

**E-portfolios in Early Childhood
Education: The Work of Freedom in
(Un)silencing the Disciplining of Bodies**

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Abstract

This thesis explores power/knowledge and truth in early childhood education, (un)silencing the disciplining of bodies in the e-portfolio space. Conceptualised as a political site, this space holds children's and teachers' bodies within complex networks of power. Examining these networks reveals a contemporary "Panopticon"—a "marvellous machine" (Foucault, 2008, p. 7) of power for disciplining subjects into docile bodies. The potential to be disciplined in educational settings produces tension, because notions of disciplining do not sit comfortably within countries that have adopted neoliberal ideologies.

This qualitative research was conducted in two kindergartens in Aotearoa New Zealand with twenty-nine children aged between three and a half years to six years and their teachers. Interview data and video recordings were analysed using a Foucaultian theoretical framework. The thesis argues the disciplining of bodies in the e-portfolio space occurs through neoliberal ideology and dominant discourses of individualism, freedom, choice and agency. Normalisation processes operate to produce the 'good docile teacher body' and the 'good docile child body' while simultaneously subjugating alternate ways of being.

A third body offers hope and freedom against subjugation. Drawing on Foucault's concepts of freedom and pleasure, children demonstrate how they "counterattack" (Foucault, 1980, p. 56) normalisation processes. On these occasions children portray themselves as powerful and agentic bodies, taking pleasure in evading and thwarting adults' power and in subjugating other children. In acknowledging Foucaultian notions of pleasure as the "work of freedom" (Foucault, 1984b, p. 46), the nexus to children's resistance can be celebrated. Little is known about this area of inquiry. Therefore, this thesis contributes to new modalities of freedom by challenging what we currently have and currently are—to experiment with the undefined "possibilities" (Foucault, 1982, p. 788) of what we might hope to be.

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Preface

Joanne's interest in school tends to fluctuate, as does the quality of her work at times. A more sustained consistent effort should eradicate this problem. (J.R.K, school report - age 7, 1977)

The above comment made by my teacher in the 1970s is the production of assessment practices underpinned by developmental psychology. It seems to me though, the 'true' problem is the unequal power relations operating to train, manipulate and correct my body in line with the normalising discourses of the time. Yet, today I am no less caught up in complex arrangements of power than I was as a child. What I am referring to is disciplinary power, the Foucaultian concept that has captured my attention for the past five years.

Oscar Wilde (1889) said, 'Life imitates art far more than art imitates life'; however, my doctoral journey seems to have been inextricably entwined between the two. Such an experience has penetrated to the very core of my body and subjectivities, without which, this thesis would not be what it eventually becomes. Let me explain, two years into my doctoral journey, the world was struck by a global pandemic—Covid 19. Aotearoa New Zealand went into lockdown, as did many countries around the world. Confined to our homes, we were unable to experience the freedoms that were once our taken-for-granted norms.

Reading the work of Foucault during this time, I could not help but draw similarities to his seminal work, *Discipline and punish, The birth of a prison* (Foucault, 1995) where he writes of the seventeenth century plague. Though we were not placed under the authority of a syndic or locked inside our homes forbidden to leave on pain of death, we were controlled and monitored, nonetheless. Social distancing, alert levels, face masks, health codes and vaccination passports, now the new norms that govern and regulate our bodies.

In the third year of my doctoral journey I relocated to China. Nasal and throat swabs between both countries ensued before a mandated fourteen day isolation period in a ‘designated’ quarantine hotel, designated by the authorities, not my own choice. Far more congruent with the rules of the seventeenth century plague, we were confined to a small room for the duration of our stay with its intermittent Wi-Fi, unpalatable food and limited sanitary provision. Yet, we were not locked in, we did not need to be. CCTV cameras outside our door and people in full hazmat suits regularly checking our temperatures ensured conformity. Power held us in place, we did not defy the ‘rules’ because, “if he moves, he does so at the risk of his own life, contagion or punishment” (Foucault, 1995, p. 195).

This thesis, similar to Covid-19 illustrates the pervasive effects of power—the silencing and subjugation of human bodies. But equally, of the resilience of human nature—the ways human beings will inevitably resist and subvert power creating the possibility for new discourses. This period of my life, both professionally and personally has profoundly shaped my subjectivities. As Foucault (1995) observes, “the individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production” (p.194).

The main interest in life and work is to become someone else you were not in the beginning. If you knew when you began a book what you would say at the end, do you think you would write it? What is true for writing...is true also for life. The game is worthwhile insofar as we don't know what the end will be - Michel Foucault, October 25, 1982.

For Lillith and all my future grandchildren

Chapter 1: Setting the Scene: Old Truths, New Truths

We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth. (Foucault, 1980, p. 93)

This thesis explores the ways human-beings are made into subjects in the e-portfolio space in early childhood education [ECE] in Aotearoa New Zealand. ECE provides education and care for children in the years prior to starting school. Whilst not compulsory, almost all young children attend an ECE service for a substantial amount of time (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). Children’s participation in ECE has been steadily increasing over the last three decades due to neoliberal policy changes (Gallagher, 2017a, 2017b; Haggerty & Alcock, 2016; Mitchell, 2015; Tesar, 2017). These changes have also led to the increased regulation and accountability of ECE services (Haggerty & Alcock, 2016; Mitchell, 2015, 2018; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a, 2021b; Sims, 2017). As a result, many services now use e-portfolios to document children’s learning and development. E-portfolios are a digital tool containing assessment information, collected over time and used to plan for children’s future learning and development (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). The e-portfolio space, as conceptualised in this thesis, encompasses everything that occurs as children and teachers engage directly and/or indirectly with e-portfolios within the boundaries of the ECE setting.

Guided by a Foucaultian theoretical framework, the focus of this study is the complex relationships of power that are produced in the e-portfolio space. As Foucault (1980) observes, power is not something that one has; power is all around us, it comes from everywhere and holds everything within its networks. The data collected through qualitative participatory methods reveals the divergent ways relations of power

constrain and enable children's and teachers' bodies in this space. The concept of bodies that informs this thesis also draws from Foucault's work. Foucault (1980) conceptualises the body as always/already in motion, biological and socially constructed and shaped by processes of normalisation (see Chapter 3). The body is bound within complex power dynamics that, "have an immediate hold upon it; they [power relations] invest in it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (Foucault, 1995, p. 25). Across the data, these dynamics feature prominently.

The main argument is that power/knowledge and truth circulates in the e-portfolio space to discipline the bodies of children and teachers into certain types of bodies. The notion of disciplining bodies is significant for two reasons. First, disciplining children's and teachers' bodies into certain types of bodies subjugates and silences other types of bodies. Second, notions of disciplining do not sit comfortably within neoliberal ideology, which promotes freedom, choice and agency. However, neoliberal ideology is not unfettered freedom but a mode of governance at just enough (Hamann, 2009). What I mean is, just enough force so one adopts neoliberal ideals as if it were one's own free choice (Foucault, 1982; Foucault et al., 1991). Power is therefore exercised at just enough to ensure economic productivity in the market, including children as future productive citizens (Sims, 2017). Similarly, choice and agency are allowed only so much as to support engagement in and adherence to economic ideologies (Gallagher, 2021).

This thesis reveals the complicated connections between neoliberal ideology, disciplinary power and the production of knowledge in the e-portfolio space. Foucault (1995) describes disciplinary power as the modern techniques of power that are productive, rather than "sovereign" (p, 48) power whereby the body is the raw material upon which it acts (see Chapter 3). Power circulates through dominant discourses, discursive practices and normalisation processes to govern and regulate subjects' (children and teachers) bodies. Dominant discourses establish

power/knowledge that come to be known as the truths of a group of people within a specific historical and cultural time/place (Foucault, 1972). Hence, truths are the established common-sense and taken-for-granted ways of thinking about the world guiding subjects in all aspects of their daily lives (Foucault, 1972).

The Foucaultian notion of subject is also important to mention because it has a composite understanding. It means being tied to another subject by control and dependence, as well as being tied to oneself through self-knowledge (Foucault, 1982). As Foucault (1982) points out, “both meanings reflect a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to” (p. 781). Operating interdependently, these complex relationships of power influence the institutionalised truths of children’s engagement with e-portfolios. In turn, these truths effect children’s experiences.

This thesis is concerned with how dominant discourses come together to produce a particular version of events that are constituted as truths. What these truths are and how they discipline subjects’ bodies is central to the discussion on the subjugation and silencing of ‘some’ bodies in the e-portfolio space. However, as demonstrated by children in Chapter 7, there is opportunity to actively resist such disciplining. Foucault (1990) describes this resistance as a “counterattack” (p. 56) to disciplinary power. Children’s resistance is understood as both one and the same, a counterattack to power and “the work of freedom” (Foucault, 1984b, p. 46). I do not mean freedom in the metaphysical sense, nor political freedom as an element of society, but Foucault’s conceptualisation of freedom (see Chapter 3).

For Foucault (2002), freedom is the space of open and undefined possibilities—to experiment and transform ourselves into something we were not before. In this thesis, children’s work of freedom has the potential to augment constructions of power (re)positioning their bodies as powerful, agentic and pleasurable. The use of Foucaultian theory opens the dialogue for the possibilities of new emancipating discourses

in which counterattacking pleasure might be recognised as the work of freedom.

The Research Problem

In Aotearoa New Zealand the dominant discourses that guide the ECE sector encourage opportunities for young children to participate with digital technologies (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017a, 2017b; Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2021; United Nations General Assembly, 1989). However, the increasing prevalence of digital technologies in every sphere of contemporary living has raised concerns about children’s participation and agency in digital environments (Livingstone, 2016; Lupton, 2016; Lupton & Williamson, 2017). Referencing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC] (United Nations General Assembly, 1989), Livingstone (2016) states:

Children’s lives in the digital age raise new questions about the so-called 3P’s of the CRC – rights to provision, protection and participation – in the changing media and communication environment...As children’s daily lives become ever more heavily mediated, and as the media themselves simultaneously converge and diversify, researchers along with policy-makers and the public are now debating whether “the digital age” is enhancing or undermining children’s rights, with current controversies centring on children’s right to privacy online as [sic] offline, to information and freedom of expression. (pp. 2-3)

Livingstone (2016) highlights the tensions produced between intersecting dominant discourses closely related to the thesis topic. The notion of participation is particularly contentious within dominant

discourses, such as *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, hereafter *Te Whāriki*), the national early childhood curriculum. *Te Whāriki* is Aotearoa New Zealand’s first bicultural curriculum document upholding the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi¹ (May, 2019; Metge, 1990). Developed in consultation between Māori² and Pākehā³, *Te Whāriki* is permeated by the discourses of socialism, Te Ao Māori⁴ and neoliberalism (Westbrook & White, 2021). Socialism and Te Ao Māori are underpinned by democratic values, which position participation within the context of “collegiality, and collective deliberation” (Peters & Tesar, 2018, p. 8). Neoliberalism, on the other hand releases subjects from state dependency, seeking to produce a highly specific type of subject—the individual “enterprising and competitive entrepreneur” (Peters & Tesar, 2018, p. 8). Hence, participation takes on economic valances from its previous political understanding within a welfare state.

Children’s participation also sits inside broader discourses, such as the UNCRC, of which Aotearoa New Zealand is a signatory (United Nations General Assembly, 1989). UNCRC sets out specific rights that guarantee basic and fundamental human rights for participation, protection and provision for the world’s children, up to eighteen years of age (United Nations General Assembly, 1989). As signatories to the UNCRC, ECE teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand are obligated to ensure children’s voices and perspectives are at the forefront of all matters concerning them. *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) states, “children have agency to create and act on

¹ Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Signed in 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand guaranteeing provision is made for participation, protection and partnership for Māori as tangata whenua and Pākehā as signatories of the treaty (Education Review Office, 2016).

² Māori: of indigenous descent/person of Aotearoa New Zealand (Orange, 2021).

³ Pākehā: The Māori term used to describe a New Zealander of European descent (Orange, 2021).

⁴ Te Ao Māori: The Māori worldview (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

their own ideas...and, increasingly to make decisions and judgements on matters that relate to them” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, p. 18). This includes participating in assessment processes (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

Responding to the prevalence of digital technologies, dominant discourses and contemporary assessment practices, the ECE sector is increasingly using e-portfolios to document children’s learning and development over traditional hard-copy paper-based portfolios (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Danniels et al., 2020; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a, 2015b; Higgins & Cherrington, 2017; Hooker, 2017; Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; White et al., 2021).

Despite the rising use of e-portfolios and the affordance of children’s rights, there is a dearth of literature exploring children’s participation in this space. Research has primarily focused on the benefits of e-portfolios in relation to adults’ agendas (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a; Higgins & Cherrington, 2017; Hooker, 2016a). Most notably, the increased communication practices and partnerships between teachers, parents and families (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a; Higgins & Cherrington, 2017; Hooker, 2016a). Therefore, the current situation appears to undermine children’s rights in a space which is both ‘raising concerns’ (Livingstone, 2016; Lupton & Williamson, 2017) and ‘concerns children’ (United Nations General Assembly, 1989). This draws attention to the problem of unequal relationships of power between adults and children.

A few commentators have begun to question power in digital spaces (Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; Lupton & Williamson, 2017; White et al., 2021). White et al. (2021), for example draws attention to the potential surveillance of teachers through digital documentation they produce about children, as well as documentation they gather for their teacher registration and appraisal (White et al., 2021). Teachers’ professional documentation can be integrated into e-portfolio platforms alongside children’s documentation (Educa, 2022b; Storypark, 2022b).

New e-portfolio features that adhere to neoliberal mechanisms of accountability also have the potential to put teachers' practice under surveillance (see Chapter 2). Lupton and Williamson (2017) also raise concerns about the possible surveillance of children in digital spaces. They suggest digital documentation presents a risk to children's privacy due to the "ever-intensifying network of visibility, surveillance and normalisation, in which their behaviours and bodies are continually judged and compared with others" (Lupton & Williamson, 2017, p. 786-787).

The use of the words 'visibility, surveillance and normalisation' draw attention to Foucault's concept of disciplinary power, as discussed in Chapter 3. This thesis addresses the problem of disciplinary power in the e-portfolio space by drawing on Foucaultian theory to understand the ways subjects are produced through complex power dynamics. Little is known about the effects of disciplinary power on children's and teachers' bodies through their participation with e-portfolios. Therefore, it is argued that Foucaultian theory can help develop an understanding of the role of disciplinary power within this space and the possibilities of what we might do about it. The thesis might also add to wider debates on the impact of the increasing prevalence of digital media on the lives of children by bringing children's voices to the fore.

Examining the complex power dynamics between children and teachers in this space reveals highly complicated practices. What these are and how they circulate are documented in the Findings Chapters.

The Research Questions

The research questions were shaped by my ongoing engagement with Foucault. The influence of Foucault's work is evident in the main question, which draws on his concepts of power/knowledge and truth. The main research question is:

- In what ways does power/knowledge and truth constitute the bodies of children and teachers in the e-portfolio space?

The Foucaultian concept of disciplinary power shaped the development of four sub-questions:

- What normalising judgements are being made in this space and how might these judgements operate to intervene, restructure and improve the bodies of individuals?
- How is power exercised between children and teachers in the e-portfolio space?
- In what ways does power/knowledge constrain the bodies of children and teachers?
- In what ways does power/knowledge enable the bodies of children and teachers?

The Research Aims

I began this study intending to find out about children's participation with their e-portfolios. What I had not anticipated was the complex arrangement of power/knowledge and truths in this space, how power circulates to constrain and enable children's and teachers' bodies and the ways it shapes their subjectivities. The resulting thesis speaks to these aspects, as well as my own shifting subjectivities. As with the research questions, Foucault's work played a significant role in shaping the research aims. The overall aim of the study is to explore the ways children's and teachers' bodies are disciplined within the e-portfolio space. As the study progressed, I began to uncover the production of specific types of bodies and this became a sub aim—to explore what types of bodies are produced in the e-portfolio space. This thesis documents stories of subjugation and silencing but equally of resistance and subversion, offering new possibilities of freedom through the truths that are told.

Process of inquiry

To generate information to address the research questions, I recruited twenty-nine children aged between three and a half years to six years of age and eight teachers from two kindergarten services in the same city in Aotearoa New Zealand. I visited these kindergartens weekly over a four-month period where I used semi-structured interviews and semi-structured activities to understand how power is exercised in the e-portfolio space. The methodology detailing the ethical, practice and process aspects is discussed in Chapter 4. The rest of this Chapter sets the scene for understanding the power/knowledge and truths that underpin children's and teachers' participation with e-portfolios within the neoliberal context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

E-portfolios as an Assessment Tool: An Introduction to Current Truths

E-portfolios are positioned as a tool for assessment that can support and enhance children's learning and development (Beaumont-Bates, 2022; Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; White et al., 2021). Assessment, as influenced by neoliberalism, is positioned within accountability mechanisms (Arndt & Tesar, 2015). Whilst accountability takes many contemporary forms, it is generally understood as regulating subjects' activities and performance through standards and criteria (Peters & Tesar, 2018). Thus, accountability is a form of governance characterised by "procedures and rules, and hierarchies of institutional power" (Stewart & Roberts, 2015, p. 240) that enables the monitoring and regulation of individuals' performance in the production of the ideal citizen—*homo economicus*. The *homo economicus* is a product of neoliberal governmentality—an entrepreneur of himself (Brown, 2015). He is "his own producer, the source of his earnings" (Foucault et al., 2008, pp. 225-226). Therefore, "whether he is selling, making, or consuming, he is

investing in himself and producing his own satisfaction” (Brown, 2015, p. 80).

Contemporary forms of assessment, as highlighted in *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education - Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017), are argued to be a “powerful force for learning” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004, book 2, p.2). Such forms of assessment purportedly create agency by supporting children’s participation in assessment processes, as discussed in Chapter 2. However, assessment also operates as a disciplinary mechanism in producing the *homo economicus*. This vantage point produces tension because assessment has the potential to situate children within an authoritative gaze where they can be disciplined—monitored, trained and improved.

Assessment requires teachers, “find out what children know and can do, what interests them, how they are progressing, what new learning opportunities are suggested, and where additional support may be required” (Ministry of Education - Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017, p. 63). Children’s assessments are stored in their individual e-portfolios so they can revisit and reflect on their learning and to plan for future learning (Ministry of Education - Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017). Despite the potential for disciplining, a key benefit of e-portfolios are their accessibility to children because e-portfolios are less dependent on the written word than previous hard-copy portfolios (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021; Knauf & Lepold, 2021). Features, such as photos, videos and audio recordings mean children can decipher e-portfolios on their own terms (Knauf & Lepold, 2021).

Children can also contribute to their e-portfolios by taking photographs and recording videos themselves (Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; White et al., 2021). Boardman (2007) suggests the integration of photos and videos “has the potential for children to assist in selecting the images that best reflect key points of the learning episode, and to be actively involved in deciding what should be included in the

learning story⁵ process” (p. 65). Thus, e-portfolios are argued as enabling children’s participation more authentically in the assessment process (Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; White et al., 2021). These aspects connect with children’s participatory rights as set out in the UNCRC.

Alongside the potential to enhance children’s learning, e-portfolios can also enhance teaching practices, save time, reduce paper consumption and administrative costs (Beaumont-Bates, 2017; Boardman, 2007; Cowan & Flewitt, 2021; Hooker, 2016b, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021). The power/knowledge circulating through the discourses espoused by Boardman (2007), Knauf and Lepold (2021) and White et al. (2021) demonstrates how power operates to establish truths. These truths then become the common-sense, taken-for-granted ways of thinking, speaking and acting within individual societies (Foucault, 1972).

In Aotearoa New Zealand the two main e-portfolios providers are Educa (<http://geteduca.com>) and Storypark (<https://nz.storypark.com>). As is the case in countries that have adopted neoliberal ideologies, both Educa and Storypark have embraced the economic market-driven ideology that drives buying and selling. E-portfolios are designed to improve communication practices, information sharing and assessment documentation to support parents and educators to improve children’s educational outcomes (Educa, 2018; Storypark, 2018). These truths imply e-portfolios provide the ‘right’ conditions for children to develop into future productive citizens—the *homo economicus*—as consistent with the dictions of neoliberal governmentality. To recap, the *homo economicus* is a self-interested individual who is a self-interested subject (M. Peters, 2012).

⁵ Learning story: “Structured narratives that track children’s strengths and interests; they emphasise the aim of early childhood as the development of children’s identities as competent learners in a range of different arenas. They include an analysis of the learning (a ‘short term review’) and a ‘what next?’ section. The narratives frequently include the interactions between the teacher and the learner, or between peers. Often the episode is dictated by the learner as a ‘child’s voice’”(Cowie & Carr, 2004, p. 107).

Educa's founder, Nathan Li, suggests Educa is primarily a software system to support teachers and parents to communicate more effectively through online documentation (Barback, 2013). Educa was created by Li after discovering that sharing information between parents and teachers was challenging after his daughter began attending full-time ECE (Barback, 2013). Similar to Educa, Storypark was created to provide opportunities for teachers, parents and wider family to collaborate on children's learning (Education Review, 2017). The emphasis on communication and partnerships between teachers, parents and families is not surprising as dominant discourses in ECE situate relationships as central to children's learning and development (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004, 2017b; Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2021). A significant reason for this collaboration is widespread agreement, both nationally and internationally, of the nexus between parental involvement in their child's education and their educational achievements (Cooper et al., 2014; Fan, 2001; Kim, 2002; Redding, 2006).

Since their introduction to the market, e-portfolios have made significant inroads into the ECE sector globally. Educa reports it has 15,000 users in 71 countries (Education Review, 2017). Similarly, Tapestry, a market-leading ECE e-portfolio platform in the UK supplies over one million individual e-portfolios to its children (Tapestry, 2021). However, although children's participation with e-portfolios is continuing to steadily increase, platforms have made limited modifications to accommodate children. Rather new features focus on providing additional benefits for adults in line with neoliberal ideology.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism⁶ is described as “an ideology, which argues that free market - and the market exchange - is an ethic in itself, constantly capable of inventing itself and acting as a guide for all human subjects' actions” (Peters & Tesar, 2018, p. 5). Conditioning its population through the regulation of economic, political and public spheres, neoliberal ideology is insistent social life be determined and shaped by market-driven measures (Peters & Tesar, 2018). Such an ideology is underpinned by economic rationality based on efficiency and cost-cutting analysis through marketisation and entrepreneurship, a lesser role for the state, fewer rules, free trade and unrestricted movement of capital and profits (Bettache & Chiu, 2019; Peet, 2012; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021b; Sims, 2020).

Neoliberal governmentality permeates neoliberal ideology, whereby hierarchical management structures produce, “hierarchical forms of authoritatively structured human working relations” (Peters & Tesar, 2018, p. 9). It is a mode of governance for regulating not only the state but the production of the subject, forms of citizenship and behaviour, and for organising the social enterprises of subjects (Foucault et al., 2008). Thus, neoliberal governmentality is understood as “the art of exercising power in the form of the economy” (Foucault & Senellart, 2010, p. 95), establishing and legitimising certain truths as being more powerful and worthy than others (Foucault et al., 1991). Understanding the ways neoliberal governance influences macro-level structures is relevant for

⁶ Neoliberalism: Literature highlights inconsistencies between the use of ‘neoliberalism’, ‘neoliberal ideology’ and ‘neoliberal governmentality’. At the outset, choosing one term for consistency and conciseness made ‘good’ sense; however, as my understanding developed and deepened, the less likely this became. Instead, like other scholars I shift between these terms depending on my discussion and/or argument. For example, the influence of neoliberal governmentality in the production of *homo economicus*, as opposed to my use of neoliberalism when drawing attention to mechanisms of accountability and standardisation in the increasing shift to e-portfolios within ECE sector. My fluidity highlights the shifting and slippery nature of ‘neoliberalisms’ within contemporary milieu.

contextualising the power/knowledge and truth that circulate through ‘working relations’ in the e-portfolio space at the micro-level. These relations circulate in the e-portfolio space through disciplinary power as regulated by neoliberal modes of governance, as discussed in Chapter 3.

The advent of neoliberal governance and its guiding policy making structure was uncritically taken up with “vengeance” in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1980s (Peet, 2012, p. 151). A central argument for neoliberal governance was that welfare state intervention was the cause of the economic downward spiral (Peet, 2012). The welfare state was said to encourage the growth of “dysfunctional families” while discouraging neoliberal ideals such as effort and self-reliance (Peters & Tesar, 2018, p. 7). State intervention should instead support the free market (Peet, 2012). Removal of state responsibility for welfare marks the end of an era in Aotearoa New Zealand. Public services and utilities, such as education, were repositioned as a commodity (Giroux, 2013) and ECE shifted into the hands of the marketplace (Gallagher, 2017a, 2017b; Tesar, 2017).

