahitanga program has been in the school for nearly ten years. I would like to explore culturally responsive teaching practices and how they have effected student/teacher relationships and philosophies for teachers here, in that time. Please read the attached ‘Participant Information Sheet’ and ‘Participant Consent Form’. If you are interested in participating in this study, I will be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have. Please note, the first six participants, who identify as Pākehā or as part Pākehā and are registered teachers that agree to participate, will be selected to become part of the research.

As outlined in the ‘Participant Information Sheet’, the interviews will take place at a time that is convenient for you at XXX School. There will be two 30 minute interviews for you to participate in during term two. If you would like to extend that time or have a further session it will be arranged.

If you wish to accept my invitation, please sign a copy of the ‘Participant Consent Form’ and place it in my pigeon hole. As earlier stated, if you have any questions please feel free to ask me at any stage. In addition, you may choose to contact my supervisor for further information. Her contact details are: Esther Fitzpatrick, University of Auckland, School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice, Office N111, ph+64 9 623 8899 ext 48518, e.fitzpatrick@auckland.ac.nz

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your prompt response.

Yours Sincerely,

Julie Brien

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*APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 11 April, 2016 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 016983*
Appendix E – Participant Information Sheet

School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice
Te Kura Whakatairanga i te Ako Ngaio me to Whanaketanga

Date: April 14, 2016

Project Title:  
_Stitching Lives Together – Creating and sustaining relationships in the secondary classroom_

Researcher: Julie Brien   Supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick

Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

The research topic

I am currently working on my Master of Education research thesis at The University of Auckland. My thesis focuses on the relationships between students and teachers and what creates and sustains them. As part of my research I would like to conduct interviews with teachers who would be willing to comment and share their practice, pedagogy, personal beliefs, distinctive moments with students and/or mechanics in the classroom to create and sustain relationships with students.

I have chosen to work with teachers at XXX School because the Te Kotahitanga program has been in the school for nearly ten years. I would like explore how culturally responsive teaching practices have affected student/teacher relationships and philosophies for teachers here, in that time.

Participant involvement

As part of my study I will be conducting interviews with teachers from XXX School, limited to six individuals who volunteer to take part in this study. The participants will be asked to recall strategies, thoughts, practice, pedagogy and their personal journey as a teacher in their relationships with students. With consent, the interviews will be recorded for transcription.

The Te Kotahitanga program has exposed teachers at XXX School to culturally responsive teaching practices and encouraged them to reflect on their own practice and pedagogy using that perspective. The school has made a commitment to culturally responsive practices and these interviews will offer a further understanding of how the school and its teachers are responding to this involvement, over an extended period of time.

Written assurance has been obtained from the BOT and principal that your participation or non-participation in this project will not affect your employment status or relationship with the school, and that neither will be singled out in any way.

Time required

There will be two 30mins interviews with the six participants. All interviews will be one on one between the participants and the researcher. The school and the participants will be assigned pseudonyms that will be used throughout the project. Should you agree, both 30 minute interviews will take place in term two at XXX School at a time chosen by you, the participant that does not
interfere with your work. Once transcribed you will receive a copy of the transcript to review for one week. During this time you can add to, or delete parts of the transcript. You will be offered a one page summary of the research findings at the end of the study. The school will be offered a copy of the completed thesis.

Withdrawal and confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality. All interviews are one on one and all participants are requested to sign a confidentiality agreement. It is the researcher’s intention to transcribe all the interviews herself. If for some reason this is not possible then a professional transcription service will be used and they will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your relationship with XXX School now or in the future. You will be able to withdraw from the study during the research phase and up to two weeks after the reviewing transcripts, without giving a reason. You may also choose not to answer questions during the interview or ask for the recorder to be turned off.

All aspects of the inquiry, except findings, will be treated as confidential. Only the supervisor and I, as the researcher, will have access to the data. Unless in use, all hard copy information relating to the study will be stored in locked filing cabinets at the University of Auckland for a period of six years, after which time the documents will be confidentially destroyed. All electronic files will be kept on password protected computers. Your consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet separate from all recordings and hard copies of the transcribed data. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but neither the school’s name, nor your name will be used in such a report.

Benefits

The opportunity to engage in professional dialogue is always beneficial. In this case, participation in interviews will potentially give you the opportunity to further develop and understand your own practice and pedagogy. This project includes teachers who have worked in the Te Kotahitanga program.

When you have read this information, I will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact me, c/o University of Auckland jtab007@auckland.ac.nz, my supervisor: Esther Fitzpatrick, University of Auckland, School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice, Office N111, ph+649-623-8899 ext-48518, e.fitzpatrick@auckland.ac.nz, the University of Auckland, Head of School for Education: Lorri Santamaria, Office, ph+649-373-7599 ext-46353, l.santamaria@auckland.ac.nz, or for any concerns regarding ethical issues you may contact the Chair, the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, at the University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142, ph+649 373-7599 ext. 83711, ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

Kind regards,

Julie Brien

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 11 April, 2016 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 016983
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