As Tesar (2015a) suggests, in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand neoliberal ideals have increasingly become normalised, “elevating notions of choice, accountability, individual responsibility, and a focus on economic growth and business investment” (p. 12). All encompassing, individuals willingly adopt “market-based values in all of their judgements and practices to amass sufficient quantities of human capital” becoming “entrepreneurs of themselves” (Hamann, 2009, p. 38). The impact of neoliberalism has led to viewing children and childhoods through an economic lens (Tesar, 2017). Discourses of economic investment to improve the outcomes of children who are viewed as ‘vulnerable’ and at ‘risk’ to society contribute to the narrative (H. May, 2014).

Government policies reflect the investment in ECE as a commodity to ensure future productive citizens (Haggerty & Alcock, 2016; Sims, 2017). The shifting political agenda has produced increasing demand on workforce participation by mothers to mitigate long-term social

disadvantages (Gallagher, 2017a; Mitchell, 2015). Government policies such as the ‘twenty hours free early childhood education’ encourage workplace and ECE participation (Gallagher, 2017a). Emerging from these discourses, teachers are positioned as ‘experts’ with the professional knowledge to support ‘vulnerable’ children and their families (Kamenarac, 2021c). Teachers as ‘experts’ are well-placed to support children and their families to learn what is ‘right’ and to direct them towards productive citizenship (Kamenarac, 2021c). However, commentators claim not all children benefit from policy initiatives (Haggerty & Alcock, 2016; H. May, 2014; Mitchell, 2015). The shift to a private regulatory state produces contexts where the rich and powerful can circulate more efficiently (Sims, 2020). Correspondingly, these shifts weaken the welfare state worldview of participation and belonging (Peters & Tesar, 2018), as noted earlier. Peet (2012) suggests that although neoliberalism is underpinned by a belief in the fairness and justice of the market it still manages to reward its “hero-class—finance capitalists” (p. 151).

Despite the warnings, capitalist investors have embraced privatisation and free-market ideals (Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021). Investors have eagerly taken up the selling of childcare services and children as products for consumption under the guise of neoliberal ideology that assures quality (Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021). The notion of quality, like participation, has taken on distinctly economic valances from its previous political understanding (Brown, 2015). Quality from a neoliberal perspective is increasingly measured in terms of customer satisfaction (Brown, 2015). In a marketplace that trades on customer happiness, ECE services are increasingly adopting technologies and systems (Brown, 2005; Hamann, 2009; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021; Sims, 2017), such as e-portfolios, to remain competitive.

As Roberts-Holmes and Moss (2021b) argue, neoliberalism defines what is important, influencing what we do and how we do it. “We are produced by it, animated, activated, ‘made up’. It provides, for some, a

sense of worth, purpose, success and improvement” (Ball, 2021, p. xv). However, measuring one’s worth against a specific set of ideals is problematic because for those who do not measure up, neoliberalism “is a distortion, a source of abjection – positing them as of little worth, as unproductive, in need for rectification” (Ball, 2021, p. xv). According to a number of commentators, putting the responsibility of young children’s education into the hands of the private sector and the free market has been devastating for ECE (Arndt & Tesar, 2015; Gallagher, 2017a, 2017b, 2021; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a, 2021b; Sims, 2017).

Contextualising ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand

Responding to neoliberalism, ECE encompasses a wide range of governance and ownership structures, and different operating models and philosophies. Centre, home and hospital-based services alongside Kōhanga Reo, Pasifika centres and Special Character settings now make up Aotearoa New Zealand’s varied ECE landscape (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). The traditional community-based kindergartens and parent-led playcentres continue to operate within this landscape (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). Many ECE services operate longer hours and cater to a wider age range due to neoliberal policy shifts and the move towards privatisation in the 1980s, as discussed earlier.

Due to the diversity of the ECE sector, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b), plays an important role in unifying services. *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) is shaped by the dominant discourses of neoliberalism, socialism and Te Ao Māori (Westbrook & White, 2021), as indicated earlier in the Chapter. In contrast to neoliberalism, socialism is characterised by community values, advocacy for the rights of women and children and an overall interest in equality and social justice (Westbrook & White, 2021). Te Ao Māori is underpinned by collectivist

values, entrenched in family relationships and a deep connection to the land and the spirit world (Westbrook & White, 2021).

Released to the ECE sector in 1996, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) has been argued as a framework for resistance to colonialism and neoliberalism (Tesar, 2015b). However, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) has also been argued as supporting the rise of neoliberal ideology (Duhn, 2010; Tesar, 2017). Duhn (2006) suggests *Te Whāriki* is productive of a particular type of good ideal child—the neoliberal, entrepreneurial child set within the political context of Aotearoa New Zealand. A decade on, neoliberalism continues to have “a very strong influence on children in Aotearoa New Zealand” (Tesar, 2017, p. 22) through the governance of ECE settings (Duhn, 2006, 2010; Gallagher, 2017a, 2017b, 2021; Peters & Tesar, 2018; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a; Sims, 2017; Tesar, 2015a). Thus, neoliberalism is argued as weakening the discourses of Te Ao Māori (Te One, 2003b) and socialism (Smith, 2018). Addressing the discord, Westbrook and White (2021) analyse *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) to understand the influence of neoliberalism on socialism and Te Ao Māori.

According to Westbrook and White (2021), the dominant discourses of all three (neoliberalism, Te Ao Māori and socialism) fluctuate and vary in intensity. At times each blends aspects of its key tenets for gain and at times they are in contrast (Westbrook & White, 2021). Therefore, “absolute power” remains elusive with neither neoliberalism, Te Ao Māori or socialism holding supreme power (Westbrook & White, 2021, p. 434). This is consistent with Foucaultian thinking, as Foucault (1972) describes discourses as non-linear and discontinuous with the propensity to traverse one another. Hence, neoliberalism, Te Ao Māori and socialism form the framework for understanding the discourses that influence children’s participation in ECE. However, in this study neoliberalism plays a significant role in influencing the power/knowledge

and truths of the participant kindergartens (see Findings Chapters). For this reason the thesis focuses on neoliberalism, rather than socialism and Te Ao Māori.

Out with the Old and in with the New: It's Not That Simple

This Chapter has introduced the thesis focus. The Foucaultian theoretical framework and the role of Foucault's work in shaping the research questions and aims of the study has also been introduced. The Chapter has established the context by introducing neoliberalism as an ideology, the shifting landscape of ECE education in Aotearoa New Zealand and e-portfolios. As mentioned above, neoliberalism is significant to this study. However, it is frequently described as being the root of all modern world problems and has "developed into a global political and cultural hegemony" (Bettache & Chiu, 2019, p. 11). Widespread hegemonic beliefs are problematic because they perpetuate the cycle of power reducing the possibilities of disrupting or challenging them (Foucault, 1994b).

As discussed in this Chapter, children's and teachers' engagement with e-portfolios is constituted within a broad range of historically and culturally constructed values. Teachers provide children with opportunities to engage with their e-portfolios in line with certain truths primarily constructed through the discourses of *Te Whāriki*. This thesis will examine these truths and extend the argument that in alignment with these truths three dominant types of bodies are produced. The thesis argues that e-portfolios are a political site where children's and teachers' bodies are disciplined into the 'right' way of participating.

Discourses perpetuate power and its (re)production (Foucault, 1972). They define the conditions and rules hidden or otherwise, through which subjects can exist as intentional thinking-and-acting subjects (Foucault, 1972). As will be argued throughout this thesis, discursive constructions of children as social agents constrain and enable children's and teacher's bodies. These constructions demonstrate the pervasive

effects of dominant neoliberal discourses in the construction of future productive citizens. Drawing on Foucaultian theory, the thesis demonstrates how tensions are negotiated by children and teachers as they conform to and resist norms that circulate to subjugate and silence their bodies.

I will draw attention to the specificity of power/knowledge and truth as being historically and culturally situated because prior to the twentieth century there was no truth concerning e-portfolios. E-portfolios did not exist. Similarly, views about children and childhood have undergone a significant paradigm shift due to the influence of neoliberal ideology which situates them economically (Tesar, 2017). Correspondingly, views on assessment have shifted from tick-box systems to assessing children holistically in relation to their lives, development and capabilities (Arndt & Tesar, 2015). Therefore, I argue there is no truth beyond what is currently under construction. Instead, there is a perpetual circulation of power between old truths, new truths and the production of alternate truths. This thesis is but one production.

Thesis Structure and Chapter Headings

Having established a context for the thesis, this final section outlines the thesis structure and Chapter headings. Divided into eight Chapters, the first Chapter has introduced the topic and the Foucaultian stance of the thesis. The research problem has been discussed with a clear rationale linking it to social, cultural and political justification for studying the effects of disciplinary power in the e-portfolio space. Following this, I presented the research aims and questions that guide the thesis and briefly described the process of inquiry. The subsequent sections introduce e-portfolios, the shifting landscape of ECE and the discourses that influence the activity in the e-portfolio space. A brief summary of the key ideas concludes this Chapter.

Chapter 2 discusses the literature that has been used to shape and inform the study. The first section discusses the philosophical

underpinnings of assessment in ECE to orient the reader to the shifting truths of assessment in Aotearoa New Zealand. The second section introduces the evolution of portfolios to e-portfolios discussing some of the key issues that both portfolios share. Following this, the discussion explores some of the benefits, tensions and concerns discussing how certain new features of e-portfolios situate them as a tool for surveillance. The final section explores pleasure in ECE. Pleasure is a consistent thread in e-portfolio literature. Therefore, the section seeks to uncover current constructions of pleasure. Pleasure is significant to this thesis as Foucault's concept of pleasure as a counterattack to power has the potential to redefine and reshape notions of silencing and subjugation in the e-portfolio space.

Chapter 3 is my work of freedom, that is, it introduces my *askesis* on power and justifies my game of truth regarding the Foucaultian theoretical framework that guides this thesis. Foucault's concepts that form the theoretical framework are discussed and argued in relation to their suitability for (un)silencing the bodies of subjects in the e-portfolio space.

The methodological dimensions of this thesis are detailed in Chapter 4. I begin by introducing how I went about designing the research methodology and outline the ethical work involved. Following this, I introduce the mosaic approach as the methodology chosen as most suitable at the outset of this thesis. It is difficult to say whether this would have been the most suitable approach had I envisaged the direction this thesis was to go in. The mosaic approach is discussed in detail, outlining each method chosen to represent one piece of the mosaic. I explain how the methods link to the theoretical framework. This is followed by a description of the data collecting methods. The final section of this Chapter discusses some of the ethical considerations and the limitations and challenges encountered.

Chapter 5, 6 and 7 report the key findings that address the aims and questions of the thesis. Chapter 5 reports on teachers' truths,

beginning with an introduction to the Kindergarten Association's initiative to shift to an e-portfolio system, linking it to neoliberal ideology. The main Chapter argument is as titled, the e-portfolio space produces good docile teacher bodies. This type of body also connects with the sub aim of this study, which is to identify the sorts of bodies that are produced in this space. Throughout the Chapter key neoliberal discourses of individualism, freedom, choice and agency are linked to the teachers' dialogue as they espouse 'what they do' and 'why they do what they do' in the e-portfolio space.

Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power, objectification and subjectification are central to Chapter 5. I illustrate the ways in which neoliberal governance disciplines teachers through processes of objectification whilst they simultaneously engage in processes of subjectification. Subjectification refers to processes of self-formation, that is, the ways in which teachers govern themselves into good teachers by thinking, behaving and speaking certain truths into existence. These processes produce tension because they perpetuate power orders rendering subjects docile. The resulting body, as argued, is the discursively constituted good docile teacher body.

Building on the work in Chapter 5, Chapter 6 explores the different ways teachers discipline children's bodies into good docile bodies in the e-portfolio space as guided by their truths. This Chapter focuses primarily on Foucault's concept of disciplinary power and its three specific techniques of discipline to demonstrate how teachers draw on these techniques to discipline children's bodies into the 'right' kinds of bodies in this space. Underpinning teachers' discursive practices is the belief that they are supporting children to enact agency in the e-portfolio space. However, as demonstrated, it is limited agency because only a particular type of agency that aligns with normative views is recognised by teachers.

The categories of subjugation and silencing that emerged during data analysis demonstrates how disciplinary power circulates through

neoliberal ideology and associated discourses to diminish the potential for other types of agency. The effect is the production of another particular type of body—the good docile child body. Making visible the natural and taken-for-granted-ness of present power/knowledge and truth in the e-portfolio space has the potential to open the possibilities for new practices of agency and new practices of freedom.

Chapter 7 is further work of freedom as I attempt to rupture current discourses that are assumed as common-sense and taken-for-granted ways of thinking about what constitutes ‘right’ in the e-portfolio space. I do this by demonstrating how pleasure is exercised by children as a counterattack to power, their work of freedom. Using salient examples, the Chapter demonstrates how children thwart adults’ power through their resistant and subversive actions. The categories of resistance and subversion are argued to be a powerful way to disrupt and augment current discourses that silence and subjugate children’s bodies. A counterattack repositions them as powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies. Chapter 7 reinforces my argument for a conceptualisation of practices of freedom that might be cultivated in the pursuit of new pedagogies of emancipation.

In the concluding Chapter I bring together the key ideas that cut across the three Findings Chapters. My discussion demonstrates how power circulates to constrain and enable ‘some’ bodies in the e-portfolio space, and the potential for resistance and subversion as the work of freedom. I also address the contribution this thesis makes to educational knowledge and research. Lastly, recommendations and suggestions for future research are outlined.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: Multiple Truths

The history of the study of childhood in the social sciences has been marked not by an absence of interest in children [...] but by their silence. (James & Prout, 1997, pp. 7-8)

A review of the literature from a Foucaultian stance involves exploring the discourses that form the common-sense, taken-for-granted knowledge that is accepted as truth in ECE. Knowledge of dominant discourses is significant because how children and teachers participate within the e-portfolio space is a form of enculturation. According to Foucault (1972), discourses produce truth and are rooted in the discursive and non-discursive practices of social relations and the institutional activities of organisations. As Foucault (1980) observes, there is no such thing as a single universal truth. Rather, truth is produced, is inherently shifting and changing over time, and is culturally and historically located. The shifting truths in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand have been due to rapid neoliberal policy development and further shaped by social and cultural diversity, as introduced in Chapter 1 (Arndt & Tesar, 2015; Duhn, 2010; Haggerty & Alcock, 2016; Kamenarac, 2021a, 2021b; Mitchell, 2015; Tesar, 2015a). Neo-colonial childhoods and conceptual challenges have also contributed to changes in ECE (Arndt & Tesar, 2015; Carr et al., 1998; Duhn, 2006, 2010; Gallagher, 2017b; H. May, 2014; May, 2019; Tesar, 2015a).

The first strand of literature discussed in this Chapter chronicles the historical and philosophical underpinnings of assessment in ECE, demonstrating the shifting nature of discourses and truths over time, in relation to differing phenomenon. For example, children are positioned as *being* competent within the current edition of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b), as opposed to the 1996

edition which positioned them as *becoming* competent. The second strand of literature explores the emergence of portfolios in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand. Portfolios developed as a response to the political agenda of accountability, which is part of the wider network for governing childhood. Following this, the discussion turns to the development of e-portfolios—the primary focus of the study. This section outlines some of the benefits, tensions and concerns surrounding e-portfolios, as identified by key stakeholders. Attention is given to the ways in which e-portfolios connect with neoliberal modes of governance and the key disciplinary power of surveillance.

The final strand explores current truths surrounding pleasure in ECE. The literature identifies that e-portfolios bring pleasure to children, teachers and parents. For example, children, teachers and parents take pleasure in looking at and sharing e-portfolios with one another (Beaumont-Bates, 2017, 2019; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a, 2015b; Hooker, 2017, 2019). Pleasure is also expressed during children's, teachers' and parents' conversations with researchers using words such as enjoy, happy, like, love and so forth (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a, 2015b; Hooker, 2019). Despite their expressions of pleasure, what pleasure is and how it is experienced is relatively unexplored. Instead, pleasure is spoken about as if there is a common sense, taken-for-granted truth about pleasure and therefore it needs no explanation.

In the studies above, power/knowledge situates pleasure as relational, produced during warm, responsive relationships in the e-portfolio space. However, as Foucault (1980) reminds us, there is no such thing as a single, universal truth. This thesis explores a different truth, one in which pleasure is produced through resisting and subverting power in the e-portfolio space. What I am talking about is Foucaultian notions of pleasure; the pleasure one takes in counterattacking power, rupturing it and inserting new possibilities for alternate truths. Thus, the

final section orients the reader to the possibilities of considering pleasure that is located outside normalising discourses.

Philosophical Underpinnings of Assessment in ECE

Prior to the implementation of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) in Aotearoa New Zealand, ECE was guided by traditional child development knowledge underpinned by developmental psychology (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009; Carr, 2001). Emerging from a combination of child development theories of the twentieth century, developmental psychology has since been criticised as a ‘Minority World’ social science that seeks to establish universal truths about children’s development (MacNaughton, 2005). The term ‘Minority World’ describes capitalist neoliberal countries who claim Western social sciences establish truth based on rational scientific investigation (MacNaughton, 2005). Therefore, it is factual and correct (MacNaughton, 2005). However, Minority World views create tension because they privilege Western normative perspectives and issues despite the majority of the world’s population and land mass residing in the Majority World (Tisdall et al., 2012a). Furthermore, Western normative perspectives do not consider the perspectives of indigenous people (Ritchie et al., 2011). For example, the “whitestreaming” of Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand through socio-cultural and political policies associated with assimilation and colonisation (Ritchie & Skerrett, 2014, p. 73).

As noted above, a developmental psychological gaze on child development focuses on one particular truth or singular classification of development (Arndt & Tesar, 2015). This truth led to children’s learning and development being categorised into developmental domains: physical, social/emotional, cognitive and communication/language (Arndt & Tesar, 2015). Children are assessed against the domains using predetermined fixed criteria to categorise and label what children can do (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009; Carr, 2001). Known as summative assessment, this model has been criticised for not taking into account

what is invisible, such as feelings, ideas and teachers' subjective interpretations (Arndt & Tesar, 2015). A summative assessment model produces tension because in identifying what counts as 'normal' development, teachers can also identify what is 'abnormal' (see Chapter 3).

Formative assessment, on the other hand, focuses on outcomes that can improve students' overall achievement. For example, teacher-student relationships, informal feedback, a variety of observational and written records, photographs and video recording (Arndt & Tesar, 2015; Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004, 2017b). It also invites children's and parents' participation in the assessment process (Arndt & Tesar, 2015; Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004, 2017b). The formative assessment model underpins the assessment practices of teachers in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand today—it guides their truths.

Shifting discourses of assessment

The shift towards formative assessment has largely been due to the development and implementation of *Te Whāriki* in 1996 (Carr et al., 1998). *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) takes a holistic individualised approach to children's learning and development, rather than subscribing to any single universal truth. Such an approach opens the possibilities of many truths whereby children's learning and development is considered as "fluctuating and unpredictable" (Arndt & Tesar, 2015, p. 72). Hence, summative assessment, the model of assessment used during the 1990s was widely criticised because it did not align with the philosophical underpinnings of *Te Whāriki* (Carr et al., 1998; Nuttall, 2005). This criticism led to the development of 'assessment for learning' (Carr et al., 1998).

Assessment for learning is a contemporary approach to formative assessment that highlights children's learning, being and becoming and responds to the principles and strands of *Te Whāriki* (Arndt & Tesar,

2015). Assessment for learning also emphasises the “role of socially and culturally mediated learning and of reciprocal and responsive relationships for children with people, places, and things” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1996, p. 9). Continuing to align with the aspirational statements of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b), the revised version of the document articulates assessment as a “mana⁷-enhancing process for children, parents and whānau, conducted in ways that uphold the empowerment/whakamana principle” (p. 64)

The Early Childhood Learning and Exemplar Project, funded by the Ministry of Education and led by Margaret Carr, was instrumental in the shift to assessment for learning (Nuttall, 2005). The aim of the project was to develop ways to honour traditional principles of ECE, such as meaningful play with a more contemporary approach (Nuttall, 2005). The project produced 20 books, titled *Kei Tua o te Pae/Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004; Nuttall, 2005). Each book focuses on an aspect of assessment, highlighting examples of assessment exemplars.

The books were initially intended to be used alongside *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b), and *Quality in action: Te mahi whai hua: Implementing the revised statement of desirable objectives and practices in New Zealand early childhood services* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1998). Together, these key documents were designed to enable teachers to discuss assessment in terms of the curriculum and their specific settings as a “powerful force for learning” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004, book 2, p.2). The assessment for learning approach sought to resist standardised approaches through a model that reinforced early childhood teachers’ responsivity to their local community in the

⁷ Mana: “the power of being, authority, prestige, spiritual power, authority, status and control” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, p. 66).

writing and format of their assessments (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004). Book 2 describes the assessment process as “noticing, recognising and responding” to children’s learning and development (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004, book 1, p.6).

The notice, recognise and respond sequence is widely applied through the learning stories approach to pedagogical documentation (Mitchell & New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 2008). Learning stories continue to be the most common form of assessment documentation in ECE (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2008; Mitchell & New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 2008).

Learning stories

The learning stories approach is widely acclaimed internationally (Arndt & Tesar, 2015; Cowan & Flewitt, 2021; Knauf, 2017; Reisman, 2011). Developed by Margaret Carr in collaboration with colleagues, learning stories are a narrative assessment focusing on what children are able to do and their approach to learning (Carr, 2001, 2011; Carr et al., 2010). Teachers observe and record a child’s learning as a learning story—a narrative account of a learning experience (Carr, 1998). The story is then reflected upon using learning dispositions to analyse learning that has taken place (Carr, 1998). Learning stories respond to the principles and strands of *Te Whāriki*, reflecting specific learning outcomes. These outcomes are the knowledge, skills and attitudes that children acquire in their everyday social and cultural interactions and experiences (Carr et al., 2010).

In *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b), children’s learning outcomes “include knowledge, skills and attitudes which combine as dispositions and working theories” (p. 22). Children draw on their learning dispositions to develop, refine and expand their working theories. Their disposition towards learning relies

on a “ready, willing and able element. Being ‘ready’ means having the inclination, being ‘willing’ means having sensitivity to time and place and being ‘able’ means having the necessary knowledge and skills” (Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 23). Carr (1998) identifies five central learning dispositions that form the basis of the learning story approach with each disposition linking to a strand of *Te Whāriki* and assessed by focusing on a behaviour. Working theories are children’s interpretation of new ideas and understanding combined with existing knowledge as they make sense and meaning of new experiences (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

In line with formative assessment, the learning story approach invites participation from children, situating them as capable and competent (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). Viewing children as capable and competent stems from shifting discourses that position children as human ‘beings’ with ‘rights,’ rather than ‘becomings’ (MacNaughton & Smith, 2009). Alongside learning stories, *Te Whāriki* also identifies photographs, samples of children’s work and audio and visual recordings as other elements of formal assessment (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b) suggests valid ways of involving children in such assessment practices may include, children taking their own photographs and videos, narrating their own stories and planning for their own learning. All participant teachers in this study use the learning story format, alongside photographs and digital media as part of children’s formal assessment documentation. Once children’s learning is documented it is typically stored in an individual portfolio so children can revisit and reflect on their learning and plan for future learning (Ministry of Education - Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

Portfolios in ECE

Portfolios were first introduced into ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1998. Presented by the Ministry of Education in *Quality in action: Te mahi whai hua*, the publication recommends teachers foster assessment practices that empower children to develop a positive self-image (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1998). It describes the use of portfolios as one pathway to achieving this:

To celebrate children’s learning achievements, educators open a file for each child. It illustrates each area of the child’s life and contains examples of artwork, photographs of the child and their whānau, written observations from educators, anecdotal accounts of events in the child’s life, and celebrations of the child’s success. These files are available to the children, their whānau⁸, and educators and become an essential part of planning for children’s experiences within the service. (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1998, p. 39)

Portfolios in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand have become well established as an effective tool for communication and assessment (Davis, 2006; Steele, 2007; Te One & Institute for Early Childhood Studies, 2002). Early ECE research show portfolios can strengthen communication with families, build on children’s interests and improve children’s learning outcomes (Billman et al., 2005; Cooper & Love, 2001; Davis, 2006; Te One & Institute for Early Childhood Studies, 2002). Steele (2007) suggests portfolios can provide young children with opportunities to participate in their learning and encourage them to take responsibility for

⁸ Whānau: extended family, multigenerational group of relatives or group of people who work together on and for a common cause (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, p. 67).

their own learning, fostering ownership. Current discourses continue to espouse portfolios as an effective way to follow children's progress over time (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

Portfolios have traditionally taken the form of hard-copy paper-based folders or scrap books and assume a level of participation from children, as do the individual assessments contained within them. Therefore, children's access to their portfolios is important because portfolios can be a powerful teaching and learning tool that supports children to develop "understandings of concepts, ideas, and emotional self" (Seitz & Bartholomew, 2008, p. 63). As such, the way in which portfolios are shared with children will impact their experiences and shape their subjectivities.

The location of children's portfolios impacts children's ability to engage with them because they rely on them being accessible (Schurr, 2009; Steele, 2007). Whilst portfolios are generally kept in areas and at levels that provide children with physical access (Beaumont-Bates, 2017, 2019; Danniels et al., 2020), not all services have portfolios readily available to children and/or their families (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021). Cowan and Flewitt (2021) notes portfolios are frequently stored on high shelves and in areas that are out of reach to children and parents. Teachers suggest this practice reflected their concern over portfolios getting lost or damaged (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021). However, children's inability to access their portfolios produces tension because dominant discourses create space for children's participation.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the notion of participation produces tension due to different understandings within competing dominant discourses. However, regardless of one's view of participation, be it 'relational and collective' or 'separatist and individual,' storing portfolios in areas that minimises children's and parents' access to them diminishes participation. Children and parents' physical access is not the only tension. Steele (2007) claims children and parents also need to have intellectual access. To clarify, physical accessibility is the ability to view

an individual portfolio at any time, whereas intellectual accessibility refers to the documentation inside being in a language and format that is understandable to all stakeholders (children and their parents/families) (Steele, 2007). Steele (2007) makes a valid point because in ECE children need both physical and intellectual access to revisit, reflect and plan for future learning (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

Alongside access, portfolio ownership is another consistent strand that emerged in the literature. Steele (2007) claims portfolio ownership is interconnected with accessibility. She suggests the more children are able to engage with their portfolios the greater their sense of ownership of them (Steele, 2007). Similarly, Te One (2002) argues children's engagement with their portfolios fosters their sense of ownership through their active role in the process. Accessibility and ownership are important considerations for this study because as portfolios move online, access shifts from the physical environment to a virtual environment. As introduced in Chapter 1, the digital shift raises concerns regarding children's participation, access and ownership (Beaumont-Bates, 2017; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; Livingstone, 2016; Lupton & Williamson, 2017). These, and other issues, are expanded upon in the following section which reviews the current benefits, tensions and concerns surrounding e-portfolios.

E-portfolios: Benefits

E-portfolios are a digital version of the traditional hard-copy paper-based folders/scrap books discussed above. Similar to hard-copies, e-portfolios contain a collection of artefacts that document children's learning and development with the added advantage of digital media, such as video and audio recordings. E-portfolios are typically cloud-based and can be accessed via a range of digital devices, such as computers, smart phones and tablets. This makes e-portfolios accessible anywhere and anytime (Educa, 2018; Storypark, 2018). To assure customer satisfaction, which

as noted in Chapter 1 is closely linked to neoliberal ideals of quality (Brown, 2015) Educa and Storypark offer a range of benefits for using their platforms.

Key benefits include the multiple ways teachers and parents can communicate with each other, for example comments, conversations, video and audio files (Educa, 2018; Storypark, 2022). Educa cite the ‘all in one place’ feature as being another significant benefit of their e-portfolios as parents have all their child’s learning stored in one place (Educa, 2018). According to Educa (2018) parents are less likely to miss information and communication if it is all together. Children’s learning and development is more immediate and visible because it is sent directly to parents’ digital devices as soon as it is uploaded with parents immediately notified (Educa, 2018; Storypark, 2018).

Teachers in a few studies in Aotearoa New Zealand note timesaving as being a significant benefit of e-portfolios (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Hooker, 2016a). Teachers suggest the speed of documenting online means they are able to complete more assessments in their professional time than they previously could using traditional hard-copy portfolios (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Hooker, 2016a). Time saving findings are also mirrored in international studies (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021; Kim, 2018), “simplifying and streamlining early years assessment” (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021, p. 2). Parents and teachers report the online communication tools enhance face to face conversations with each other, strengthening parent-teacher relationships “a great deal” (Higgins & Cherrington, 2017, p. 16). E-portfolios are also reported to have increased family participation in their children’s learning (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Hooker, 2016a). Increased parental participation contributes to a deeper understanding of children’s home contexts, which is argued as enhancing children’s learning in ECE (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Hooker, 2016a).

Hooker (2019) suggests e-portfolios support children’s participation with their assessments because children can take their own photos, watch their videos, and narrate their stories to teachers. She

describes children's involvement as "*recalling, reconnecting and restarting*" their learning (Hooker, 2019, p. 376. Italics in the original). According to Lewis (2017) reviewing video-recorded experiences stimulates children's thinking and reflective dialogue, supporting metacognitive and cognitive development. Developing children's metacognition is important because it supports children to be thoughtful about their learning (Lewis, 2017). Aside from the benefits of reflecting on previous learning experiences, e-portfolios are argued as being more accessible to children because visual documentation does not rely on their ability to read (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021; Knauf & Lepold, 2021). Similarly, children's engagement is improved through touch-screen devices as these do not rely on children's ability to hold a pen, therefore, (Rose et al., 2017).

Children's increasing participation with digital documentation is consistent in national and international studies (Bordonaro & Payne, 2012; Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; Kumpulainen & Ouakrim-Soivio, 2019). However, despite the supposed benefits of e-portfolios for different stakeholders, a number of tensions arose in the literature. Before exploring these further, it is important to point out that overall e-portfolios research in ECE tends to focus on the impact and influence of e-portfolios in relation to adults' experiences and perspectives. Children's experiences and perspectives are largely unexplored. Therefore, this thesis might make a contribution to knowledge of children's experiences.

Tensions

As mentioned in Chapter 1, e-portfolios are increasingly being taken up by ECE services to remain competitive in a marketplace that trades on the production of human capital (Brown, 2005; Hamann, 2009; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021; Sims, 2017). Neoliberalism emphasises standardisation and accountability practices as the best way to assure future productive citizens (Arndt & Tesar, 2015; Peters & Tesar, 2018; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a; Stewart & Roberts, 2015). However,

neoliberalism produces tension in educational discourses because it positions children as products for consumption and parents as consumers (Peters & Tesar, 2018). Hence, parents are responsible for making rational choices about the type of service to select for their children so as to produce enough human capital to secure their future (Gallagher, 2017a, 2017b).

Similar to the portfolio literature reviewed, children's accessibility to their e-portfolios is a common theme in e-portfolio literature. Despite studies that suggest children's access to their learning is improved using e-portfolios (Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; White et al., 2021), other studies counter these claims. In my own previous work, I identified that children's access to digital technologies directly impacts their ability to participate with their e-portfolios (Beaumont-Bates, 2016). Children's limited access to digital technologies in some contexts inhibits their participation and risks marginalising children's voices (Beaumont-Bates, 2017; Cowan & Flewitt, 2021). Other studies in Aotearoa New Zealand reveal similar findings with Hooker (2019) suggesting that although e-portfolios provide many benefits and opportunities, these are lost if e-portfolios are not available to children to access at their leisure.

Goodman and Cherrington (2015a) use a mixed method approach to explore children's engagement with e-portfolios in Aotearoa New Zealand. They identify a large number of services having no direct access for children (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a). Rather, many services use both hard-copy portfolios and e-portfolios to ensure children have opportunities to revisit their learning (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a). Exploring this phenomenon in greater depth in two case studies, Goodman and Cherrington (2015a) interview eighteen children in one setting and twenty in another. Findings reveal only two children in the first service knew what their e-portfolios were and could make links between their hard-copy portfolio and e-portfolio. In the second setting, children appeared to have a strong sense of ownership of their e-portfolios, regularly engaging with them at kindergarten either with

teachers and/or peers, as well as at home (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a).

Children's access to the technology was the key difference between the two ECE services (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a). The first service had limited technology, correspondingly children had limited access. The second service had a computer, iPad and tablet, iPhone/android and other electronic devices. The various digital technologies meant children in this setting had regular opportunities to engage with their e-portfolios. Goodman and Cherrington (2015a) claim a disparity between digital technology in ECE services has a significant impact on children's access and therefore their sense of ownership of them. Similarly, Hooker (2016a) conducts a comparative study between hard-copy portfolios and e-portfolios. Hooker (2016a) claims children have a greater sense of ownership to their hard-copy portfolio than their e-portfolio. However, unlike Goodman and Cherrington (2015a) who attribute ownership to variances in access, Hooker (2016a) suggests the materiality of the hard-copy portfolios contribute to children's feelings of ownership. Hard-copy portfolios are a tangible artefact for children to hold, to touch, to carry about and so forth, whereas e-portfolios are intangible and are reliant on access from adults.

Children's diminished access in a digital environment is mirrored by international findings (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021). One study suggests e-portfolios pose challenges in the disparity between different services, as well as families access to digital technologies (Cowan & Flewitt, 2021). Cowan and Flewitt (2021) claim adult-designed e-portfolio platforms can constrain children's agency by limiting their ability to contribute to digital documentation. Limiting agency potentially diminishes children's rights as citizens by marginalising their voices, particularly in ECE settings that promote agency and rights. A point mentioned by Livingstone (2016) in Chapter 1. Children's access can be further diminished by onscreen navigation that relies on children being able to read 'play video,' navigate small icons, as well as being able to avoid accidentally erasing content

(Cowan & Flewitt, 2021). Studies also note the disparity between the content of children's e-portfolios in some settings (Kumpulainen & Ouakrim-Soivio, 2019). Kumpulainen and Ouakrim-Soivio (2019) claim there are inconsistencies amongst teachers and settings in the ways in which e-portfolios reflect children's learning and development, their emotions and their lives.

Whilst access and ownership creates tension and challenges when using e-portfolios in ECE contexts, another significant aspect is the frustration caused by the digital platforms themselves (Beaumont-Bates, 2017). The length of time to upload photographs and videos, as well as computers stalling part way through uploads was a frequent complaint of teachers (Beaumont-Bates, 2017). Another familiar frustration in relation to performance was lack of an autosave function (Beaumont-Bates, 2017). Teachers mentioned they would lose work and waste valuable professional time when the e-portfolio platform glitched (Beaumont-Bates, 2017). Whilst these issues question factors related to the software and hardware of digital technology, e-portfolios can potentially call into question teachers' performance. Several studies identify teachers' lack competence and confidence in using e-portfolios (Beaumont-Bates, 2017; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a, 2015b; Hooker, 2016a). A lack of competence and confidence in using digital technologies is significant because as noted, children in some settings rely on teachers to access their e-portfolios for them.

A number of other factors contribute to teachers' performance in relation to e-portfolios, such as their beliefs and educational philosophies (Santamaria et al., 2020; Beaumont-Bates, 2016), self-efficacy (Bittman et al., 2011), their capacity to adapt to change (Prensky, 2001) and their overall interest (Ellis, 2010). Often older more experienced teachers who hold more traditional views of educational practices tend to be more sceptical of digital technologies (Dong, 2018). Therefore, the practical application of digital technologies often has to be seen in practice before teachers are willing to change their attitudes (Parette et al., 2010).

The factors identified above are important to consider because teachers shape the ECE environment through their perspectives of the most appropriate ways to use e-portfolios with children (Eagle, 2012). Including the amount of time teachers spend using e-portfolios with children and the quality of children's experiences (Eagle, 2012). This raises concern because educational contexts can be significant sites for providing digital equity to children who may experience a digital divide between home and ECE (Smith et al., 2016).

Goodman and Cherrington (2015b) claim effective teaching practices are key in implementing e-portfolios successfully in ECE services. They suggest it is important to develop practices that foster children's participation because children are more removed from participating with e-portfolios than hard-copy portfolios (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a, 2015b). Many centres have implemented e-portfolios in such a way as to weaken the aspirations of *Te Whāriki* by removing children from having the opportunity to be active participants in their learning (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a). Hence, teachers' practice within the e-portfolio space can enable children, but it can also constrain them. Diminishing children's participation is a concern because e-portfolios are continuing to trend in Aotearoa New Zealand with new features being developed to entice consumers to buy their product. In light of the findings in the literature so far, I question whether e-portfolios are undermining democratic assessment practices in ECE.

Concerns

Since they began, Storypark (2022a) and Educa (2022a) have added a range of new features which enhance their platforms for teachers, families and managers/leaders. For example, the new 'Daily Routines' function enables teachers to capture and share children's routines with their parents. Teachers can record such aspects as a child's sleeping, toileting, food consumption and sunscreen information (Educa, 2022a; Storypark, 2022a). Parents can access this information throughout the

day whenever it suits them (Educa, 2022a; Storypark, 2022a). However, these features raise concerns about the surveillance or ‘dataveillance’ of children. Dataveillance refers to digital surveillance practices that can record details about subjects’ lives, such as digital media, educational software, wearable devices, social media platforms and so forth (Lupton & Williamson, 2017; Lyon, 2010).

Dataveillance contributes to what Lyon (2010) refers to as ‘liquid surveillance’. Such surveillance describe “regimes of in/visibility and is characterized by data-flows, mutating surveillance agencies and the targeting and sorting of everyone” (Lyon, 2010, p. 325). The dispersed ability to watch ourselves and others through mobile digital documentation is a form of biocapital—a way of commercially exploiting human capital (Lupton, 2016; Lupton & Williamson, 2017). As outlined within Chapter 1, a concerning outcome of the increased use of e-portfolios is the potential to objectify children as there is limited evidence of existing practices that safeguard children’s rights in relation to dataveillance (Lupton & Williamson, 2017).

Children are not the only ones who are potentially under surveillance. Recent features question the surveillance of teachers, for instance the real-time analytical and reporting tools that are a part of the software package (Storypark, 2021). These tools can strengthen teachers’ practice because they encourage “reflective intentional teaching and can support work with mentors and/or specialists enhancing the quality of teaching practices” (Storypark, 2021). Whilst they are claimed to enhance teachers’ practice, these tools also provide an efficient way for managers to analyse and monitor teachers’ performance and to compare data sets (Storypark, 2022b).

The ability for teachers to record and gather evidence of their professional growth for their teacher registration and appraisal processes put teachers’ performance under additional surveillance. Plummer and Kautz (2014) claim in some contexts practices are implemented whereby teachers monitor the quality of each other’s posts. Teachers also suggest

they feel accountable to wider audiences (children's families) for both the quality of their posts, as well as the frequency (Hooker, 2016b). A recent collaborative pilot study between Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia identifies power dynamics and inequalities that privilege some voices while marginalising others (White et al., 2021). Preliminary findings identify variables in authority and authorship of digital documentation amongst different stakeholders (White et al., 2021). There are connections between the e-portfolio reporting tools and the technologies of neoliberal governance, particularly the ways in which they support mechanisms of surveillance (Gallagher, 2018; Kim, 2018; Lupton & Williamson, 2017).

The concerns raised in this section are relevant to this thesis because they highlight issues of power between different stakeholders. This section also draws attention to Foucaultian notions of panoptic surveillance, whereby small numbers of subjects in positions of power can monitor and control the behaviours of larger groups (Foucault, 1995), which will be expanded upon in Chapter 3. It is important to note, power is not merely negative, rather, power is productive; it produces power/knowledge and has the capacity for pleasure (Foucault, 1980).

The Measure of Pleasure

If power has the capacity for pleasure, then there are grounds to explore the intersection further to understand the ways in which pleasure may equally orient (or reorient) the flow of power within networks. The Foucaultian concept of pleasure is discussed in depth in Chapter 3; however, as an overview Foucault (1980) suggests there is no such thing as pre-existing inherent pleasurable feelings. Rather, pleasure is a discursive construction that circulates through discourses bound within complex power networks, historically and culturally situated (Foucault, 1980). Whilst Foucault's conceptualisation of pleasure sounds fairly broad and indeed many argue so (Davidson, 2001; MacNaughton, 2005;

McWhorter, 1999; Race, 2008; Sawicki, 2010; Thrumbull, 2018), it is actually highly specific.

According to Foucault (1980), pleasure is a powerful intersection which can produce a counterattack to relations of power. This is congruent with his more general discussions on power, where he states, “Every relation of force implies at each moment a relation of power (which is in a sense a momentary expression) and every power relation makes a reference, as its effect but also as its condition of possibility” (Foucault, 1980, p. 189). Foucault (1980) discusses pleasure as a potentiality because it produces relations of power that can counter and disrupt normalisation processes, as congruent with his notion of freedom (see Chapter 3). Foucaultian pleasure challenges power; it provokes, it incites, it resists—it produces. Hence, pleasure can be understood as an exercise of freedom against certain relations of power, a complex interplay between the subject and other (as discussed in Chapter 3). However, despite the potentiality of pleasure, Foucault’s pleasure sits outside the common-sense, taken-for-granted ways of viewing pleasure in ECE.

In ECE, pleasure is situated within spontaneous warm and responsive relationships between teachers and children. Such relationships are described as both pleasurable and desirable (Atkins & Wallace, 2012; Crisp & Kringelbach, 2018; Kringelbach, 2020; Lieberman & Eisenberger, 2009; Maselko et al., 2011; Piper et al., 2012; Surtees & Delaune, in press). In Aotearoa New Zealand relationships are central to children’s learning and development (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017a, 2017b). The cornerstone being *Te Whāriki*. Many international curriculums also place value on responsive relationships between children and teachers. In Sweden, for example, teachers and children frequently spend “pleasurable time together” engaging in warm physically close relations (Cekaite & Bergnehr, 2018, p. 928). These relationships are considered central to children’s learning and wellbeing (Cekaite & Bergnehr, 2018).

Similarly, in the UK, Page (2018a) claims warm loving relationships, described as ‘professional love,’ develop through positive interactions and intentionally informed practices (Page, 2018a). Jools Page writes prolifically on the topic of professional love (Page, 2011, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017, 2018a, 2018b). She suggests professional love can be understood as a triangle of healthy love that occurs between child-parent-teacher and compliments the child-parent relationship (Page, 2018a). Emerging research in Australia also weighs in on the conversation of love in ECE being “an empowering agent in children’s wellbeing and achievement” (O’Connor et al., 2020, p. 2402). Moreover, children’s right to ‘happiness, love and understanding’ are fundamental human-rights as set out by UNCRC in recognition of the significance of emotional development in children’s early years (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commission, 2022). Pedagogies of love are primarily grounded in power/knowledge of relationship theories—attachment theory being the hallmark (see for example Bowlby, 1988, Ainsworth, 1967). Attachment theory underpins a number of ECE curriculums, such as Aotearoa New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Given the nexus between warm loving relationships and pleasure, it is no surprise to find e-portfolio engagement is often pleasurable (Beaumont-Bates, 2017; Penman, 2014; Hooker, 2019; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a). Hooker (2019) claims children, parents and grandparents all take pleasure in looking at children’s e-portfolios. She also mentions, e-portfolios have improved teachers’ enjoyment both in documenting children’s learning and reviewing it with them (Hooker, 2019). Goodman and Cherrington (2015a) suggest similar, saying children enjoy looking at their e-portfolios. They also enjoyed sharing their stories and videos with her and other children during data collection (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a).

The studies related to e-portfolios discussed above focus on such as communication practices and partnerships between parents and

teachers, rather than pleasure itself (Beaumont-Bates, 2016, 2017; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015b; Higgins & Cherrington, 2017; Hooker, 2016b; Penman, 2014). Thus, pleasure is mentioned only in relation to the broader aims of the research. As one parent stated, “The stories are captured more often, with far more pictures....and participation from children in terms of being able to see and enjoy the pictures” (Hooker, 2016, p. 230). Hence, pleasure can be argued as a readily recognisable characteristic that occurs between children and teachers as they engage in warm loving responsive relationships. Therefore, pleasure in ECE needs no explanation because of the common-sense, taken-for-grantedness of it.

Although warm loving relationships are both pleasurable and desirable the use of such words has created conflict and tension in educational discourse because it “implicates teachers both personally and professionally” (White & Gradovski, 2018, p. 201). The implications of pleasure between teachers and children has long been a source of debate with discourses, such as childhood innocence, sexuality, suspicion and protection/safety operating to silence pleasures (Piper & Sikes, 2010; Piper et al., 2012; Robinson, 2013; Tobin, 1997). A recent study by Morris (2020) reveals competing discourses has led to ECE teachers feeling they have to resort to ethical subversion to protect themselves and to balance the tension of displaying too much affection with not enough.

Morris (2020) describes ethical subversion as “acts of loving disobedience” by experienced teachers who understand the consequences of their rule-bending actions (Morris, 2020, p. 1). Such practices enable teachers to provide pleasurable responsive care to children despite policy limitations (Morris, 2020). Morris (2020) theorises ethical subversion as a “powerful phenomenon” (p, 1) that can effect positive transformation. Using a Foucaultian framework, Morris (2020) claims ethical subversions upholds a broader set of ethical principles that “challenges imperfect policy” (p. 14). This study draws from Foucault to

theorise pleasure, but only in relation to teachers' counterattacking pleasure. Children were not the focus of Morris's study, therefore, they were not included.

A few studies documenting children's resistance and subversion to power dynamics in ECE settings were discovered in my search of the literature (Tesar, 2014, 2017a, 2017b), but not in relation to pleasure. I also located two studies that explore children's pleasure as a site of resistance, but not in relation to Foucault. Instead, both studies draw on the Bakhtinian concept of carnivalesque (De Vocht, 2015; White, 2014). Therefore, I have identified a gap in the literature in relation to Foucaultian notions of pleasure in ECE. That is, the counterattacking pleasure—the pleasure one experiences in resisting and subverting normalising discourses and the pleasure in exercising power against others. Children's use of power in the production of pleasure against teachers and their peers is an area where there is no recent research nationally or internationally. Therefore, this is a topic where this thesis might offer insight.

Conclusion

Taking a Foucaultian stance, this Chapter has drawn attention to a range of discourses that have come together to form a particular way of thinking about things that are considered 'truths'. Several truths regarding the benefits of e-portfolios over the traditional hard-copy portfolios have been pointed out by key stakeholders; however, children's voices are largely absent in research to date. The literature also calls into question children's access to and ownership of their e-portfolios over the hard-copy portfolios. Several studies raise concerns over the potential for the surveillance of children and teachers through the layers of documentation stored in children's e-portfolios and in teachers' registration folders stored alongside.

Newer features that have been added to e-portfolios such as the daily routines and teaching trends also have the potential to monitor

children's and teachers' behaviour. The art of surveillance creates tension because power produces relations where subjects can be observed, monitored and trained into conforming docile subjects (Foucault, 1995). Therefore, it is possible that through the art of surveillance e-portfolios could be situated as a modern-day version of Bentham's Panopticon (see Chapter 3), crossing borders between the virtual and physical worlds.

The Chapter has drawn attention to children's participation in the e-portfolio space. However, the notion of participation produces tension due to differing worldviews, as discussed in Chapter 1. On the one hand, commentators mention the benefits of e-portfolios in relation to more democratic assessment practices, which encourage children's participation and collective involvement. On the other hand, this is negated through the creation of the neoliberal subject—*homo-economicus*, a self-interested individual who invests in itself. As pointed out, neoliberal governmentality circulates in the marketplace through e-portfolios as a vehicle for the improvement and production of *homo-economicus*.

In light of the research problem, the literature reviewed in this Chapter indicates the e-portfolio space has the potential to produce power relations in which children's rights are, at times diminished. Therefore, as Livingstone (2016) suggests, the conversation regarding digital technologies and children's rights needs to be continued. The last section of this Chapter adds to the discussion by providing possibilities for the enhancement of children's rights in this space. Focusing on discourses surrounding pleasure, as a reoccurring theme of e-portfolio literature, the section explored the concept of pleasure.

The common sense, taken-for-granted truth about pleasure in the e-portfolio space is that it is a readily recognisable feature of warm, loving relationships between children, teachers and parents. As mentioned, there is no such thing as a single, universal truth (Foucault, 1980); Foucault's concept of pleasure demonstrates this flux. Foucaultian pleasure is counterattacking pleasure, not the mutually enjoyable pleasure just described. For Foucault (1980) pleasure and power are

mutually constitutive, whereby pleasure resists, incites, evades and subverts power producing “its condition of possibility” (Foucault, 1980, p. 189). I argue my use of Foucaultian pleasure is a strength of this thesis as it opens the possibilities for new capacities of pleasure not tied to the current taken-for-granted-ness of pleasure in ECE. Examining how counterattacking pleasure might shape current discourses is important because of the freedoms that might come of it.

The following Chapter presents the Foucaultian concepts that make up the theoretical framework of this thesis and are used to answer the aims and questions of this thesis.

Chapter 3: An *Askesis* on Power and the Power of *Askesis*

The essay - which should be understood as the assay or test by which, in the game of truth, one undergoes changes, and not as the simplistic appropriation of others for the purposes of communication – is the living substance of philosophy, at least if we assume that philosophy is still what it was in times past, i.e., an “*ascesis*,” *askesis*, an exercise of oneself in the activity of thought. (Foucault, 1985, p. 9)

The title doublet symbolises this thesis as a journey—an exploration into power but also an *askesis* that has held me bound within complex power dynamics from the outset, none so byzantine as working through the intricacies of the theoretical framework. As I discovered, the complex power relations that emerged in the e-portfolio space demanded a theoretical lens that questions power and so I turned to the work of Michel Foucault. Michel Foucault (1924-1984) is described as one of the twentieth century’s most influential philosophers (Besley, 2015; Fendler, 1998; Macey, 1993; MacNaughton, 2005; M. Peters, 2007). Influenced by theories of Marxism, phenomenology, structuralism, psychoanalytic theories and the writings of German philosophers, Friedrich Nietzsche and Immanuel Kant, Foucault’s work on power has dominated the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Foucault claims his writings are not merely about power, they are a history of how power constitutes individuals as subjects, whilst they simultaneously exercise power in the production of discourses (Foucault, 1980, 1984b, 1995). In an interview prior to his death, Foucault (1982) states:

I would like to say, first of all, what has been the goal of my work during the last twenty years. It has not been to analyse the phenomena of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects. (p. 777)

Foucault's history led to the identification of three modes of objectification: dividing practices, scientific classification and subjectification (Foucault, 2002). Foucault's mode of subjectification is significant to this study because subjectification is concerned with "the way a human being turns him - or herself into a subject" (Foucault, 2002, p. 327). What Foucault directs us to is "the constitution of the subject as an object for himself," the internal processes or "technologies of the self" in which "the subject is led to observe himself, analyse himself, interpret himself, recognise himself as a domain of possible knowledge" (Foucault, 2002, p. 461). Subjectification focuses on the processes whereby a person is active and self-forming (Foucault, 1984b).

Subjectification, like many of Foucault's concepts, has a composite understanding, insofar as creating subject positions but also being tied to one's own identity as a process of self-formation. Self-formation, or the point of contact between self and power (Ball, 2016), occurs by the desire to change oneself into something one was not before (Skinner, 2013). What Ball (2016) and Skinner (2013) draw our attention to is the Foucaultian notion of freedom, I return to this concept later in the Chapter. What I want to develop is the importance of the mode of subjectification (and objectification) to this thesis. The processes of subjectification relevant for demonstrating how a person's subjectivities can be manipulated through disciplinary processes that penetrate to the very core of one's subjectivity.

Objectification and subjectification are inescapable dynamic processes that every human-being is constituted and constitutes themselves through when defining who they are as a person (Foucault, 2002). My interest in these processes lies in the potential for their dynamics to expose the disciplining of subjects through normalising discourses that circulate in the e-portfolio space.

Foucault's *askesis* on power continues to influence twenty-first century thinking and his ideas have been influential in my own *askesis* throughout this journey. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Foucault's work has played a significant role in shaping the research questions and aims of the study. In this Chapter I discuss the Foucaultian concepts that come together to make up the theoretical framework. Foucault's concepts are used to understand the ways in which power silently permeates everything we do and say, constituting us through dynamic processes as self-forming subjects. Two-fold, power circulates through dominant discourses to subjugate and silence children's and teachers' bodies. Equally, there is the potential to resist and subvert power dynamics through pleasure as an exercise of freedom. As discussed in Chapter 2, Foucault's conceptualisation of pleasure can produce relations of power that create "possibilities" (Foucault, 1982, p. 788) for resistance and in doing so produces new power/knowledge. Such undetermined "possibilities" (Foucault, 1982, p. 788) have the potential to shape existing discourses and discursive practices.

Foucault's ideas have not only been instrumental in moving this thesis forward but also as an investigation into how I might think differently. For Foucault (1984b), the pathway to thinking differently is a process of self-formation—"the work of Freedom" (p. 46). My work of freedom in this Chapter is in revealing my game of truth, that is, my justification for using a Foucaultian framework in this thesis. Foucault's theories have been applied widely to educational contexts in diverse ways. For example, Gore (1998) uses Foucault's analytics of power to examine the micro-level of power operating in school classrooms; MacNaughton

(2005) makes tactical use of knowledge to disrupt regimes of truth in ECE; and Tesar (2014, 2017a, 2017b) draws on Foucault's work to discuss children's power, resistance and subjectivities in ECE.

As discussed in Chapter 2, there is a dearth of literature drawing on Foucaultian theory to explore the ways in which power circulates through neoliberal governance in *'the e-portfolio space'*. There is also a dearth of literature exploring the ways children exercise Foucaultian pleasure as the work of freedom—a counterattack to the dominant hegemonic neoliberal discourses. I say hegemonic because neoliberal ideologies dominate governance systems of ECE internationally (Chomsky, 2016; Peters & Tesar, 2018; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a; Sims, 2017, 2020). I argue it is significant to find out how the individual subject is produced through these discourses if we are to better understand freedom and pleasure might counterattack these discourses.

The thesis draws on key Foucaultian concepts as a result of ongoing reading of his work and my engagement with the data. In retrospect, the concepts I have chosen are far more complex than I could have discussed in any one Chapter. However, Foucault has opened my mind to considering other ways of thinking, ultimately shifting this thesis in directions I had not previously considered.

Theoretical Networks of Power

This rest of this Chapter explains how Foucault's concepts come together to form the theoretical networks of power that frames this thesis—my work of freedom. To recap, power is not something someone innately has, power is exercised in relations of power with other subjects, only existing in action, through discourses and within specific historical contexts (Foucault, 1980, 1995). During these relationships neither subject is in complete control, rather they are constituted and reconstituted through the discursive practices they participate in (Foucault, 1995; McWhorter, 1999). Consequently, relations of power in the e-portfolio space are

considered multi-dimensional and tangled, rather than separate and distinct.

In Foucaultian theory, power is a concept that never stands alone, necessitating it be analysed in relation to power/knowledge and truths that constitute and are constituted by institutions, political contexts, ideologies and government. Such mechanisms of power are macro-level structures that inform this thesis because they govern the bodies of subjects in the micro-level (Foucault et al., 1991; Foucault & Senellart, 2010). The bodies I am talking about here are the children and teachers who engage in the e-portfolio space—a micro-level structure.

Power/Knowledge

Power/knowledge circulates through discourses structuring and regulating what statements can be said and under what conditions they are ‘true or false’ (Foucault, 1994b, 2000). Exercising power over others leads to the conditions that make it possible to identify and define what is ‘objective and subjective,’ ‘true or false,’ ‘normal or abnormal’ and ‘good and bad’ behaviours. As a composite term, power/knowledge *pouvoir-savior* has no clear source, instead it requires a genealogical analysis (Feder, 2014). As Foucault (2000) observes, genealogy is an investigation of the historical conditions in which certain relations of power come to be known as knowledge and truth.

‘*Pouvoir*’ translated from the French word, means ‘power’ (Feder, 2014). As a noun power is typically understood as a force; however, as an infinite verb it means “to be able to” or “can” (Feder, 2014, p. 35). Hence, power is both a force and a “potentiality, capacity or capability” (Feder, 2014, p. 35). Foucault (1980) states:

Power in the substantive sense, ‘*le*’ *pouvoir*, doesn’t exist.... The idea that there is either located at – or emanating from – a given point something which is ‘power’ seems to me to be based on a misguided

analysis.... In reality power means relations, a more-or-less organised, hierarchical, co-ordinated cluster of relations (p. 198).

What Foucault directs us to is that power should not be thought of within the constraints of the old monarchical form, “sovereign” power, whereby power is something one possess and exerts over others (Foucault, 1995). He also urges us not to think of power purely in the sense of it being negative, just as productive is not necessarily positive (Foucault, 1976). The constitutive dynamics that are produced are neither pre-determined as inherently positive or negative, but are produced, nonetheless. Foucault wants us to consider power as coming from everywhere (Foucault, 1976).

Power circulates through individuals and groups of people, customs, culture and institutions (Foucault, 1995). Therefore power can be understood as unstable, fluctuating, reversible over time and through history (Feder, 2014). As Foucault (1995) observes:

we must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it “excludes,” it “represses,” it “censors,” it “abstracts,” it “masks,” it “conceals.” In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production. (p. 194)

Reading this passage led me to consider the ‘rituals of truth’ that are produced in the e-portfolio space and ask myself the following questions: What discourses underpin such power dynamics and how do they shape the behaviour and subjectivities of the bodies who inhabit this space? What knowledge belong to this production? It may seem as if I am accumulating a great many questions along the way and admittedly, I

have a great many more than when I first began. However, what would be the point in going on if the outcome is only a “certain amount of knowledgeableness” (Foucault, 1985, p. 8). One of the most significant ways new knowledge is constituted is through the asking of questions (Feder, 2014). Thus, my work of freedom in this thesis ‘produces’ possibilities of new knowledge and the production of new truths.

Foucault articulates two types of knowledge in his genealogical writings, *savoir* and *connaissance*. *Savoir* refers to the process whereby subjects are created through particular implicit knowledge that is culturally and historically formed within a specific time/place/group of people. Hence, it forms the common-sense knowledge and taken-for-granted views of the world that are accepted as truth (Foucault, 1972). ‘*Savoir*’ shapes the *connaissance*, the explicit knowledge that is “institutionalised” (Foucault, 1972, p. 178) in the disciplines that make up the human sciences (Feder, 2014).

Institutionalised knowledge is the knowledge formed through passive voice, that is, the common sense taken-for-granted knowledge “recognised as true” (Feder, 2014, p. 56), rather than decreed by any one authoritative body. Such knowledge can only occur within power arrangements that have no definitive origin, and no specific ‘body’ can be said to “have” it (Feder, 2014, p. 56). *Pouvoir-savoir* then, can be understood as “being able to do something – only as you are able to make sense of it” (Spivak, 1993, p. 34). The concept of power/knowledge in this thesis helps to uncover the dominant discourses that form the institutionalised truths that are normalised in the e-portfolio space.

The Subject of Discourse

Power/knowledge is in a constant flux, shifting through discourses, rather than static states (Foucault, 1972). However, like much of Foucault’s work his notions of discourse have been problematised due to the shifting range of meanings identified in his works. During his ‘archaeological’ writings Foucault (1972) treats discourses as the ‘rules’

for the regulation of subjects' bodies by setting the code of conduct. During this period, discourses appeared to exist beyond the social context and independent from subjects (Foucault, 1972). They defined the conditions through which subjects can exist as moral beings and as intentional thinking and acting subjects of knowledge (Foucault, 1972). Hence, discourses are structured determining who the subject is whilst simultaneously regulating the ways in which the subject sees itself in relation to the world (Foucault, 1972).

In Foucault's (1972) later genealogical works his thinking shifts from discourses existing independently to discourses as being rooted in the discursive and non-discursive practices of social relations and the institutional activities of organisations. As Foucault (1972) observes, discourses are structured rule-bounded systems of statements that identify who can say what, where and how, appearing as discursive and non-discursive practices (Foucault, 1972). Foucault's thinking during this period emphasises the subject within discourse as not independent of it, because the discursive practices of subjects cannot be separated from their speech and actions (Caldwell, 2007). Therefore, he took the vantage point of viewing both the subject as constituted within discourses and discourses as a form of power/knowledge (Foucault, 2000).

Foucault's genealogical conceptualisations of discourse are relevant to the thesis. A genealogical analysis enables me to explore how the subject appears in discourse and the rules in which the subject is constituted. Foucault's ideas are salient across the findings and analysis Chapters as I explore the discursive truths of teachers in the e-portfolios space. Teachers' truths are constituted through discourses as:

manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body....There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourse of truth which operate through and on the basis of this association. (Foucault, 1980, p. 93)

The significance of discourses is that they circulate to govern the desired and normal ways of thinking, feeling and acting in the world (MacNaughton, 2005). However, although discourses operate to regulate and govern subjects' bodies, Foucault (1982) argues there are possibilities to resist normalisation. Challenging discourses involves carrying out the work of freedom.

Freedom and Power

One must observe that there cannot be relations of power unless the subjects are free. If one or the other were completely at the disposition of the other and became his thing, an object on which he can exercise an infinite and unlimited violence, there would not be relations of power. In order to exercise a relation of power, there must be on both sides at least a certain form of liberty. (Foucault, 1994a, p. 12)

What Foucault is directing us to is that freedom, like his other key concepts, only exists within power relations. Freedom cannot exist outside of power because it is produced as an effect of it, and only insofar as subjects are free (Foucault, 1982). Freedom, for example cannot exist within hierarchical forms of power such as "sovereign" power because the sovereign has "absolute power" over subjects' bodies (Foucault, 1995, p. 48). The graphic and gruesome execution of Robert Francois Damiens in 1757 in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of a Prison* (Foucault, 1995), highlights this relationship of power, whereby total dominance of one is exacted over another. In the case of Damiens, power was executed upon his body, not to modify his actions but to demonstrate the complete power of the sovereign, where no relation of power existed and there was no escape into freedom (Foucault, 1982). As Foucault (1982) claims, there are no relations of power "without points of insubordination which, by definition, are means of escape" (p. 794).

In *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1995), Foucault documents this 'escape' from sovereign power during the eighteenth century to the use of disciplinary power. As he details, what is central to modern forms of power, "is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future" (Foucault, 1982, p. 789). Two features are crucial for this relationship to exist. First, power is always an exercise involving an 'other,' that is, the subject who is acted upon. Second, the subject who is acted upon is recognised as an actor—a subject who will respond in an 'undetermined' way (Foucault, 1892).

What Foucault wants us to recognise though, is that power is not merely the relationship between subjects, it is the ways in which particular actions modify the actions of others (Foucault, 1982). Disciplinary power demonstrates this relationship. Disciplinary power circulates through discourses to produce ideal types of subjects whilst simultaneously making subjects think about themselves in a particular way (Foucault, 1995). This is where freedom comes into play, because although disciplinary power creates conformity through normalisation processes, the subject acted upon is free in the sense that they can respond in an undetermined way. Thus, the relationship between power and freedom must be understood as the complex interplay between subjects as power is *exercised* (Foucault, 1982).

For Foucault (1982), power is not understood as mutually exclusive. Instead, power and freedom are "an 'agonism' (a combat)—of a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle, less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation" (Foucault, 1982, p. 790). Foucault's concept of genealogy is useful to draw from at this point because genealogy invites us to consider the constitutional forces of discourses (Mendieta, 2014). As Foucault (1984b) states:

This critique will be genealogical in the sense that it will not deduce from the form of what we are what it is impossible for us to do and to know; but it will separate out, from the contingency that has made us what we are, the possibility of no longer being, doing, or thinking what we are, do, or think....it is seeking to give new impetus, as far and wide as possible, to the undefined work of freedom. (p. 46)

As the work of freedom, genealogy is an investigation into making cognisant those events that have led us to constitute ourselves into a certain type of subject, and in doing so open the possibility to do, think and act differently. Freedom moves us beyond relations of power that constrain us as objects of its exercise. Freedom is an impetus, compelling us to exercise power over ourselves and others in the constitution of ourselves as something we were not before—“to grasp the points where change is possible and desirable and to determine the precise form this change may take” (Foucault, 1984b, p. 47). This brings me to another point relevant to this thesis. These relationships of power and freedom that Foucault wants us to notice are exercised at the level of the individual, penetrating to the very core of subjects’ bodies (although power operates at every level). Contemplating relations of power means considering what sort of subjects we want to be, what subject positions are available, and how we might shape current constructions of subject positions through practices of freedom.

Subject positions are discursive constructions related to a ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ way of being within a particular cultural context. They enable subjects to exercise power in a certain way but change depending on the position one is assuming in the relationship (Feder, 2014). As a discursive construction, subject positions are made available through dominant discourses as the common-sense way to think and act. The notion of subject positions is an important consideration for the relationship

between power and freedom because 'we' as subjects are not only made through discourses, we make ourselves. As Foucault (1982) observes, when a subject is "faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions may open up" (Foucault, 1982, p. 789). Freedom, as Foucault (1982) argues is the point of power in which it becomes an agonism. May (2014) suggests the struggle for freedom "is not guaranteed to us. It can only be approached through experimentation and historically informed reflection" (p. 80-81).

The work of freedom in this thesis is understood as the ways in which children resist and subvert power in the production of pleasure (see Chapter 7). It is argued that children's work of freedom opens new ways of thinking about power and pleasure in relation to others and their lives. The work of freedom is also undertaken by me in relation to the constitution of my own body, that is, how I have come to think differently by challenging my own truths, as a free-thinking subject. I argue the use of Foucault's conceptualisation of freedom is a strength of this thesis because it offers hope for the production of new knowledge and truths about e-portfolios. These truths might challenge existing power/knowledge and the possibilities that may come of it are new forms of freedom.

Truth

Just as freedom is connected to power, power is inseparable from truth, bound within complex networks of power in human societies (Foucault, 1980). As Foucault (1980) observes:

Truth isn't the reward of free spirits ... nor the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves. Truth is a thing of this world: It is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its own regime of truth,

its "general politics" of truth: that is, the type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true. (p. 131)

The quote reveals the interactional aspects of freedom bound within the truths inherently linked to power/knowledge of dominant discourses. As Foucault (1980) observes, truth circulates through power networks, it constitutes what knowledge is truth and then holds that knowledge in place through power. The concepts knowledge/power and truth are linked to circulatory systems of power which “produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it” (Foucault, 1980, p. 133). Hence, truths can be difficult to challenge as they are circular relations tied to dominant discourses that normalise them (Foucault, 1980). Foucault (1980) claims truth can “be understood as a system of set procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operations of statements” (Foucault, 1980, p. 133). As such, truths become embedded in the multiple layers that make up the social world of a group of people (MacNaughton, 2005; McWhorter, 1999).

Once truths are produced, they form the power/knowledge known within their specific fields as regimes of truth. In ECE, regimes of truths are partially formed by dominant discourses that guide teachers on how to think, feel and act in order to be a good teacher (MacNaughton, 2005). Regimes of truth are also partially constructed by one’s own beliefs, values and subjectivities. These regimes do not just occur, they are produced within the conflict of teachers’ actions, feelings and thoughts within power networks (MacNaughton, 2005). Consequently, teachers’ truths play a significant role in how and what they ‘do and say’ in the e-portfolio space because power/knowledge and truth produce constructions of the good teacher.

Using Foucaultian theory to expand on my discussion, the construction of the good teacher is constituted through multiple discourses, historically and culturally located. For example, new ways of thinking about children and childhood during the latter part of the

twentieth century led to the establishment of documents that govern and regulate the ECE sector⁹. Wider external bodies of governance, such as the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand¹⁰ have also contributed to constructions of the good teacher (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2021). The Council has developed a code of professional responsibility titled ‘*Our Code, Our Standards*’ (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2021). The Code combines and replaces the former *ECE Code of Ethics* and the *Practising Teacher Criteria*, establishing the discourse for teaching standards in Aotearoa New Zealand (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2021).

The dominant discourses above establish certain truths about teachers, situating them as both objects and subjects in the constitution of their teacher subjectivities. This occurs through objectification and subjectification processes in which subjects are produced through discourses whilst simultaneously objects for the construction of knowledge (Foucault, 2002). Objectification produces ideal types and is an external process in which something or someone is objectified or made into an object for study (Skinner, 2013). Like Foucault’s other concepts, objectification must be considered within its social and historical contexts.

Objectification connects with ‘technologies of power’ as they “determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivising of the subject” (Foucault, 1988b, p. 18). ‘Technologies of the self,’ on the other hand, connect with the processes of subjectification or self-formation because they:

⁹ Regulatory ECE documents in Aotearoa New Zealand: *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b), *Education Early Childhood Services Regulations* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2008), *Quality in action: Te mahi whai hua: Implementing the revised statement of desirable objectives and practices in New Zealand early childhood services* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1998), *Kei tua o te pa: Assessment for learning: Early childhood exemplars* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2004), *ECE Code of Ethics* (Education Council New Zealand - Matatū Aotearoa, 2017).

¹⁰ Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand: formerly the Education Council New Zealand - Matatū Aotearoa.

permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. (Foucault, 1988b, p. 18)

I emphasise the interconnectedness of objectification and subjectification here because whilst objectification produces constructions of the good teacher in Aotearoa New Zealand, one must also consider that subjectification is the internalisation of power. Teachers are encouraged, through dominant discourses as truth to behave in ways that represent a good teacher depending on epoch/country/cultural context. Hence, self-formation, the production of oneself as a subject, as discussed earlier in the Chapter, requires ongoing engagement with what type of good teacher one *wants* be.

My use of italics for the word *wants* is to draw attention to normalisation processes because normalisation reduces one's ability to think there might be alternate ways of being a good teacher, it renders one 'docile' (explained further in the next section). As discussed in Chapter 1, neoliberal ideology is a pervasive means of regulating and governing populations into thinking 'there is no alternative' (Hamann, 2009; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a, 2021b). Hence, through neoliberal technologies of governance a teacher *wants* to be a good teacher as constituted by neoliberal subject positions available to them. In Foucaultian terms, the individual is not powerful per se, rather it is the subject positions the individual takes up that enables certain relations of power to be exercised (Feder, 2014).

The significance of truths is that they offer "the terms that make self-recognition possible," that is, the way we realise ourselves through the discourses we espouse as truth (Butler, 2005, p. 22). Such processes

produce subjectivities about what it means to be a good teacher (and good child). Hence, the subject and subjectivities of the good teacher are produced through dominant discourses and complex power arrangements. The social construction of the good teacher also simultaneously produces the conditions for the construction of the good child. The nexus between the good teacher and good child forms the basis of Chapter 5 and 6. These Findings Chapters demonstrate the ways teachers, guided by their truths, discipline children's bodies through normalising discourses that allow limited augmentation for alternate truths.

I draw attention back to the historical and cultural construction of truths which is central to Foucault's discussion on power/knowledge. Teachers' and children's subjectivities in this study are different to those held prior to paradigm shifts in the mid-1990s. The paradigm shift I am referring to, as discussed in Chapter 2, are the dominant discourses guided by child development knowledge of the twentieth century. The dominant discourses of the time constituted the good teacher by defining the practices a good teacher engaged in, such as developmentally appropriate practice and summative assessment (Anning et al., 2004; Te One, 2003a). Power/knowledge also shaped the ways children were viewed during this time, as becomings rather than beings. However, the increasing adoption of neoliberal ideology has been influential in shaping the subject as *homo economicus* in which the good teacher and good child are now positioned. To recap, the *homo economicus* is an entrepreneur of himself, a product of neoliberal governmentality, which situates the responsibility of one's success squarely in the hands of the individual (Foucault et al., 2008). As Sims (2021) claims, individuals are expected to succeed (in terms of wealth) with little or no state intervention. Those who fail to realise their potential can only blame themselves (Hamann, 2009).

In Foucault's widely acclaimed lectures at the Collège de France during 1978-79, he describes the shift in views of the subject of *homo*

economicus from classical economic liberalism to neoliberalism. In classical economic liberalism the *homo economicus* is one whose needs are gratified through exchange, whereby the *homo economicus* is positioned in neoliberalism as an entrepreneur of himself (Brown, 2015). In producing the *homo economicus*, neoliberal governance promotes a culture that fosters both individualism and conformity (Brown, 2015). Individualism is a governance through individual responsibility. As Brown and Baker (2012) state, “Responsible citizens are proactive paragons of civic engagement, enhancing the social fabric and selflessly crafting themselves, their families and their neighbourhoods to achieve greater economic independence, social capital and well-being” (p. 3). What we see here is the nexus between the individual, who is both one and the same, constituted within networks of power and a self-forming individual. Therefore, although individualism implies the subject acts independently, social-historical conditioning defines all modes of subjectivity (Foucault, 1980, 1984b).

This section has outlined how Foucault’s key concepts are inextricably bound. I argue that examining how truths circulate to normalise subjects’ bodies has the potential to unmask the ways in which power circulates to constrain children’s and teachers’ bodies in the e-portfolio space. The consequence of these relations of power is the production of docile subjects. Children and teachers willingly giving themselves up to power/knowledge relations not because they see themselves as constrained but because they are capable of exercising power over themselves as well as exercising power over others. Equally, power can be enabling, exercised as freedom, as discussed earlier in the Chapter.

As Foucault (1988a) states, “If I feel the truth about myself, it is in part that I am constituted as a subject across a number of power relations which are exercised over me and which I exercise over others” (p. 39). What Foucault (1988a) is describing is disciplinary power. Disciplinary power constructs everybody in some way, but “what is essential in all

power is that ultimately its point of application is always the body” (Foucault, 2006, p. 14).

Disciplinary Power

Disciplinary power focuses on the bodies of individuals (Foucault, 1995). As Foucault claims, “We are never dealing with a mass, with a group, or even, to tell the truth, with a multiplicity: we are only ever dealing with individuals” (Foucault, 2006, p. 75). To point out, all forms of power act on the bodies of individuals in one way or another. One only needs to think of “sovereign” power in relation to the execution of Damians to be reminded of its effect on the body of an individual. However, what Foucault (1995) directs us to in disciplinary power are highly complex relations of power in which the subject is constituted. This form of power replaced the old “sovereign” power of the monarchy. Sovereign power depended on the public space and the power of the “spectacle” for the control of its subjects (Foucault, 1995, p. 32). The public execution was a “juridico-political function” (Foucault, 1995, p. 48), insofar as a ceremonial act that enabled the injured sovereign to be reconstituted. The spectacle had to be carried out in the public space because it needed subjects to see the absolute power of the sovereign (Foucault, 1995).

Disciplinary power, on the other hand, operates by universal surveillance (Foucault, 1995). Disciplinary power “does away with the notion of public space; Power no longer appears, it is hidden, but the lives of all subjects are now under scrutiny” (Taylor, 1984, p. 157). As already discussed, power operates through normalising discourses to produce particular kinds of subjects. The individual is produced through power, rather than the raw material that it acts upon (Foucault, 1995). Foucault (1995) claims, “Discipline ‘makes’ individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals as objects and as instruments of its exercise” (p. 170). This involves increasing the body’s skills without simultaneously allowing the development of these skills to serve as a source for resistance (Hoffman, 2014). Disciplinary power makes the

body “more obedient as it becomes more useful” (Foucault, 1995, p. 138). It reduces the possibilities for resistance to serve as the point in which one might alter and destabilise established truths.

Disciplinary power circulates in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand through neoliberal modes of governance that guide the sector. As such, teachers work in ways to increase children’s capacities as future economic citizens by supporting individualism, agency, choice and freedom. As mentioned in Chapter 1, neoliberal governmentality “is not to force people to do what the governor wants” (Foucault, 1993, p. 203). It uses just enough force so that subjects adopt neoliberal ideals as if they are of one’s free choosing (Foucault, 1993). This links back to my earlier discussion on the inseparable connection between power and freedom because disciplinary power operates through political and economic subjection. It governs subjects into the ‘right’ ways of thinking and behaving but subjects are free “in the sense that they are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments, may be realized” (p. 790). In other words, disciplinary power produces relations of power in which there are ‘undetermined’ possibilities for freedom (Foucault, 1984b).

Foucault (1995) attributes three specific disciplinary techniques to the success of disciplining power: hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and the examination. The next section looks at the ways in which these disciplinary techniques provide the conditions for which ‘technologies of power’ and ‘technologies of self’ come together in the production of specific kinds of bodies in the e-portfolio space.

Hierarchical observation

A central feature of hierarchal observation is the ‘art of distribution’ as it renders individuals ‘visible’ (Foucault, 1995). Visibility holds subjects in a mechanism of power through the invisibility that disciplinary power produces through a mechanism of objectification (Foucault, 1995). The purpose of total individualised visibility is to restructure behaviour to

produce utility and docility (Foucault, 1995). The art of distribution is most famous in the spatial ordering of individuals in Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon (Foucault, 1995, 2008). The Panopticon is a ring-shaped building made up of single cells. At the centre of the Panopticon stands a tower. Each cell houses one prisoner and has two windows, one facing towards the centre and one on the opposing side. This arrangement guarantees light can filter from one side of the cell to the other, ensuring the prisoner can be seen at all times. The tower houses a guard who is stationed to observe and monitor the prisoners (Foucault, 1995).

The Panopticon is not only a prison that contains criminals, but also a laboratory (Foucault, 2009). It can be used to assess and classify, to experiment and observe, and to train and correct the behaviour of prisoners (Foucault, 1995, 2008). What makes visibility possible in these laboratories are the hierarchical networks of certain groups that inhabit particular spaces (Foucault & Rabinow, 1984). A hierarchical structure makes it possible for mechanisms of surveillance to operate efficiently. Foucault (2006) uses a nineteenth century asylum to illustrate his point. Surveillance circulates not only through the doctor, but also the supervisors who report back to the doctor on patients. Servants can also gather information on the patients and report back to supervisors/and doctor. Whilst the asylum gives the impression of a top-down approach, what Foucault wants us to take note of is the hierarchical character. In the case of the servants, it is possible for hierarchical observation to act conversely, and laterally for that matter "...supervisors, perpetually supervised" (Foucault, 1995, p. 177).

As Hoffman (2014) claims, architecture alone does not render the individual totally see-able (Hoffman, 2104). The objective of Bentham's Panopticon is "internalisation" of the authoritative gaze whereby an individual:

subjected to a field of visibility ... assumes responsibility
for the constraints of power; he makes them play

spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (Foucault, 1995, pp. 202-203)

Foucault (2008) claims the Panopticon is a “marvellous machine” (p. 7), a perfect functioning mechanism of power due to the internal mechanisms in which individuals are caught up in. For example, the arrangement and distribution of bodies, the surfaces, the lights and gazes all render the subject visible (Foucault, 2008). Disciplinary power hinges on the subjects’ internal negotiation of discourses that are externally normalised, hence the panopticon becomes something inside us. As discussed in the previous section, teachers’ performance is regulated by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Council is the external governing body that sets the standard for effective teaching in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Teachers internalise these standards and behave in ways that meet these expectations as a process of objectification and subjectification. Therefore, although power focuses on the bodies of individuals, it is also distributed insofar as every individual is both watched and trained to watch himself (Hoffman, 2014). The art of distribution ensures a hierarchical visibility of individuals, enabling normalising judgement to be made.

Normalising judgement

Foucault (1995) claims, for disciplinary power to function, some sort of judgement must be made because merely seeing subjects is not enough. Thus, disciplinary power depends on normalising judgement to perpetuate its existence (Foucault, 1995). As identified earlier in this Chapter, norms seek to homogenise a group by categorising subjects within specific norms (Foucault, 1995). Revealing a subject’s differences as deviations, it simultaneously renders a subject individualised by illustrating the degree of deviation (McWhorter, 1999). Normalisation, the

processes that renders a subject docile, is a pervasive means of ordering groups for the purpose of obtaining information to intervene, restructure and improve future individuals (McWhorter1999).

Foucault (1995) claims normalising judgement uses punishment to restructure and improve subjects. First, even small departures from the desired behaviour are punished:

By the word of punishment, one must understand everything that is capable of making children feel the offence they have committed, everything that is capable of humiliating them...a certain coldness, a certain indifference, a question, a humiliation, a removal from office. (la Salle, as cited in Foucault, 1995, p 178)

Second, behaviour that does not measure up to the established rules is punishable. Third, to reduce gaps, punishment is corrected, typically in the form of exercise, insofar as training that is continuously repeated and intensified. Fourth, gratification is added to regimes of punishment to establish good and bad subjects. And lastly, ranking subjects. Ranking subjects plays a dual role because whilst it identifies gaps, it sets hierarchical relationships between those who have developed the skills, qualities and attitudes in line with norms and those who have not. Hence it is both a form of punishment and reward. What Foucault is drawing our attention to is the establishment of the norm (Foucault, 1995).

The establishment of norms is important to the thesis, because normalisation constitute what counts as normal in the e-portfolio space. Thus, normalisation subjugates and silences other ways of being. However, in order to identify what is defined as normal some sort of examination takes place. The examination is Foucault's disciplinary technique and combines with the techniques of hierarchical observation and normalising judgement (Foucault, 1995).

Examination

The examination situates individuals in mechanisms of surveillance where they are documented and individualised (Foucault, 1995). It induces and extends, “the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected” (Foucault, 1995, p. 184-185). The constitution of individuality through the examination operates through activities that lead to layers of documentation about a particular subject (Foucault, 1995). This documentation makes it possible to describe the individual, to track their development and to monitor and compare them to other subjects (Foucault, 1995). Individuality creates the subject as a ‘case’ to be studied creating individual status through the identification of specific “features,” “measurements,” “gaps” and “marks” (Foucault, 1995, p. 192). These feature prominently in Chapter 6.

The disciplining of subject’s bodies in the e-portfolio space can be thought of as two-fold. First, children’s bodies can be objectified in this space, subjected to disciplinary techniques regarding their thoughts, speech and actions. Second, children can be objectified through their individual e-portfolios because these hold a collection of documents on their learning and development. To recap, e-portfolios are filled with learning stories, photographs, videos, anecdotal observations and children’s and parents’ contributions in line with formative assessment in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Whilst formative assessment documentation focuses on what children can do, McWhorter (1999) reminds us, everyone is constructed within processes of normalisation, insofar as “there is no pure difference, only measurable deviance” (p. 156). Therefore, e-portfolios and the e-portfolio space could potentially be thought of as the ‘examination’ because they can reveal the ways children’s bodies are meticulously and continuously trained into ideal bodies. As discussed in Chapter 2, the literature also shows the potential for teachers’ bodies to be disciplined

in the space due to the standardisation and accountability features of e-portfolios systems. I return to this in the substantive Chapters.

The circulation of power caused me to consider the ways in which power constructs the subjectivities of other bodies in the e-portfolio space, in particular my body. Disciplinary power circulated to classify me as a ‘case’ to be objectified—the doctoral student. I was objectified and disciplined through the gazes of children, teachers and parents as I carried out the practical side of data collection as discussed in the Findings Chapters. I was also a ‘case’ to be objectified by my doctoral supervisors and institution. Their normalising gazes as aligning with institutionalised standards and dominant discourses, as well as wider institutional factors, such as regular meetings, progress reports, conferences and so forth operating to ‘train’ me. These overlapping networks of surveillance ultimately culminating to the examination of this thesis and the following viva that will measure my knowledge, identify gaps and make judgement on whether I deserve the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Such disciplining has led to my body in pain; although, intermittently marked by moments of my body in pleasure.

Situating Bodies

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault discusses Descartes’s concept of the body as a machine during the last part of the eighteenth century marking the beginning of the shift in thinking from the body as a machine to the body as an organism (Foucault, 1995). It is the emergence of this new kind of body, the ‘natural’ body, that Foucault finds worthy of dominating the second half of *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1995). He uses the example of Guibert, a fervent disciplinary of soldiers, to detail how the notion of natural bodies gradually replaced mechanical bodies. Foucault (1995) explains:

Through this technique of subjection a new object was being formed; slowly, it superseded the mechanical body

– the body composed of solids and assigned movements....This new object is the natural body susceptible to specific operations, which have their order, their stages, their internal conditions, their constitutive elements. (p. 155)

The technique of subjection Foucault refers to is disciplinary power (Foucault, 1995). This marks the historical moment of the disciplines when the “art of the human body was born” (Foucault, 1995, p. 137). However, the disciplines do not solely focus on the growth of the body’s skills, nor the intensification of its subjection, it is about how the body can be made more obedient and more useful (Foucault, 1995). As is argued, it is made possible through a mechanics of power—those techniques that have a “hold over others’ bodies, not, so as they can do as one wishes but so they can operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed, and the efficiency that one determines” (Foucault & Rabinow, 1984, p. 182). Hence, disciplinary power leads to the construction of docile bodies (Foucault, 1995; Foucault & Rabinow, 1984). At the centre of the notion of docility is the connection between the analysable body and the manipulable. As Foucault (1995) observes the natural body is docile, because it can be “subjected, used, transformed and improved” (p. 136).

Bodies are significant in this thesis because power circulates in the e-portfolio space to discipline the bodies of children and teachers into specific kinds of bodies. It is the natural bodies I study, the bodies that are shaped through the mechanisms of power that circulate to discipline them in the e-portfolio space. As McWhorter (1999) claims,

Once bodies are conceived as temporally unfolding sets of functions, it becomes possible to study those processes and learn not only how to influence them but also, and far more importantly, how to draw on their own inherent

energy and power to do so. A machine must be set in motion, but an organism is always already in motion and only needs to be directed. (p. 155)

Natural bodies are always/already active, they are biological and socially constructed and are shaped and constrained by society (Leavitt & Power, 1997). I'm talking specifically about "the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (Foucault, 1980, p. 39). Focusing on disciplinary power in the e-portfolio space is useful to the task of understanding the complex ways children and teachers are constituted in the e-portfolio space. That is, the ways in which, during their day-to-day interactions, power acts upon their bodies to dominate, regulate and manipulate their gestures, behaviours and subjectivities.

Positioning bodies as natural bodies in this thesis produces some degree of tension with my own body—I am straying from myself here because I am constituted within the discourses of Cartesian mind body dualism. As is the case with normalisation, not only did I not notice my embedded Cartesian thinking while exploring an alternate way of thinking, it is also a struggle to think beyond it. One only needs to think of the phrase 'being of sound mind' regardless what state the body is in, to understand how tightly we are bound to the notion of the mind body dualism (McWhorter, 1999). However, as Foucault (1985) asserts:

What would be the value of the passion for knowledge if it only resulted in a certain amount of knowledgeableness and not, in one way or another and to the extent possible, in the knower's straying afield of himself? There are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than

one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all. (p. 8)

This seems sensible, after all, why 'go on' if I am only going to validate knowledge I already know, or at least think I know? Therefore, I accepted Foucault's challenge and strayed afield of myself. Positioning bodies as natural—manipulatable and pliable has the potential to reveal how bodies are produced through disciplinary power and its primary mechanism of normalisation. It also has the potential to reveal how these same bodies might resist normalising discourses as the work of freedom. Foucault (1995) claims resistance to normalisation is exercised through dynamic relations of power whereby pleasure is understood as an act of freedom. The following section explains Foucaultian pleasure which is the final concept that forms the theoretical framework of this thesis.

Foucaultian Pleasure

Pleasure is something that passes from one individual to another; it is not a secretion of identity. Pleasure has no passport, no identity card. (Foucault, as cited in Davidson, 2001, p. 213).

The concept of pleasure that is articulated in this thesis is that of Foucault. For Foucault (1980), pleasure is a discursive construction that occurs in relations with others and in complex power networks, inherently linked to power. However, commentators claim Foucault's broad conceptualisation of pleasure is problematic because he does not precisely define what pleasure is (Davidson, 2001; MacNaughton, 2005; McWhorter, 1999; Race, 2008; Sawicki, 2010; Thrumbull, 2018). Nonetheless, Foucault (1985) claims his interest lies in theorising how pleasure operates within networks of power, not with the specific origins of it. His ambivalent descriptions of pleasure are also due to substantial developments in his thinking over the course of his works (Foucault,

1984a, 1986, 1990, 1998). In this thinking, pleasure shifts from being constructed within regimes of sexuality to producing new capacities for pleasure through transformative practices that are not limited to sex (Foucault, 1984a, 1986, 1990, 1998). Throughout his work on pleasure, two aspects remain constant. First, pleasure always occurs within relations of power. Second, all subjects are always implicated in each other's pleasure (Foucault, 1995).

In Foucault's (1990) celebrated passage from the *History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, he speaks of "perpetual spirals of pleasure and power" reflecting the inseparability of power from pleasure in relations of power (p. 45). Commentators who have sought to understand Foucault's conceptualisation claim pleasure must be considered in relation to the constraining power that enables it (Butler, 2016). Pleasure's power is no less bound up with certain discourses than its ability to serve normalising power relations (Sawicki, 2010). As Foucault (1990) observes, disciplinary mechanisms function with a 'double impetus'—pleasure and power:

The pleasure that comes of exercising a power that questions, monitors, watches, spies, searches out, palpates, brings to light; and on the other hand, the pleasure that kindles at having to evade this power, flee from it, fool it, or travesty it. The power that lets itself be invaded by the pleasure it is pursuing; and opposite it, power asserting itself in the pleasure of showing off, scandalizing, or resisting. . . .These attractions, these evasions, these circular incitements have traced around bodies and sexes, not boundaries not to be crossed, but perpetual spirals of power and pleasure. (Foucault, 1990, p. 45)

The above passage demonstrates how power and pleasure are overlapping and reinforcing, rather than opposing and/or excluding

(Gallagher, 2008). To illustrate the inseparability of the two concepts in the context of this thesis I draw on surveillance, a key disciplinary power, as noted in the previous section. Surveillance is relevant to this thesis because of the multiple gazes the e-portfolio space enables it to cast—the kindergarten management (the CEO, the education manager and senior teachers), the teachers, parents and children. Equally, pleasure is always penetrated by power (Thrumbull, 2018), those under the gaze of surveillance may find pleasure in resisting normalising discourses.

As is discussed in the Findings Chapters, the art of surveillance in the e-portfolios space produces particular relations of power that reinforce normalising discourses. However, in Chapter 7, children demonstrate how they engage in Foucaultian forms of pleasure as they resist relations of power. As explained earlier in this Chapter, drawing from Foucault's conceptualisation of freedom, children's resistance is considered the work of freedom through a counterattack to the constraining relations of power in this space. A counterattack depends on affirming development, that is, the bodies usefulness, but not docility, as well as affirming the "free, open playfulness of human possibility," without falling prey to any particular regime of normalisation (McWhorter, 1999, p. 181).

Hence, a counterattack to disciplinary power is a disruption between the increasing capacities of a subject and their increasing docility—the process of normalisation (Foucault, 1984b). As Foucault (1980) observes, "Power, after investing itself in the body, finds itself exposed to a counterattack in the same body" (p. 56). One might experience this counterattack as "the increased feeling of power that accompanies an activity, a feeling that signals an enhancement of our capacity to act" (Sawicki, 2010, p. 196). Such counterattacks are likely to be pleasurable in themselves and can increase a subject's capacities for new sorts of pleasures (McWhorter, 1999).

It is important to note that there are and always will be shifting variations and changes to pleasure as located within a specific time, place

and group of people. Therefore, pleasure can be elusive through this variability. As McWhorter (1999) claims, pleasure is a process of perpetual change because the body is an organism whose 'essence' is in constant change. Ongoing processes makes it possible for pleasure to be "subject to diminishment, intensification, and qualitative variation through time and with cultivation and exercise" (McWhorter, 199, p. 179). Pleasure is not a promise of freedom per se but an experiment in testing the limits of possibilities, and in doing so producing a space of possible transformation.

In staying 'true' to Foucaultian thought, pleasure is only conceptualised in this thesis as occurring in relationships of power, rather than in other forms of pleasure that are less collaborative. Hence, experiences of pleasure, such as *schadenfreude* have not been included. This is not to say this form of pleasure was not present, only that it was not observed during data collection. Additionally, ECE services are crowded places and there was not a time during data collection where I observed any 'body' participating with their e-portfolio without a teacher, a peer or many peers present—it was always multiple bodies.

The use of the Foucaultian concept of pleasure in this thesis is considered the work of freedom, not just children's freedom but my own. Foucaultian pleasure offers a useful theoretical basis for understanding how subjects might harness pleasure through their resistance and subversion to normalisation. What remains to be seen is whether pleasure in this space is a practice freedom beyond what we currently have and currently are.

Conclusion

There is always much confusion in *medias res*, and if I cultivate the pleasures of the movement, of thinking instead of the pleasures of knowingness, I find myself open to new disciplinary—ethical—possibilities even in my confusion and ignorance. (McWhorter, 2001, p. 120)

As I conclude this Chapter, it seems pertinent to express that from my confusion at the outset of this thesis, freedom comes closer. The way I see and I am in the world now, is the same, yet not quite the same, as I go about my ordinary life; my *askesis* of pleasure (and pain) as a perpetually transformative body. In practicing for freedom, the following Chapter details the ethical principles and ongoing ethical considerations I made throughout the research process. The chapter includes the methods used to collect, record and make sense of the data.

Chapter 4: Ethical Substance: The Work of Freedom

The ethical substance of research is “that which enables one to get free from oneself.” (Foucault, 1985, p. 9)

This Chapter reveals my ethical work as both the work of freedom and as a reflexive process as I reveal how particular relations of power influence the choice of methods, interpretation of data and the production of knowledge. Researchers who undertake research in the qualitative paradigm attempt to explain how people assign meaning to their circumstances, and how they develop and make sense of the rules that govern them (Brophy, 2016). Hence, a qualitative approach seems a common-sense way of approaching this study because understanding the rules that govern subjects is of central interest to this study. The work of freedom continues as I discuss some of the ongoing tensions and dilemmas I faced as a researcher, whilst other tensions are written into the body of the thesis.

Hammersley (2005) claims sound qualitative research requires researchers to make well informed decisions on their chosen methodology, make it duly known and be able to validate it. Therefore, I have to acknowledge that my thinking at the outset of the study did not allow space for the developmental or transformational aspects of my researcher positionality. Nor did it allow space for my shifting subjectivities over the course of this research. As such, I paused to readjust and reconsider my position several times. During these dynamics I shifted from insider, to partial insider/outsider and finally to a ‘multi-dimensional and development positionality’ as Lu and Hodge (2019) coin it. Lu and Hodge (2019) claim the multi-dimensional and developmental positionality emerged as a result in shifts in social constructionist, deconstructionist and poststructuralist perspectives.

These perspectives recognise the dynamic relationships of the researcher and researched (Lu & Hodge, 2019).

Lu and Hodge (2019) argue the dichotomy of insider/outsider is too limited and too over-simplified to handle the complexity of inter and intra-personal dynamics of relationships. A key aspect of this positionality is the dynamic relationships experienced between the researcher and the researched. This is in keeping with qualitative research as there is agreement amongst commentators that the researcher cannot be devoid of his/her own assumptions and should not pretend otherwise (Hammersley, 2005). Such ideas resonated with me because throughout the study there were times, as illustrated in the Findings Chapters, when I played a significant role in shaping the e-portfolio space, albeit, in unintentional ways. Nonetheless, my thoughts and actions connect with power/knowledge and truth, which is central to the study. Aspects such as my ongoing engagement in literature, data collection and analysis brings to the fore the dynamic power relations that shifted my positionality and shaped my subjectivities throughout this doctoral journey. A multi-dimensional and development positionality also places emphasis on the researcher's agentic role in the production of knowledge (Lu & Hodge, 2019), thus I see this as the work of freedom because at times my actions changed the actions of others. At other times, their actions changed mine.

As detailed in Chapter 1, the setting for the study is the e-portfolio space of two kindergartens in Aotearoa New Zealand. The e-portfolio space crosses borders and at times these borders are blurry. Two reasons contributed to its blurriness. First, the boundaries of the e-portfolio space cross borders between the physical and virtual worlds. Second, in the physical world this space is open and fluid. There are no walls, no doors or windows, no specific boundaries to define when it is no longer a 'space' and instead something else. To recap, e-portfolios are used to document children's assessments in the ECE setting. Assessment occurs formally through documentation, as well as moment by moment during daily

interactions between teachers and children (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). As stated by Felicity in Chapter 5, it is not something that happens behind closed doors in the “magic place” (p. 143). Increasingly, assessment occurs in the e-portfolio space as children and teachers engage directly and/or indirectly with e-portfolios within these blurred boundaries. Sometimes the e-portfolio space was harder to see than others.

In the following section of this Chapter, I outline the qualitative methodological approach, defending my choice of methods within a Foucaultian theoretical framework. During this discussion, telos is particularly salient. Telos is the ongoing assembly and disassembly of one’s subjectivity (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). Telos is evident as I describe how my questions and methods are rooted in unequal power relations despite my efforts in conducting child-friendly research. The ethical principles and ongoing ethical considerations of how aspects, such as gaining consent, negotiating access to participants and the reality of living up to my ethical commitments are explained. The next section describes my data collection methods demonstrating how these are shaped over the course of data collection. Following this I outline data analysis and discuss the power relations inherent throughout the research process. My reflexivity as a researcher is illustrated as I draw attention to the constant day-to-day negotiation of being in the field, the ever-present power dynamics and the dilemmas I encountered. The Chapter concludes with a summary of the key points.

Designing the Research Methodology

At the outset of the study, Foucault’s work was not part of my thinking, nor was it part of the research design. As discussed in Chapter 3, it was not till data collection that I began reading Foucault to address the power dynamics that were emerging in the e-portfolio space. However, just because I was not thinking Foucaultian at the outset does not mean power was any less constitutive in my early research decisions. As

Foucault (1980) reminds us, power is everywhere, it constitutes everything within its networks.

During the early stages, my research design was guided by the intention of carrying out research *with* children, not *on* children. This was primarily due to an earlier study I conducted for the degree of Master of Education. In my Master's study I had unintentionally disregarded children's voices. This caused tension in relation to my ontological perspectives of children and childhood, which from a Foucaultian stance, are constituted within dominant discourses. As discussed in Chapter 1 and 2, dominant discourses in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand position children as capable and competent with the right to have a voice in matters concerning them. Discourses of rights also presuppose the significance of hearing children's voices in educational contexts (Woodhead, 2009).

Carrying out research *with* children is supported by a growing body of literature in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally of the importance of researching children's perspectives (Clark & Statham, 2005; Greig et al., 2013; Peters & Kelly, 2011; Stephenson, 2009; Te One, 2007; Tisdall & Kay, 2016). Over time and through normalisation processes (Foucault, 1984b) these shifting views about children and childhood have led to research being carried out *with* rather than *on* children as a way to redress power relations and marginalisation of children (Sultana, 2007).

Conducting qualitative research with children is fraught with methodological challenges due to uneven power relation between adults and children (Clark & Statham, 2005; Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008; Tangen, 2008; Te One, 2007). Hence, researchers who intend to work with children need to design participatory methods specifically for listening to children (James & Prout, 1997). James and Prout (1997) and Grover (2004) claim specially designed participatory methods can generate more authentic representation of children's perspectives than researching them as subjects to be observed. Participatory methods are

argued as being more ethical in research with children and a moral imperative (Gallagher, 2008). Therefore, participatory methods are considered as an emancipatory alternative over more conventional methods, which have marginalised children in the past (Grover, 2004; James, 2007).

In selecting participatory methods I envisaged the study as the work of freedom and an act of political empowerment through enacting children's rights in research that explores their lives. The touchstone being the UNCRC, specifically Article 12:

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views, the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. (United Nations, 2009, p. 3)

It is important to mention despite my attempts to select methods that would foreground children's experiences and create more equal distribution of power in the research process, my methods did not always work out to be very child friendly. Nor did they always prove to be as participatory as I had anticipated.

Selecting child-friendly participatory methods

In line with a qualitative approach, an emic perspective was assumed in this research, forming relationships with participants focusing on the process, as well as the outcome (Cohen et al., 2018). Drawing from the work of Peters and Kelly (2011), I used four principles to guide the selection of child-friendly participatory methods. First, children are experts on their lives and the holders of knowledge. Second, the research process is viewed as a collective endeavour of co-constructing knowledge, whereby power is shared between participants and researcher. Their

third principle relates to the research process itself and suggests methods should reflect the multiple ways young children communicate. Lastly, methods should be flexible and adaptable (Peters & Kelly, 2011).

Considering the four principles outlined by Peters and Kelly (2011) led to my selection of the mosaic approach as the most suitable methodological approach to answer the research questions and aims of this study. The mosaic approach (as discussed later in this Chapter) is a specific type of participatory framework that has been specially developed for listening to the voices of young children under the age of five (Clark, 2001). As discussed, giving voice to children was important to me from the outset. Therefore, selecting methods that would allow children's voices to be heard was central to the methodological considerations.

Gallagher (2008) claims that although participatory research with children is increasing, children are often marginalised in planning, analysis and dissemination of research. It is the researcher who holds the power (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). They decide what to study and how to represent the voices of those who are chosen to participate (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). Whilst some scholars have explored various ways of getting around marginalising children (Kellett, 2010; Kellett et al., 2004), I admit I did marginalise children at different stages, particularly in early concept development. Children had not chosen the topic or methods, nor had they considered what the data might mean.

Marginalising children occurred for two reasons. First, pragmatically, during my initial year of study I was juggling fulltime employment and designing a research project 'after hours'. In actuality this meant late at night and into the early hours of the morning. Therefore, consulting children in the design stage was not practicable. Secondly, there were no participants to consult at the outset as I needed to gain ethics approval before I could invite participants, which was subject to passing my PhD colloquium. Passing meant presenting a comprehensive research proposal of my plan for carrying out ethical research, which usually occurs nine months from commencing study. It

was actually three months beyond passing my colloquium that I found research participants.

Acknowledging the reasons for marginalising children at the outset is a 'confession' of my experiences (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013). As Foucault (1998) claims:

[T]he confession became one of the West's most highly valued techniques for producing truth. We have since become a singularly confessing society....Western man has become a confessing animal. (p. 59)

Whilst arguably I am a 'confessing animal,' Cannella and Lincoln (2018) claim a researcher's honesty is how one transforms oneself into an ethical subject within their research. Confessing is also my reflexive process of understanding how networks of power influenced my methodological approach. The participatory act of involving children in the research design is historic now. There is nothing I can do to undo the already done. However, as my subjectivity shifted over the course of this study, I thought about ways I could redress unequal power relations and 'redo' and 'redesign' as *we* moved forward in the research process together. I leave this discussion here as I turn my attention to further ethical work, my ongoing relationship with 'self,' as a subject of those acts.

My Ethical Work

...an intensification of the relation to oneself by which one constitutes oneself as the subject of one's acts.
(Foucault, 1986, p. 41)

Research ethics is a form of governance embedded within the Foucaultian concept of governmentality (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). In research, Cannella and Lincoln (2018) suggest two forms of governmentality

influence ethics. First, the external regulatory power of discourses, typically recognised as the regulatory bodies that governs the legislation of research ethics. In this study it is the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee [ERHEC]. Governmentality in this instance reflects the external technologies of power that construct, produce and limit research (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). The second form of regulatory power, links to a subjects' own internalised beliefs that they draw on to self-regulate behaviour (Foucault, 1986). Foucault (1986) claims this construction of self-governance can be described as “political technologies of individuals” (p. 87). Salient examples of this form are illustrated in Chapter 5 in the production of the good teacher. Equally, are the ways in which I went about constructing myself as a good researcher. Attending to the ethical aspects being a significant aspect of this construction in accordance with various relations of power that were regulatory.

According to Foucault (1986), engaging in an ongoing genealogy of self during research along the axes of truth, power and ethics can avoid researcher egocentricity. Cannella and Lincoln (2018) discuss the axis as a site “through which the self-acts on itself” (p. 90). It has four components: ethical substance, mode of subjectification, ethical work and telos. The first component, ethical substance (see Chapter 8—positionality) refers to the researcher consciousness, their self-understanding and the ways they legitimise ‘self’ morally (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). The second, the mode of subjectification (see Chapter 2) is how one constructs ‘self’ in relation to the rules that govern us (Foucault, 1986).

The third component, ethical work refers to the researcher’s competence, their honesty and how one transforms ‘self’ into the ethical subject within research (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018), which I endeavour to capture throughout this Chapter. The fourth component, as mentioned earlier in the Chapter is telos. Telos is a form of self-bricolage, the reflexive activity of ethics of the ‘self’ and the ongoing assembly and

disassembly of one's subjectivity (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018). Throughout this section these components are used to guide my thinking regarding my construction of self-governance and self-formation.

Behaving in ways that reflect my positioning of children is central to my ethical work. In this research children are positioned as capable and competent beings with rights within neoliberal ideology. Hill (2005) claims, in research involving children, children have the right to make choices about aspects such as, consent, withdrawal and the boundaries of confidentiality. The chosen methods should also not subject children to situations that may be stressful or cause them distress (Hill, 2005). Therefore methods should contribute to developing practices that contribute to their wellbeing (Hill, 2005). These key ideas also align with the guiding principles of ERHEC, the governing body I sought research approval from. My ethical work on how I attend to these aspects are detailed in the following section, beginning with identifying participants.

Selecting participants

A number of questions arose when considering how to identify and select participants for this study. However, none had any bearing on which services were eventually selected because I did not receive any interest following a generic email I sent to local ECE services. Changing strategies, I approached the Kindergarten Association where I worked during that period to see if I could conduct my research within the Association. Gaining permission I emailed the head teachers of twenty kindergartens. Two head teachers responded indicating they were interested in learning more about my study. I arranged a time to meet with them and their teaching teams. During this meeting I outlined my research and discussed any queries they had. After this was completed, both kindergartens confirmed they were interested in participating.

As children are central to the study I also needed their participation. To prepare for this I created a short narrative introducing myself to parents and children. This was informal and written in a casual

non-threatening way inviting children to participate in my research (Appendix 8). I used everyday language and shared some personal history about myself and my family. I attached a photo so parents and children could easily identify me when I arrived at their kindergarten. The letter was posted on the kindergarten notice boards in both entry foyers and was also uploaded to the e-portfolio platform for those parents who may not have had the opportunity to see it physically.

Following this, I visited the kindergartens for several weeks talking to parents, handing out information and consent forms before beginning data collection. Visiting the kindergartens before I began data collection meant I was able to start establishing relations with children from the outset. This was an intentional effort to reduce the power relations between myself and children. However, it is difficult to say in what ways this might have influenced children's responses during the actual data collection. I can say that both kindergartens have adults that are not teachers visiting on a regular basis. This may have contributed to children responding to me as if I was a familiar adult, rather than an outsider.

Children never appeared to be particularly surprised to see me, they seemed to accept that sometimes I was there and sometimes I was not. For example, on one occasion very early into data collection I was videoing a social interaction when a child came over and climbed up onto my lap. She tucked her legs up under herself, lay back into my chest and watched what I was recording. The teacher who was being recorded noticed and commented "you're already part of the furniture here, the children make themselves at home on you as if you've always been here" (Lisa, teacher, field notes, October 27, 2018).

The settings and participants

My research was open to young children aged between three and a half - six years of age who attend the participant kindergartens. The age range reflects the licencing criteria of the Kindergarten Association at the time

of the study. The teachers who were responsible for documenting the participant children's learning and development in their e-portfolios were also invited to participate. The first setting I discuss is Mana Kindergarten. Mana Kindergarten is a pseudonym as is Rangatira Kindergarten; both pseudonyms are drawn from Te Reo Māori. As noted in Chapter 1, Aotearoa New Zealand respects both parties to the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Orange, 2021). Therefore, I decided to show respect by choosing names representative of both cultures. The names of the participant teachers and children are Western pseudonyms drawn from familiar English names.

Mana Kindergarten is licenced for forty-five children and the operating hours that children can attend are 8:30am - 2:45pm. At the outset of the data collection Mana Kindergarten had sixty-one children on their roll. This consisted of both part-time and full-time children. Twenty-nine children were aged three and a half years and older, which fitted my selection criteria. Eighteen children agreed to participate. Two children that were going to school during the time I was collecting data were not included as they would not have been present for the entire process. Care was taken to ensure that all children were able to participate if they chose to but no data was collected on those children.

Four teachers from this Kindergarten participated. One teacher has worked at Mana Kindergarten for twenty years. One teacher has worked there ten years. One teacher has worked there six years and one teacher for two years. One teacher returned from an extended overseas trip towards the end of data collection and although she was asked if she would like to be included, she declined. All teachers hold a full teacher registration and current practising certificate. One teacher has a Graduate Diploma in Teaching (ECE), two teachers have a Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (ECE) and one teacher has a Bachelor of Teaching (ECE).

The second setting is Rangatira Kindergarten. Rangatira Kindergarten is licenced for forty-five children and the operating hours

for children to attend are 8:30am - 2:45pm. At the outset of the data collection Rangatira Kindergarten had fifty children on its roll. This consisted of both part-time and full-time children. Of this cohort, only sixteen children were aged three and a half years and older and eleven of these children participated. Four teachers at Rangatira Kindergarten participated. Two teachers have worked at Rangatira Kindergarten twenty-five years, one teacher has been there seven years and the other teacher has been there three years. All teachers hold a full teacher registration and current practising certificate. Two teachers hold The Diploma of Free Kindergarten Union qualification, one teacher has a Graduate Diploma of Teaching (ECE) and one teacher has a Bachelor of Education (ECE) and a Diploma of Primary Teaching.

The children who attended both kindergartens were ethnically diverse and this diversity was reflected in the children who participated. The teachers were predominantly Western. Having discussed specific demographics, the following three sections illustrate how I construct 'self' in relation to the rules that govern ethics, connecting it with the mode of subjectification. My ongoing ethical work is salient here as I construct different narratives for understanding my 'self' morally and ethically regarding consent and assent.

Consent

Consent refers to permission being granted by the parent/legal guardian on behalf of the child (Lewis, 2002). In this study written consent for children to participate was obtained from the parents/legal guardians of children three and a half years of age and older as per selection process. At the outset of this phase I arrived at each kindergarten before it opened in the morning so I could personally hand out consent letters to families. The collection boxes were located in the foyer for parents to drop in their signed consent forms. I informed parents they were welcome to take these forms away and discuss them with others. Often parents signed immediately and handed the forms straight back to me. Handing out

letters personally to parents meant I was able to chat informally to them, as well as talking to their children in an attempt to establish rapport from the outset. I also did not want to create any extra work for teachers by asking them to hand them out, email or place them in 'parent pockets' (a designated space for individual children's notices usually hanging on the wall with children's names on them). However, I eventually did have to give a few consent forms to teachers at both kindergartens to pass out as I was unable to connect with a small number of parents. Teachers said they were happy to do this.

Assent

Assent refers to permission being granted by the child after a parent/legal guardian has given permission. Lewis (2002) claims "consent is not in itself sufficient; informed consent/assent is needed" (p. 111). Gaining assent from children "removes the reliance on the child demonstrating adult-centric attributes such as maturity, competence and completeness; rather, it accepts the child's state of being" (Cocks, 2006, p. 257). It is also essential to ethical research with children (Cocks, 2006). Hence, children's assent is an important part of my ethical commitment to research with children. It also aligns with rights discourses of children as active participants in their social worlds with rights to voice, to be listened to and to participate.

When I handed out consent forms to parents, I requested they discussed my study with their child at home over the following week. This was so children had time to think about whether they wanted to be involved or not before I asked them. Children were asked for their assent prior to the research commencing and again at the beginning of each data collection phase. Two visual cues were available for children who preferred to respond without words. The visuals were a happy face and a sad face, indicative that they did, or did not want to participate. However, all children chose to acknowledge their assent verbally. Children were informed their responses would be recorded using methods that involved

digital equipment. They were also informed they could test out the equipment if they chose. At the conclusion of videoing, I also invited children to watch their video recording. A few children chose to, but most did not.

The children's assent forms also consisted of two faces similar to the visual cues—a happy face and a sad face. I thought this would be easily identifiable to children but managing this aspect was challenging. I found myself having to take a flexible approach for interpreting their assent. For example, often children chose to colour in the 'sad face' rather than the happy face even though they had verbally consented and their body language was open and enthusiastic. One child, Jared, chose to colour his entire assent form (Appendix 9). Jared's chosen way to respond caused me to consider that although I had approached this with children's participation and agency in mind, I had attempted to regulate their responses through adult preconceived outcomes. Jared's choice to colour the entire picture shows how children can invoke power and modify structures. It was my reflection of Jared's form that (re)constructed the way I viewed their assent. Paying close attention to what was being said verbally, as well as the subtle nuances of body language, I accepted that assent was given from children through the multiple ways they communicated.

A contentious area of children's assent is whether or not they always understand what they are assenting for (Graham et al., 2015; Phelan & Kinsella, 2013). In this study I argue children understood what they were assenting for. As discussed earlier, at the start of each data collection method I also asked children for their assent and this was often recorded as it is another way to establish validity of children's assent. In the following excerpt, Shelley discusses her understanding of assent at the beginning of a semi-structured activity where I am establishing whether another child (Simone) gives assent. Shelley is Simone's close friend who had joined us for the activity:

I turned the video on and then went and sat beside Simone. Looking at the video recorder as if I was introducing her, I said, “Ok, so this is Simone, is it ok if I video you?” Simone nods and smiles looking directly at me. I respond by saying, “Ka pai, thank-you.” Shelley chimes in, “Before you asked, before you have, before you, umm, you have to ask us, you have to ask us if you can video us and if we say ‘No,’ you will turn that off A?” she said pointing to my video recorder. I replied, “Yes, exactly. If you don’t want me to video you, I won’t video you.” Shelley looks at the two of us smiling, “Yep, I knew that A!” (Simone, 3 years, Shelley, 5 years, myself, 9 September 2018, Mana Kindergarten)

Alongside assent I also discussed with children that I would not share their videos with other people and that I would try and protect their right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. However, contending with the tensions this created was challenging as the day-to-day reality of collecting data on site meant the ethical commitments I made were tested. In the following section I outline some of the main concerns in regard to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality.

Anonymity, confidentiality and privacy

It is difficult to provide assurance of anonymity in a location that is a close-knit community, such as an ECE setting (Graham et al., 2015). In this study the location and methods meant I could not guarantee anonymity. For example, it was likely that a child’s parents would know who the participant teachers were because they knew who documented their child’s learning. It was also likely that children would tell each other and other adults if they were involved or not. Children’s anonymity was also compromised during the data collection as this occurred in areas where others were present. Children also frequently had their friends

alongside them during these times, as demonstrated by Simone and Shelly in the previous section.

Confidentiality refers to the researcher treating the information that is shared in confidence without revealing it to others (Graham et al., 2015). However, there is debate over this (Graham et al., 2015; King & Churchill, 2000; Lewis, 2002). Some commentators claim children have the right to confidentiality of the information they share. However, at the same time children have the right to be protected from harm (Article 19) (Duncan et al., 2009; King & Churchill, 2000). Arguing the ethical principles of beneficence and non-maleficence, King and Churchill (2000) and Duncan et al. (2009) claim if a child reveals they are being harmed then the risk of ongoing harm is reduced if the researcher informs the appropriate agencies. Therefore the information sheet and the consent form included the limits of confidentiality and anonymity. It also included what actions would be taken if a child were to disclose information that might compromise this. As a result of being explicit there is potential to limit participants in the research, but first and foremost must be the priority of ensuring children's safety (Graham et al., 2015).

I was careful of not choosing methods, such as interviews where I would be alone with a child/children as these have the potential to raise concern in relation to children's safety (Graham et al., 2015). I am also a fully registered teacher in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, I have been police vetted in accordance with the Educational Act 1989, which requires the Educational Council to attain a police vet prior to issuing a practicing certificate (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2021). This may have supported parents to feel confident that I was a safe and responsible adult.

In line with child-friendly participatory methods, children chose where data was collected. Children frequently chose the bean bag room at Mana Kindergarten and the couch under the veranda at Rangatira Kindergarten. These areas allowed for some privacy, while at the same time provided protection for children and me, as well as peace of mind for

parents. As discussed in Chapter 2, ECE settings in Aotearoa New Zealand are under surveillance and attention is given to providing clear visibility, including areas that require some degree of privacy in line with discourses of protection and safety.

UNCRC states that children have the right to privacy (Article 16) and any actions involving children need to consider their best interests (Article 3) (United Nations General Assembly, 1989). Protecting and respecting a person's right to privacy means considering confidentiality in dissemination of the research findings (Graham et al., 2015). Careful consideration was given to aspects, such as removing identifying features of the kindergartens, the use of pseudonyms instead of participants' names and omitting any other specific characteristics that may identify a participant or kindergarten. I also omitted any reference to any specific person being the head teacher. All data was locked in a filing cabinet in my home office. Data that was stored on my home computer and my laptop was password protected. The audio data was erased from any equipment used to collect it once it had been downloaded to my computer. No data was sent electronically. All data will be destroyed after ten years as outlined in the ERHEC guidelines on completion of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Triangulation

Triangulation is a validity procedure that employs the researcher's lens for establishing the validity of the research (Creswell & Miller, 2000). It is also a process for accounting for one's actions and shows how the researcher's ongoing engagement with the data is interrelated to the process of making sense of the data (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Triangulation is used to identify themes/categories in the data that is collected using multiple methods drawn at different times and from a range of people (Flick, 2004). Establishing themes/categories are determined by the researcher through a continual cycle of reviewing data

to ascertain whether the categories, explanations and interpretations one has made make sense (Patton, 2002).

I chose a range of methods to support triangulation in this thesis. Two methods were used for collecting data with children: observations and semi-structured activities of children in the e-portfolio space. Semi-structured interviews were also used to collect data from teachers. Field-notes were recorded in written form during data collection. The data was audio and video recorded, which according to Carspecken (1996) can increase the rigor of a study. The concept of reflexivity, explained in the following section is a validity procedure that attends to the researcher's assumptions, beliefs and biases (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Researcher reflexivity

Being critical requires a radical ethics, an ethics that is always/already concerned about power and oppression even as it avoids constructing "power" as a new truth. (Cannella & Lincoln, 2018, p. 84)

Qualitative researchers believe complete objectivity is unrealistic because the experiences of subjects are not free from a particular time and location and are socially and cultural constructed (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). Hence, the values and beliefs of the researcher and participants become part of the research process (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). This requires researchers to engage in the process of reflexivity. Reflexivity describes a deep level of reflection and awareness of what the researcher brings to a situation and can provide research with more complex and nuanced understandings (Phelan & Kinsella, 2013; Sultana, 2007).

Researchers should explore their assumptions, values, beliefs and bias at the outset of research, including their reasoning and motivation for conducting the research in the first place (Cocks, 2006). Although ongoing throughout the research process, Berger (2015) encourages

researchers to pay attention to three central ideas at the start. First, the researcher should consider their self-knowledge and sensitivity. Second, the researcher should develop an understanding of the ways in which the construction of knowledge is influenced by the role of the self (see section on power later in this Chapter). Third, the researcher should monitor how their beliefs, biases and personal experiences impact the research (Cocks, 2006). The end goal is to retain a balance between the researcher's personal self and the universal (Berger, 2015). To deepen my understanding and awareness of the role of 'self' in the research process, I used a reflective journal to maintain self-awareness and to examine bias and ethical considerations throughout the study. Continuous engagement with my journal required considering my views and bias, rather than dismissing them as inconsequential.

Engaging in the process of reflexivity is not only about one's own internal processes (Sultana, 2007). It involves the researcher's accountability for their collection and interpretation of the data (Sultana, 2007). My accountability for collection and interpretation of data is attended to in the data collection methods and the data analysis sections of this Chapter. Sultana (2007) claims researcher reflexivity also involves critically examining the processes of power and politics that are inherent within the research process. Critical reflection is about enabling one to make choices about their behaviour. As discussed earlier in this Chapter, my reflexivity was evident as I attempted to redress power between myself and children in the research process. Later in the Chapter I share another example to illustrate how I engaged in the process of reflexivity to explore my assumptions about children's capabilities for using my laptop.

Thick, rich description

Creswell and Miller (2000) claims thick, rich description transports the reader into the narrative. The reader's ability to gain a sense of the experiences being described and/or the ability of the research to be applied in other settings provides research credibility (Creswell & Miller,

2000). Therefore, thick rich detailed accounts are used throughout this thesis in a number of ways. For example, when describing the settings and participants I use as much detail as possible without compromising participants' anonymity. In the substantive Chapters I use thick description to describe specific interactions in detail between participants in order to bring the interaction to life for the reader. I now turn my attention to the data collection methods that I chose to enhance validity and trustworthiness, and to foreground the experiences of children and teachers who participated in this study.

The Mosaic Approach

I chose the mosaic approach as it provides space for the researcher to engage a range of methods and techniques for listening to children about their social worlds (Clark & Moss, 2005, 2011). Each method forms one piece of the mosaic and when completed these are brought together to “form the basis of dialogue, reflection and interpretation” (Clark, 2001, p. 334). This approach enables children to engage in methods that reflect their individual strengths (Clark & Moss, 2011). Although I selected participatory methods, I also chose to use the traditional methods of observation to gain insight into how children participate in the e-portfolio space without my direct involvement and interviews with teachers.

Whilst there are a range of methods for collecting children's voices, Clark and Moss (2011) suggest the most appropriate methods should be based on the aims and questions of the research. As already mentioned, at the outset of the study my aim was to understand how children participate with e-portfolios. Reading the work of Foucault shifted the focus to the ways in which subjects (children and teachers) are produced in this space. Despite this shift, the data collected through my chosen methods provides rich data for analysis.

Five methods form the pieces of the mosaic. These combine traditional methods with participatory methods that I anticipated would bring together different perspectives to create a deeper understanding.

However, qualitative research is not static and set in one particular moment, rather it is dynamic and changing, (Holloway & Galvin, 2017). As I progressed I had to rethink, readjust and recalibrate my methods as my lived experiences were different to what I had perceived them to be. The following methods eventually made up the pieces of the mosaic:

- Observation of participant children
- Semi-structured interviews of participant teachers
- Semi-structured activities between children and teachers
- Semi-structured activities between children and their peers
- Semi-structured activities between children and me

Data was collected over a four-month period from mid-August to mid-December 2018. During this time, I had anticipated I would collect *all* data systematically at one kindergarten before commencing data collection at the other kindergarten. However, I discovered it was better to work simultaneously between the two kindergartens as this enabled me to draw data together as I progressed and make comparisons between the two, which I could then check. Adapting to the evolving situation is in keeping with qualitative research because it is not a precise process (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). As Holloway and Wheeler (2010) point out, human beings do not always act “logically or predictably” (p. 26). They suggest researchers follow the “guidance, control and direction” of the participants while attempting to proceed in a systematic and structured way (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010, p. 26), which is essentially what I did. Restructuring this aspect of data and analysis was a straightforward and systematic process.

Observation of participant children

Observation of participant children was the first phase of data collection. Observation is an established research method and an appropriate method to use in the study of children’s lives (Clark, 2005; Clark & Moss,

2011). Observation involves a familiar person spending time observing and recording the phenomenon in question (Clark, 2005; Clark & Moss, 2011). It is a plausible way to listen to children's voices and provides opportunity to feed into future discussions (Clark & Moss, 2011). Observation is not a participatory method per se but it can be useful in informing other methods that include children's voices more directly (Clark, 2005). As discussed earlier, I selected this method to gain insight into how children participate with e-portfolios without my direct involvement.

Observations were collected one day each week alongside other methods, rather than conducting all the observations in their entirety before moving onto the next method. This was more in line with respecting the ways children wanted to participate at any given time. Observations continued until I collected between three to five observations of individual children and lasted the length of their participation within the e-portfolio space. Observations were used to see how children were participating with their e-portfolios, with whom they were viewing them and the types of conversations that were occurring.

Peters and Kelly (2011) claim observation is not always effective because during observations children and adults can alter their behaviour to fit with traditional discourses when they are aware of being observed (Peters & Kelly, 2011). In this study, children and adults were aware they were being observed because I had to gain their consent/assent. However, I decided the advantages outweighed the disadvantages. The most significant advantage of the observations was that I was able to begin the process of building relationships with children through their curiosity and interest in what I was doing. This became the platform for our dialogue and for construction of semi-structured activities. The semi-structured activities proved the most successful method for listening to children. The observation method contributed to the sub-aim of the thesis, that is, to uncover what types of bodies are constituted in the e-portfolio space.

Semi-structured activities with children

The second method I selected for listening to children were semi-structured activities. Semi-structured activities are a participatory method that responds directly to the methodology of the thesis. Literature shows semi-structured activities specifically designed to listen to children's voices can be successful in gaining their perspectives (Clark, 2005, 2007; Te One, 2007). Clark (2005) suggests researchers should develop or design their own "specific activities" (p. 494) depending on the social and cultural context. For example, Te One (2007) uses a persona doll as one way of listening to young children. Clark (2007) describes a 'magic carpet' whereby children sat on a mat and viewed slides of different images in order to encourage them to reflect on and discuss their favourite outdoor spaces. Drawing from Clark (2005a), the semi-structured activity I designed involved encouraging children to show me their e-portfolios. This involved me guiding them through various aspects of their e-portfolios and asking open ended questions about them.

In reality the semi-structured activities rarely followed this structure as children had their own ideas. On attempting my very first semi-structured video activity, I set up my tripod and attached the camcorder. This was a 'ready, set—camera, action, roll' moment that was the culmination of just over twelve months of planning. Remembering my strategies for minimising power, I sat down beside the child with my laptop and began. As it was my first attempt at collecting video data, I was anxious that my video recorder might not record (despite the many practice runs at home), so I got up to check. I asked the child if she would mind holding my laptop while I checked, and she agreed. While I was attending to this, I realised she was no longer watching what I was doing, she was navigating the system herself. I left the video running to capture this and altered the semi-structured activities to be sensitive to the rhythms and desires of children, rather than my preconceived activities.

My sensitivity (in accordance with my reflexivity practices) to power dynamics increased my awareness of how my questions and methods

were rooted in unequal power relations despite my efforts to conduct child-friendly research. MacNaughton et al. (2007) claims that whilst researchers try to shape research in favour of hearing children's voices it is all too easy to position children as pliable subjects in the name of agency. Gallagher (2008) claims researchers often unknowingly regulate children by insisting on participatory methods that they claim constitutes agency. I have admitted to regulating children at the outset of this thesis; however, my ethical work and telos in this Chapter illustrates my shifting subjectivities and reveals my 'self' as a more 'knowing' subject.

Being flexible instead of reinforcing unequal power relations by insisting we do it as I had designed, I adapted my methods reshaping the typical power relations of adults and children. As discussed previously, all activities were generated by children's desires. Frequently children participated with their peers and often this was in peer groups of four to five children. During these interactions I might only engage with children when they asked me questions. This mainly consisted of how to 'get back to the other screen' if they had hit the 'wrong button'. In these peer groups, the child who held the laptop held greater power, dictating what was said, and by whom (see Chapter 7).

At other times, children and I would sit together and chat about their stories and/or they wanted to show me how they navigated their e-portfolio. In one interaction a child chose to teach a hand puppet how to operate her e-portfolio. I chose to video record our activities as videoing children in educational settings can support their participation in the research process (Cutter-Mackenzie et al., 2015). The semi-structured method responds to the first two research questions: In what ways does knowledge/power and truth constitute the bodies of children and teachers in the e-portfolio space? How is power invoked between children and their peers, and children and teachers in the e-portfolio space and in what ways does this effect the constitution of their bodies?

Semi-structured interviews with participant teachers

The mosaic approach is not a method for excluding adults' voices because adults' voices can add another layer to the dialogue on children's social worlds (Clark, 2007; Clark & Moss, 2011). In ECE settings teachers are primary contributors to assessment practices and have substantial power over children's learning, documentation and decision-making (Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a). Therefore, teachers' practice will affect the way in which e-portfolios are implemented within a service and the experiences children have. Clark and Moss (2011) also suggest that including teachers' voices in research with children is one way of avoiding the study feeling more like an auditing process, which "devalues and disempowers" teachers (p. 35). I considered these two aspects as being significant factors in the type of data I collected. Therefore, interviews with teachers were selected as a way to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers use e-portfolios with children and to value their professional work.

The interviews involved open-ended questions and I conducted one interview with each teacher. The interviews occurred during a time and place of the teachers choosing and were approximately 30 minutes in duration. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed and then returned to teachers to check for accuracy and confirmed as correct. This method responds to the last three research questions: In what ways does knowledge/power and truth constitute the bodies of children and teachers in the e-portfolio space? In what ways does power constrain the bodies of children and teachers? In what ways does power enable the bodies of children and teachers?

Field notes

A combination of detailed descriptive and reflective field notes were generated throughout the data collected phases. Tenzek (2017) suggests that although time consuming, well documented field notes can provide insightful information on the phenomenon studied. Field notes are particularly important in interviews where subtle nuances are missed by

an audio recorder (Mutch, 2005). My field notes were handy to refer back to in regard to casual conversations I had with teachers and proved invaluable in my reflexive practice as documented throughout this thesis. Alongside the other data collection methods my notes contributed to the overarching research aim, that is, to explore the ways in which children's and teachers' bodies are disciplined into certain kinds of bodies in the e-portfolio space.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was two-fold. My first approach was thematic analysis. This is a widely accepted systematic method of attending to large amounts of qualitative data in research within the social sciences (Ayres, 2008; Byrne, 2017; Lapadat, 2010; Marks & Yardley, 2004). Using this method of analysis required examining the data to identify thematic categories in the speech and actions of children and teachers. Analysing began at the outset of the data collection because it is argued that being immersed in data analysis while collecting data provides a sense of direction, as well as greater sensitivity to the data collected (Holloway & Galvin, 2017; Holloway & Wheeler, 2010).

I transcribed all data myself because listening repeatedly to the digital recording of interviews can support researchers to become familiar with the words of the participants (Marks & Yardley, 2004). It is also generally agreed this method can build a greater picture of the meanings that are created from the data (Marks & Yardley, 2004). Both proved true in my case. The data was reordered as much as possible, word for word onto a template I created. The template had three columns. The first column was for the transcription, the second was for recording body positions, facial expressions and movements as identified in the video data. The third column was where I noted any information about different aspects I noticed during these intersections and/or reflexive thoughts.

It does need to be pointed out the thematic process is subjective and influenced by the researcher's interpretations, bias and world views (Locke, 2004). As Locke (2004) claims:

processes such as describing, interpreting and responding are not neutral, but are constructed in discourse.... In doing so, other ways in which description and response can be constructed are marginalised. (p. 88)

Therefore, there are potentially other narratives that could be told from the data collected. I did my best to maintain the integrity of the data by checking for accuracy using member checking and making corrections. Names were changed to pseudonyms and any other identifying aspects were altered accordingly at this point. Once transcripts were confirmed as correct, I imported the transcribed data into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software package.

NVivo was a useful tool that enabled me to establish thematic categories and to compare and contrast data across transcripts. This occurred through the systematic process of reading and re-reading transcripts whereby I highlighted and coded particular texts using descriptive labels. As new codes developed, I returned to previous transcripts to apply them. The set of thematic categories were informed by my pre-existing understanding that emerged from engagement with literature and emergent "in-vivo" inspirations in line with thematic analysis (Byrne, 2017). All coded text was then imported to the relevant nodes and saved.

The nodes also guided the in-depth analytical memos written to clarify my thoughts and ideas. These contained extensive links to theory and literature including examples from the data in its entirety to preserve the integrity during this process. The analytical memos became the second approach to data analysis as I began to think about how

Foucaultian theory interacted with the thematic categories. For instance, thematic analyses reveals teachers' truths about e-portfolios, while Foucaultian theory demonstrates the complex power dynamics that circulate to produce these truths. Much of this writing eventually provided the basis of my Findings Chapters. However, this was not a linear process, emergent Foucaultian inspirations while writing the memos meant returning to the data to code again. Refining the analytical process provided insights into how children and teachers experience power in the e-portfolio space. For example, text coded to subversion combined with text coded to resistance demonstrates the ways children negated power during their everyday experiences in the e-portfolio space.

Whilst I found NVivo useful for storage and establishing themes, I also found more traditional methods valuable techniques for analysing data and organising my thinking. These included post-it notes, fluorescent highlighters, mind maps and cutting and arranging printed paper sections on the floor of my office.

Power Relations

Christensen (2004) suggests it is sensible to view power as part of the research process and address it accordingly. Addressing power in research involving children is "important for minimising the power differential between the researcher and those being studied" (Eder & Fingerson, 2003, p. 34). However, as identified in the previous section examining power dynamics that occurred between children and their peers, children and teachers, and children and myself were fruitful sites for analysis. Discovering the ways subjects (children, teachers and me) experienced power during social interactions in the e-portfolio space eventually formed the entire basis of this thesis.

Reflections from the field: Relations of power: Myself and children

At the outset of the study I was largely unaware of the complex multivalence relations of power that occur during social interactions. I

was also unprepared to see the ways in which children “exploit, appropriate, redirect, contest or refuse participatory techniques” (Gallagher, 2008, p. 137). I did have some understanding of the power dynamics between children and adults, so I had initially researched strategies on ways to reduce unequal relations during data collection. Useful strategies included sitting at the same level as children, sitting beside children rather than face-to-face and offering children the opportunity to choose a time and place that suited them (Graham et al., 2013; Phelan & Kinsella, 2013). I attempted to reduce unbalanced power relations during early field work by providing children the opportunity to select what we viewed on their e-portfolios. However, I was conscious I was positioned more powerfully, not just because I was an adult but because I held the laptop that provided access to their e-portfolios.

I had two reasons for this, first, having just purchased the laptop at a significant financial cost I wanted to ensure that it was not damaged. Secondly, my laptop was also a touch screen and children were unfamiliar with this technology in the participant kindergartens as teachers had laptops that were keyboard operated. Nonetheless, I realised that despite being in pursuit of child friendly research, I was not being particularly child friendly. Not too far into my data collection I discovered children were very familiar with using touchscreen technology, despite my positioning of them as otherwise. After I discovered children’s technological capabilities, I redesigned my semi-structured activities. This meant children were able to have greater power and control over what was viewed during the data collection. Whilst I could argue this was one way to reduce power relations between myself and children, it is more accurate to say it shaped power relations in alternate and unexpected ways.

Having navigated the tension of unequal power when I was holding the laptop, I now found myself imposing rules on children to address my first concern, which was to minimise any potential damage to it. My rules, such as ‘taking turns’ and ‘one person using my equipment at a time’ are

typical adult-derived rules that children are familiar with in ECE contexts. Therefore, whilst I did not think this was as unreasonable request, it placed me in a dominant position. Furthermore, the very construct of rules is problematic when exploring relations of power because it begs the questions: who is making the rules, how are these rules governed and how might these rules shape children's subjectivities within the e-portfolio space? The answers are explained in the substantive Chapters.

Limitations and Challenges

Certainly, there were limitations and challenges throughout the study. The most significant being that the study occurred within a specific time/place and group of people so power/knowledge and truth is specific to the historical and cultural conditions at the time of data collection (Foucault, 1972). Although I could revisit the 'place' the research was conducted, the 'time' and 'group' of people will have changed. Hence, there will be new truths to tell as power/knowledge and truth will have also shifted and changed over time.

A significant unforeseen challenge was that whilst I attempted to foreground children's perspectives in the research, listening to children was not as easy as I had imagined. When it came to asking children about their e-portfolios, I often got responses that did not seem relevant to my questions. Nonetheless, in the naivety of my researcher positionality at that time, I had overlooked this challenge. This is consistent with a number of commentators who have also documented the challenges of collecting children's perspectives in research (Clark, 2005; Clark & Moss, 2011; De Vocht, 2015; Peters & Kelly, 2011; Te One, 2007).

Conclusion

At the beginning of this Chapter I present an account of my research design and defend my selection of the mosaic approach as most suitable for data collection. During my ethical work, telos was most salient as I

outline the selection of ECE services and participants and the challenges of gaining consent and assent from children. In the section on data collection methods, I explained my methods and detail how and why some methods were adapted over the course of data collection. I have argued that my shifting subjectivity was evident as I became more fluid in my ethical work, rather than continuing along a praxis of fixity that dominated my thinking at the outset.

This Chapter also details the procedures that show how validity and trustworthiness were accounted for. I have justified the methods I used for interpretation and analysis of the data, as it relates to the Foucaultian theoretical framework of this study. Finally, insights from Foucault's perspectives on power provided me with important theoretical tools for examining my influence in the research process. Examples of specific reflections from the field are included in various sections in this Chapter. The reflections illustrate how the theory guides my thinking and is relevant to the arguments being made. A researcher's positionality is most salient when intersectionality and reflectivity causes them to "rethink, readjust and recalibrate their methodological tools" (Locke, 2015, p. 170).

The following three substantive Chapters detail the findings of the study. Chapter 5 sets the stage for the other Chapters by introducing the shift to an e-portfolio system from the Kindergarten Association and the influence of this shift on teachers' truths. I argue this is important groundwork because teachers' truths influence children's experiences in the e-portfolio space. In foregrounding teachers' truths this Chapter positions teachers centre stage, revealing the production of the discursively constituted good docile teacher body. This is one particular kind of body, not the only kind that inhabits the e-portfolio space. The good docile teacher body is produced and constituted through complex and intricate networks of power. How this occurs and in what ways is presented next.

Chapter 5: Producing the Good Docile Teacher Body

This Chapter presents the influence of neoliberalism in the disciplining and constitution of teachers' bodies in the e-portfolio space. The ways complex networks of power discipline the bodies of teachers connects with the core thesis argument and is woven throughout this Chapter. To reiterate, the main argument is that power/knowledge and truth circulates in the e-portfolio space to discipline the bodies of children and teachers into certain kinds of bodies. Positioned centred stage in this Chapter, teachers' conversations demonstrate the production of the good docile teacher body.

The docile body is at the core of Foucault's concept of disciplinary power, as noted in Chapter 3 (Foucault, 1995). Docile bodies are produced through discourses that regulate subjects into behaving in ways that are considered moral and ethical within a particular time/place and group of people (Foucault, 1995). As Foucault (1984a) observes, discourses are powerful vehicles for constituting what is natural. Hence, discourses constitute teachers' truths. The way we think, speak and act is argued to be increasingly consistent with the dictions of neoliberal governmentality (Hamann, 2009; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a).

Neoliberal governmentality is the interrelationship between the conditions driven by government and the ways individuals conduct themselves in order to (re)produce these conditions (Foucault, 1993), as discussed in Chapter 1. Teachers' discussions expose truths connected to neoliberal governmentality. I argue teachers' truths lay important groundwork for the subsequent Chapters as their truths contribute to shaping the ECE programme and therefore, the types of experiences children have in the e-portfolio space.

The main thesis argument is illustrated throughout this Chapter. In the first section, I explore the influence of power on teachers' truths

and subjectivities through the Kindergarten Association's shift to an e-portfolio platform. The second section of this Chapter demonstrates how processes of self-formation shape teachers' truths and subjectivities through the internalisation of power. As Foucault (1986) claims, this internalisation is a technique of self-governance and can be described as 'technologies of self'. I argue this is necessary work as teachers' truths do not just occur, they are constituted within complex networks of power within neoliberal modes of governance.

The Chapter contributes to answering three of the research questions. To recap, Foucaultian theory is used to inquire into the ways in which knowledge/power and truth constitutes the bodies of children and teachers in the e-portfolio space. It also questions what normalising judgements are being made in this space and how these judgements might operate to intervene, restructure and improve individual's bodies. The final question investigates how power constrains and enables the bodies of teachers.

The Kindergarten Association's Shift to E-portfolios

The initiative to shift to an e-portfolio platform was an organisational one arguably influenced by neoliberal governmentality. The Kindergarten Association is subjected to the same processes as teachers, insofar as the broader effects of neoliberal governance. Marketplace competition has led to ECE services increasingly adopting new technologies and practices to remain competitive, as noted in Chapter 2. One of these technologies relate to the use of an e-portfolio system, such as Storypark and Educa for the documentation of children's learning and development. Standardised systems for the accountability of human capital is increasingly viewed as essential to remain competitive in a marketplace that values individual economic productivity (Brown, 2015; Hamann, 2009; Peters & Tesar, 2018; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021b).

The implementation of the e-portfolio system began as a soft approach, cultivating teachers' capacities by providing several modes of

professional development at the outset. Mel from Mana Kindergarten explains her early experiences:

“I did some professional development at a conference in Christchurch and there were a couple of Wellington based centres that had e-portfolios and they presented how they use it because they had been using it for quite a while, umm in their centres, so they put stuff up and I had a look and yeah, so I suppose that way you saw the probability of it and the possibilities and the positive side of, because there had been a few.....they had been using the planning features by then as well.” (Mel, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Drawing from Foucault, to ‘make’ teachers more useful the Kindergarten Association appeared to exercise disciplinary power to increase teachers’ knowledge and skills without making them a source for resistance. What I mean here is that disciplinary power is circulating to establish the truths that will guide teachers’ practice regarding implementation and use of e-portfolios going forward. This is not an intentionally coercive procedure employed by the Kindergarten Association, but an effect of the power. Moreover the invisibility of power as it silently circulates to establish the “officially sanctioned truths” of a group of people (MacNaughton, 2005, p. 5). In another example, Sandra from Rangatira Kindergarten recounts an early experience where she went to the Kindergarten Association head office to learn about e-portfolios:

“I went when one of the people that was using, developed the e-portfolios, George, I think his name was, and our Education Manager, I went up to the office and there were a few of us head teachers that sat round and he explained

it to us... I was quite inspired by him because he, it was developed in conjunction with his mother, who is a kindergarten teacher, and he was really good, very informative.” (Sandra, Rangatira Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Both Mel and Sandra appeared to see the potential of e-portfolios. For instance, Mel spoke of seeing “the probability of it and the possibilities and the positive side.” Sandra also seemed impressed with the impending shift, explaining she felt “quite inspired” by the e-portfolio platform. This was because the developer of the e-portfolio system had “explained it to us” and “he was really good, very informative.” Other teachers also expressed several different ways they have been introduced to the e-portfolio system. As Lisa explains:

“Jackie (senior teacher) took it up really quickly too and so we did a little bit of professional development with her when she was our senior teacher, apart from that, we just support each along the way... I think Jackie really supported us to understand all the features of e-portfolios initially and that was a leg in, to then explore it further. So it was really up the individual to do that and then you know you can ask questions together in the team, umm, you know, there’s always one person in every team that is a little bit more playful and will find features, and you know, talk about it, so it’s sort of ongoing professional development, it’s not just a one off, you really do have to be committed to making it work really, and finding out more.” (Lisa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Aside from their “little bit of professional development” with Jackie, the senior teacher, Lisa indicated they had supported each other as a team to learn the e-portfolio system. Lisa’s experience appears to highlight Foucault’s mechanism of ‘individualisation’. Individualisation, central to disciplinary power, situates subjects in a field of visibility making it possible to describe the individual, to track them, to monitor them and to compare them to other subjects (Foucault, 1995). Individualisation also connects with neoliberal ideology, which as discussed in Chapter 1 and 2, hinges on the production of the *homo economicus*—the entrepreneurial individual who is responsible for making choices. Hence, success or failure rests in the hands of the individual.

As Lisa stated, it was up to the “individual” to “explore it further” so they could find out what they needed to know in order to ask “questions” when they brought it back to the team. This in itself can be understood as a mechanism of power, the power of surveillance. Lisa is visible to her colleagues through the mechanism of surveillance. Therefore, if she chose not to explore it further, she could be punished for non-compliance by others who would be more conversant with the software. Equally, those who are conforming could potentially be praised/rewarded by their compliance through enhanced ease of use. The efficiency of disciplinary power is that Lisa chose to perform in the ‘right’ way, that is, by asking her colleagues “questions” about the e-portfolio system as they learned together. The efficiency of disciplinary power is in the capillary style circulation. In this case, the multiple gazes of Lisa’s colleagues watching her, individualising her, compelling her to conform.

Like Lisa, Karen mentions the influence of her team in the uptake of e-portfolios. Her conversation illuminates the multiple gazes that can be cast upon her actions producing a docile subject. Consider the following example as she shares her memory of learning about the shift to an e-portfolio system:

“It came about as a group decision really, a team decision, umm, there was discussion about it, I think, perhaps our senior teacher had muttered a bit about e-portfolios and another kindergarten was doing it or had started it anyway and umm so for Sandra’s professional development she decided she would look into it and see it was going to be ok for us to use as a team, as a group, so umm she found it quite good so it was brought back to the team to decide.” (Karen, Rangatira Kindergarten, 23 October 2018)

Indicating the circulation of power, Karen spoke of the “senior teacher” who had “muttered a bit about it,” as well as knowing of another kindergarten who was just starting/using e-portfolios. Karen also mentioned “Sandra” had looked “into it” to see if e-portfolios would be worthwhile to “use as a team, as a group” and had “found it quite good.” Karen’s comments illustrate normalisation processes, insofar as those technologies of power that discipline one into conforming to the norms of the one’s group (Foucault, 1995). Normalisation is the complex arrangement of power that forms the institutionalisation of the norm; that is, what is classified as normal and reflects the inescapable standards that construct and define social meaning (Feder, 2014). The multiple gazes of the senior teacher and Karen’s colleagues operate to ensure she acts in the ‘right’ ways according to their institutionalised norms.

Whilst Karen’s conversation above reflects the external influences of power she simultaneously internalises norms and in recognising herself as part of the group she spoke in ways that induced and extended the norms. To elaborate, Foucault (1993) explains that through ‘technologies of power’ subjects are both “objects of knowledge and at the same time “objects of domination” (p. 203). “Technologies of the self,” on the other hand, refer to the subject as self-forming, whereby “the subject

is led to observe himself, analyse himself, interpret himself, recognise himself as a domain of possible knowledge” (Foucault, 2002, p. 461). Karen’s conversation demonstrates how different stakeholders influence her self-formation and subjectivities as a teacher. Through relations of power circulating between herself, her senior teacher and teaching colleagues she is compelled to adopt group norms so as to be seen as acting in the ‘right’ ways, as noted previously. For example, although e-portfolios were “a group decision...a team decision,” she also confirmed e-portfolios were “good”.

A group/team decision seemed important to Karen because she made two specific references to this, as stated in her closing comment, “it was brought back to the team to decide.” However, as discussed earlier in this Chapter, the e-portfolio system was not optional. The Kindergarten Association had already decided to use e-portfolios across the Association, so ultimately the choice was not hers. Karen is also constituted through normalisation processes, which she appeared to willingly accept, extending the narrative by speaking e-portfolios into existence. Karen’s following comment confirms this analysis as she explains her choice to embrace e-portfolios despite her initial hesitation:

“I wasn’t interested [laughs] noooo, I didn’t want to do it, I wanted to bury my head in the sand and say ‘no, I don’t want to do it, I’m too old to learn something new,’ but I stepped up to the mark [laughs].” (Karen, Rangatira Kindergarten, 23 October 2018)

Karen’s comment above and her previous excerpt portray her as *homo economicus* as she described her choice and “stepped up to the mark.” Although she may have felt otherwise. However, in light of Foucault’s assessment of the *homo economicus* as a rational, autonomous agent, there is some alignment between Karen’s idea of self-direction, when there was little actual ‘choice’ about participation. As identified

earlier, shifting to e-portfolios was a decision by the Kindergarten Association. Therefore, regardless of what Karen wanted to do, ultimately she would have had little choice. However, as Karen expressed, although she wanted to bury her head in the sand, she did not. Potentially burying one's head in the sand would not gain Karen enough human capital to prosper within a regime of capitalism. Nor would Karen have been behaving in the 'right' way according to her colleagues, as she was also under their gaze. Hence, Karen appeared to willingly take up the subject position of *homo economicus*. She portrays herself as an entrepreneur accepting responsibility for her own success. Thus, the image of herself as a free choosing subject remains intact.

Karen's two excerpts demonstrate the ways her body is disciplined by mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality that operate to define what is important in countries that have adopted neoliberal agendas. Foucault provides useful tools to think about the ways in which these mechanisms are operating. For example, through the distribution of power and her own self-formation, Karen arguably performs a number of operations on her body so as to conform to the 'right' ways of thinking, speaking and acting without even realising she is doing so. Hence, Karen's increased docility corresponds with her increased utility as she willingly accepts e-portfolios, speaking them into existence.

Speaking certain truths into existence is what Foucault (1993) describes as a genealogy of self. Borrowing from the hermeneutic principal, Foucault (1993) argues this is "the self's iteration and social reinforcement through an ongoing verbalisation of this self-decipherment to others" (p. 200). Nonetheless, Karen's actions demonstrate the tension between discourse, power/knowledge and discipline because although Karen might have perceived herself as a free choosing subject, her choice is far from free. Expanding on my discussion, the neoliberal individual is positioned as a free choosing subject who is responsible for making their own rational choices (Brown, 2005; Hamann, 2009; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021; Sims, 2017, 2020). But, as commentators point out this does

not make them any freer (Davies, 1990; C. Taylor, 1984; Walkerdine & Lucey, 1989).

Karen and her colleagues demonstrate how the individual subject is disciplined—constrained by discourses that circulate about the right ways to think, speak and act. As discussed in chapter 3, disciplinary power is so much more effective than “sovereign” power ever was because constraint operates on the subject’s body to train and mould the body so as to only desire that which is appropriate (Foucault, 1995). On the other hand, the mechanism of restraint does not necessarily reduce the desire for that which is forbidden (T. May, 2014).

The Mechanisms of Neoliberal Governmentality

Disciplinary power helps to understand mechanisms of power in the e-portfolio space because whilst it individualises subjects’ bodies it also produces productive individuals as a key tenet of neoliberalism. Lisa demonstrates this production by speaking, thinking and acting in certain ways that reflect her conformity and productivity:

“There’s an expectation from the Association that we’re all on the e-portfolios, we’ll be using all features, not just some, so we made that switch across from wiki and google....so everything is on the e-portfolio, that’s where we do all our planning too, we don’t use any other forums.” (Lisa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Disciplinary power appeared to have a hold over Lisa’s body as she stated, “there’s an expectation from the Association that we’re all on the e-portfolios.” Owing to the “expectation” of the kindergarten management, Lisa and her colleagues have switched all their documentation “across from wiki and google....so everything is on the e-portfolio.” The technique of disciplinary power I want to draw attention to here is hierarchical observation. According to Foucault (1995),

hierarchical observation makes it possible for multiple groups to monitor the performance of each other as discussed in Chapter 3. The external expectation puts Lisa and her colleagues under surveillance where they can be observed. Surveillance is not necessarily connected directly to their performance within the e-portfolio space as yet, but in this expectation it orients and compels Lisa's body in motion. The external expectation produces tension because teachers, in knowing they are visible, behave in ways that are considered 'right' according to discourses.

The efficiency of hierarchical observation is that although teachers and children are being watched and can watch others in this space, they are also being trained to watch themselves (Foucault, 1995). Disciplinary power like the notion of neoliberal governance hinges upon the locus of governance being internalised. Power is distributed because disciplinary power makes it possible for multiple groups to monitor the performance of the bodies that inhabit the e-portfolio space. Thus, they are not only trained, they are also watched and observed through hierarchical power arrangements so as to become the "bearers of a highly particular relationship between utility and docility" (Hoffman, 2014, p. 28).

Lisa's reference to using "all the features" on e-portfolios, "not just some" highlights the mechanisms of power I have been describing above. Her conversation is a salient example of the increasing push down approach on education, controlling and regulating subjects through neoliberal procedures of standardisation and accountability (Peters & Tesar, 2018; Stewart & Roberts, 2015). Accountability features as discussed in Chapter 2 can situate teachers under surveillance through the hierarchical character of e-portfolios in which their actions are visible and answerable. Lisa is unmistakably certain of her visibility and accountability because the kindergarten management can see what she is doing at all times:

"So sitting in the office in town, they can press a button and they can see everything that everybody's doing.... I

think the association have to have a way, a valid way of reporting.” (Lisa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Lisa’s account of being under surveillance is what Foucault (1995) describes as an authoritative gaze. Teachers appear to be subjected to a field of visibility through e-portfolios, knowing at any time they can be assessed, monitored and classified as certain types of teachers because at the press of “a button” they can be watched and judged. The hierarchical character circulates through the kindergarten managers who can watch teachers to verify they meet certain standards for accountability purposes. Parents can also watch teachers to ensure their child is gaining the desired and sought after human capital as a means of success within a neoliberal society. Obviously, teachers watch children in this space because teachers assess children’s learning and development and then document it in the e-portfolio system, as is intended. However, teachers also watch their colleagues and so too do children watch teachers.

Recent studies exploring digital documentation note similar findings, suggesting the standardisation and accountability functions of e-portfolios play a central role in monitoring the performance of teachers (Kim, 2018; Knauf, 2017; White et al., 2021). White et al (2021) claim teachers in some ECE settings have to be ‘signed off’ by a ‘higher authority’ before they can upload pedagogical documentation onto the services digital platform. Lisa makes no mention of having to be signed off, nevertheless, she behaves in ways that conform to neoliberal ideals. Thus, accountability, a neoliberal mechanism of power can be an efficient means for the objectification and subjectification of teachers’ bodies in the e-portfolio space.

Lisa confirmed her compliance to hierarchical power dynamics by stating “the association have to have a way, a valid way of reporting.” Lisa’s statement is not a push back, rather she affirms the kindergarten’s practices of standardisation and accountability because she believes it

will make their practices more efficient. Consider her following comment that supports this:

“We're doing everything on it, it is actually going to make us more time efficient, and all that information more accessible across whole teams and across the association, umm but I think in all, it brings it all into one place that I can easily access, like when I'm doing my appraisal, I can easily access all the team meetings, where I've brought things to team meetings, all the planning, I can access children's planning, all our internal evaluations, you know, where I've had input, I can access video, photos, pdf's, things that I want to download, it's a big pool. I don't have to go off and reinvent things, I can simply link to it, so the likes of the senior teachers when they come in, they can click and see exactly what we're up to and come in with a much more informed position if you like, than just arriving on the day and saying, “what's everybody doing?” They are able to easily see what everybody's doing, I think it's absolutely the way forward and that's my goal, to drive other teachers to get excited about it too.” (Lisa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

According to Lisa having her work all in one place made it easier for her to access everything, as she described when she said “it's a big pool. I don't have to go off and reinvent things.” Lisa thought this would make her and her colleagues more “time efficient.” Her comment is consistent with the literature in Chapter 2, which claims the time saving aspect of e-portfolios is one of the most frequently mentioned benefits (Beaumont-Bates, 2017; Cowan & Flewitt, 2021; Hooker, 2016b; Kim, 2018). As Lisa also pointed out, e-portfolios make the senior teachers

more efficient in their work because they can look at any kindergarten and “see exactly what we're up to” and “see what everybody’s doing.” The senior teachers can ‘see’ such artefacts as, “team meetings,” “teachers’ appraisal,” “planning documentation,” “children’s planning,” “internal evaluations” and “video, photos, pdf’s,” which are all stored on the e-portfolio platform. Lisa saw this as beneficial because the senior teachers could “come in with a much more informed position.” Lisa comments demonstrate the nexus between mechanisms of neoliberal governmentality and disciplinary power in the production of docility in the e-portfolio space.

What Lisa does not see is that the e-portfolio system situates her as an object under perpetual surveillance. But as already mentioned disciplinary power reduces one’s ability to think, speak and behave in ways that might produce alternate discourses; it renders one docile (Foucault, 1995). The effect of this rendering is the production of the discursively constructed good docile teacher body in line with neoliberal governance. Stating e-portfolios are “absolutely the way forward” Lisa demonstrates how she is disciplined through hierarchical networks of power. She thinks and speaks these truths into existence as if they are her own, perpetuating existing power/knowledge and truths.

In this section Lisa and her colleagues demonstrate how the effects of power make the e-portfolio space comparable to Bentham’s Panopticon. Bentham’s Panopticon as discussed in Chapter 2 and 3 can be understood as a ‘laboratory’ that disciplines the bodies of subjects through the multiple gazes it enables. The following section continues to build on this argument. It explores how power and discourses shape teachers’ truths as they go about the neoliberal ‘business’ of assessing children’s learning and development in the e-portfolio space. I use Foucaultian thinking to demonstrate how, through the production of truths, teachers govern themselves into behaving in the ‘right’ ways. This occurs not only through their utterances, but by creating spaces where

true-and-false statements can be made to function as true (Foucault, 1994).

Truth: “Revisiting and Engaging with Their Learning”

Teachers’ habitual modus operandi during their interviews and day to day conversations in the field reflect the discourses of *Te Whāriki*. *Te Whāriki* plays a significant role in ECE as it guides curriculum planning, decision making and assessment in Aotearoa New Zealand, as noted in Chapter 1 (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). In *Te Whāriki* children are positioned as capable individuals who should have opportunities to be involved in assessment processes. The curriculum recommends such activities as, revisiting learning and planning for future learning as valid ways of supporting children’s engagement in assessment processes (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b).

The chosen excerpts in this section are particularly salient examples of other kinds of similar data. It shows that children’s engagement with their learning is a significant truth that guides teachers’ practice. Lisa from Mana Kindergarten explains her position on children’s participation with e-portfolios:

“It’s part of the curriculum, participating...like, seeing stories about themselves, seeing their learning, actually sharing it with their peers, showing other children what they are learning about...I really love it because I’ll often hear them say *‘this is what I’m learning.’*” (Lisa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

As regulated by *Te Whāriki*, Lisa appeared to connect children’s engagement with e-portfolios as being “part of the curriculum.” In acting in ways that support this truth, she is both disciplined and disciplines herself, potentially validating herself as a good teacher. Lisa engages in

subjectification processions by assimilating into the ‘right’ ways of thinking, by claiming she “really loves” the e-portfolio space. She implied she felt this way because children were “seeing stories about themselves,” “seeing their learning,” “sharing it with their peers” and “showing other children what they are learning about.” Her statements reflect the power/knowledge of assessment espoused in *Te Whāriki*. Lisa’s excerpt also produces tension. Does Lisa “love it” (e-portfolios) because children are acting in ways that reflect the “curriculum” outcomes, and in supporting children to realise these outcomes positions her as a good teacher; or does Lisa “love it” for another reason? Only Lisa will know for sure what the answer is. What Lisa demonstrates is how subjects can “actively take up discourses through which they and others speak/write the world into existence as if they were their own” (Davies, 1993, p. 13).

As Foucault (1995) reminds us, the efficiency of disciplinary power is not only in its ability to individualise subjects but in its capacity to distribute power. The ‘art of distribution’ central to Foucault’s (1995) disciplinary power plays a significant role in constituting teachers’ truths in both kindergartens because it ensures hierarchical visibility of individuals enabling normalising judgement to be made. Foucault (1995) claims, in order for disciplinary power to function some sort of judgement has to be made, merely seeing individuals is not enough. As Mischa explains in the following excerpt, she shares a similar truth to Lisa, conforming to certain institutionalised norms of Mana kindergarten:

“Before I publish the story I will invite the child to come along with me to look at the story together on their e-portfolio, talk about it, umm ask if I got it right, is this the learning that was happening? or is that was what was going on, or is that what you wanted me to say?...or I’ll say “what do you want me to say...tell me your words” I’ll often decipher it, I’ve had another occasion when a child said “*I’ll do it*” and she typed the whole thing to her mum

and dad, and I said can you read to me, so she was telling me what she was writing, "now I've done the monkey bars can we take my friends home to my house again,' so the story was full of lots and lots of letters because she was on the computer writing the story, but often I'll use it, I like children to look at it, and to revisit it." (Mischa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Mischa's conversation appeared to demonstrate Foucault's (1980) point about behaving in ways that both reflect institutionalised norms and reinforce and extend them. As Foucault (1980b) observes, truth is inherently connected to power/knowledge that produce and sustain it, as well as the effects of power which 'induce' and 'extend it'. Like Lisa, Mischa espouses the power/knowledge of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b), for example, she "likes children to look at it, and to revisit it." Normative discourses in ECE both in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally recognise children as participating and contributing to pedagogical documentation (Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; Kumpulainen & Ouakrim-Soivio, 2019; Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b; White et al., 2021). Thus, Mischa creates the conditions for this to occur—she induces it.

As Mischa points out, "I will invite the child to come along with me to look at the story together on their e-portfolio." Her conditions provided space for children to "talk about it" (their assessments) so she could confirm if she had "got it right" by checking "the learning that was happening." She also asked children if she could document their learning in their own words, stating "what do you want me to say...tell me in your words." In inducing power Mischa also extends it because there is an expectation that she needs to produce assessment documentation that represents the child's voice even if it is produced in a manner that might be somewhat overt and potentially demanding. Hence, she reinforces the

view that there must be a child's voice in the documentation to affirm its 'correctness'. In questing for the 'right' answer, Mischa demonstrates her compliance with these dominant discourses, inducing and extending the truth that there needs to be a 'right' that is confirmed by the child.

Foucault (1995) suggests normalising discourses are highly efficient mechanisms of power that operate through surveillance. The all-seeing gaze ensures Mischa monitors, trains and regulates her behaviour knowing that she could be watched at any time. But at the same time she monitors, trains and regulates the behaviour of children. In knowing she is visible Mischa is both subjected to social control whilst simultaneously providing the conditions for the objectification of children. The conditions of the objectification of children is the gaze that situates children as objects to be studied, to assure a certain amount of 'correctness' in the details held about them in e-portfolios. Therefore, this space has the potential to subjugate and silence children's bodies because power dynamics can be created to define what is considered as correct/right/normal. Normal or norms are problematic from a dichotomous perspective because in identifying anything normal, Mischa can also identify what is "abnormal" (Foucault, 1995, p.199).

Mischa's exercise of power is not intentional, far from it, it highlights the invisibility of power that circulates through complex relations of power/knowledge and truth. What I mean is, that whilst power silently operates on Mischa's body, she simultaneously internalises what it means to be a good teacher and then thinks, speaks and behaves in ways that confirm this. Speaking neoliberal ideals into existence both as an individual and as a collective, Mischa demonstrates how mechanisms of power operate to constitute her thoughts, speech and actions.

Drawing from Foucault (1993), Mischa is a subject who practices the examination on herself by checking if she has handled herself by the "rules of conduct" (Foucault, 1984a, p. 12). Thus, discourses are powerful vehicles for constituting truth because they act as mechanisms of power,

legitimising certain knowledge, which is then validated by individuals and perpetuated in a cycle of subjugation and privilege (Foucault, 1984a). In this way Mischa legitimises and constitutes herself as a subject of knowledge and as a knowing subject within an environment that induces and extends neoliberal ideals. As Mischa brought her truths into existence through her dialogue and actions, she made self-recognition possible. To recap, self-recognition is the way we realise ourselves through the discourses we espouse as truth (Butler, 2005, p. 22). In another example, Felicity explains her views on children's participation, which reflect her self-recognition as she espouses certain institutional truths of Mana Kindergarten:

“E-portfolios allow them [children] to be engaged in their assessment and make up their own mind about it because it's so much easier to revisit and edit...and yeah, and intentional, [teachers] being intentional about taking the opportunity to revisit the learning with the child and to hear the child's voice in their own assessment, and you can see that with the story I wrote here [points to it]. It's quite common here, children are always checking on their own progress in their e-portfolio, which is great because that's what's supposed to happen, what we have to do.” (Felicity, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Felicity references some key aspects central to assessment as prescribed by *Te Whāriki*, such as “the opportunity to revisit the learning with the child” and “the child's voice in their own assessment.” Felicity also drew on the disciplinary technique of totalisation by indicating “It's quite common here” implying she was part of a group of teachers that think, speak and act the same way. Gore (1998) claims “totalisation” is “the specification of collectivities,” it gives “collective character” to a group and “forms a readily recognisable element of pedagogical activity” (p. 179).

As Lisa identified earlier in this section, Felicity also mentioned children's participation as something that is "supposed to happen" therefore, "we have to."

Felicity's words implied that despite not having the freedom to make her own choice, she still chose to view children's engagement with e-portfolios as "great," indicating her subjection to normalisation processes. This reiterates my discussion on normalisation being a pervasive force of power because Felicity adopts group norms despite her words highlighting underpinning issues of control and power. Felicity and Lisa's dialogue demonstrate how power/knowledge and truth are intrinsically linked to the normalising power of neoliberal discourses.

As mentioned earlier in this Chapter, teachers' truths are constituted by multiple discourses within the neoliberal context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Whilst the teachers' truths so far have implicated *Te Whāriki*, Felicity also connects children's participation with e-portfolios alongside rights discourses. She spoke about children "making up their own mind" in regard to their assessments. Felicity is not alone in espousing discourses on 'rights'. Teachers at Rangatira Kindergarten also speak about children's rights and this underpinned their truths and practices in this space.

Truth: "They have Just as Much Right to be Heard as Anyone Else"

"Children have just as much right to be heard as anyone else" (Tina, Rangatira Kindergarten, 28 August 2018) or similar phrases were typical responses from teachers across the two Kindergarten contexts. Tina and Ruby's conversations in this section are characteristic of this. Espousing specific slogans or phrases reflects how power operates on the bodies of subjects through training and enculturation (Stickney, 2012). As Tina, a teacher from Rangatira Kindergarten demonstrates, she uses specific well-known phrases to validate children's right to be heard, another dominant truth about e-portfolios:

“We *should* be allowing children the right to be heard in their assessments, to express their opinions and ideas about things, and about us, as adults to put value on that as well, to use that and not too... well they have just as much right to be heard as anyone else and we should put value on that, in a nutshell. We should see them equally, as having the same voice as our adult voice. I think sometimes because they are younger means their views are pushed under the carpet and we don’t think they have a right, but I guess it’s allowing them that right, that right to be heard from like, the curriculum, and the Convention aspect anyway.” (Tina, Rangatira Kindergarten, 28 August 2018).

Tina made numerous references to rights discourses, including the UNCRC when she referred directly to “the Convention.” She explained children have “the right to be heard in their assessments” and “to express their opinions and ideas about things.” The interest in giving children voice has become increasingly important in dominant discourses in ECE in recent years (De Sousa, 2019; Kumpulainen & Ouakrim-Soivio, 2019; Peters & Kelly, 2011; Te One, 2011). Tina shaped her discussion by adding children have “the same voice as our adult voice” and “we should see them equally”. Tina’s concern in children’s rights also connects with *Te Whāriki* as she spoke of “the curriculum” also providing space for the voice of the child.

Tina’s conversation implicates neoliberalism because the productive neoliberal citizen is an autonomous individual with ‘rights’ (Loveridge et al., 2010). Hence, she demonstrates how teachers’ truths and subjectivities are constituted through multiple discourses. But Tina is also objectified, in the same way she objectifies children, insofar as her performance is always under review. Therefore, she is compelled to behave in ways that conform to dominant discourses. Tina exhibited her

conformity as she discussed how adults “should put value on” hearing children’s voices and creating spaces for them to be involved with their e-portfolios. She appeared to attribute this to her belief that “sometimes because they are younger means their [children’s] views are pushed under the carpet.” Her words also implied that perhaps she and others have not always considered children’s views because she added that “we” don’t always “think they have a right.”

Tina’s emphasis on the word “*should*” at the outset of her conversation also implicates Foucault’s (2002) self-formation. As explained in Chapter 3, self-formation is the ongoing internalised processes of subjectification that enables her to position herself as a good teacher. Her view of a good teacher in this context might be understood as allowing children the right to be heard in the e-portfolio space. In a similar example taken from my field notes, Ruby, another teacher at Rangatira Kindergarten also spoke about children’s right to participate with e-portfolios, using the language of Article 12 in her terminology:

“...when it comes to their e-portfolios, children are given opportunities to contribute their opinions and views on all matters that are relevant to them...so for me, thinking about the ways we do that.” (Ruby, Rangatira Kindergarten, 4 September 2018)

Like Tina, Ruby also spoke of children having “opportunities to contribute their opinions and views,” presumably in reference to Article 12 of the UNCRC. Power was operating externally and internally as Ruby considered how she might facilitate this in her practice, potentially modifying her behaviour to fit with norms. Ruby’s reference to “we” suggested some shared truths at Rangatira Kindergarten demonstrating the disciplinary techniques of totalisation and classification, as noted earlier in the Chapter. The power of ‘we’ is in the establishment of the norm. Ruby’s conversation demonstrates the complexities of power as she

is disciplined and disciplines herself through dominant discourses to the 'right' way of thinking, speaking and behaving. Arguably, disciplinary power has diminished Ruby's capacity to produce alternate ways of being, rendering her body 'docile' (Foucault, 1995).

Tina and Ruby's comments demonstrate how children's participation in the e-portfolio space is intrinsically linked to adult views about their participation. However, these views are not necessarily the views of children. As discussed, teachers' views are situated within neoliberal modes of governance that prepare children for the future as productive citizens (Giroux, 2013). Their conversations do not account for the ways children might use e-portfolios without the control and regulation of adults, that is, the freedom and choice to use them as they might want to. Control and regulation problematise the e-portfolio space because notions of freedom and choice underpin neoliberal governance, but this does not necessarily make teachers and children any freer.

The nexus between 'freedom and choice' and 'regulation and control' is interesting because freedom and choice are in themselves a form of control—control over oneself (Smith, 2012). A salient example of this connection was demonstrated in Karen's discussion earlier in the Chapter when she "stepped up to the mark". However, on one occasion Felicity appears to consider children's freedom in the e-portfolio space. As she explains:

"We don't have e-portfolios freely accessible, so we're the gatekeepers, children don't have the freedom to access it themselves on child friendly devices, so they do have to go through us with our laptop, or with the Smart TV, kind of thing to get to it, so it inhibits them.... I think it's [e-portfolios] quite young at the moment and I look forward to seeing access for children's freedom, so they can get onto it and they can access it and contribute to it, it would be really cool, it would make their voice a lot

louder, they [the developers] have a wee way to go yet.”
(Felicity, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Felicity identified teachers as “the gatekeepers” of children’s e-portfolios because children have to “go through” teachers to access them. She thought this “inhibits” children’s participation because it limited their “freedom” to access their learning when they wanted to, and on “child friendly devices.” The notion of ‘gatekeepers’ produces tension because it creates a powerful powerless dichotomy. These dualisms are typically enmeshed in power orders, which render each binary on one side of a hierarchy, such as powerful or powerless, good or bad, true or false and so forth (Larson, 2014). Felicity also questioned children’s “freedom” in this space. However, her view of freedom differs from Foucaultian freedom. To recap, Foucaultian freedom is an exercise which exists within relations of power in which subjects are free to choose how they will act (Foucault, 1982). I return to this later because what I want to draw attention to here, is the unequal power relations between teachers as ‘gatekeepers’ and children. At this precise point there are no power relations because power is yet to be exercised. When it is exercised Felicity and the children are free to decide how to respond.

Felicity puts children’s “freedom” in this space squarely in the hands of the developers. Hence, there is tension in her and her colleagues’ conversations because on the one hand, they talk of children’s rights—the right to be heard, to participate in matters concerning them and to have a voice. On the other hand, this appears to be only at times and in the ways that suit teachers according to their truths; the teacher chooses, the child does not. Thus, the powerful powerless dichotomy remains intact. Mel’s conversation also demonstrates this dichotomy, as she outlines the available technology for children’s use at Mana Kindergarten:

“They [children] have the iPads, they have two of those,
plus the teachers’ ones, umm, and there is the big screen

out there, but it's probably easier for us to access our own laptops with them, it's probably the easiest way because you know where stuffs saved and can access it easier." (Mel, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

The big screen Mel referred to was not available for children to use without an adult because it required connection to a laptop. As Mel mentioned, children did not have access to laptops independently. She explained there were two iPads available for children to use, although she said "it's probably easier for us to access our own laptops with them." Mel said this was because teachers "know where stuffs saved" and "can access it easier." Presumably, Mel meant teachers could access it easier because they knew where information was stored, rather than relying on children's capabilities, however this was unclear. What did seem clear is that regardless of my interpretation, teachers 'are' and 'do' position themselves as having more power than children in this space. As portrayed by Felicity "children don't have the freedom" that adults do, so adults have more power. Therefore, despite teachers' good intentions of involving children in their learning there is the potential to subjugate and silence children's bodies in the e-portfolio space.

Children's limited access in the e-portfolio space is consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Some studies reveal that children's physical access to their e-portfolios is diminished or in some cases non-existent (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; Cowan & Flewitt, 2021; Goodman & Cherrington, 2015a; Hooker, 2016b; Lupton & Williamson, 2017). However, there is complexity here because when children gain physical access via the "gatekeepers" as Felicity pointed out, e-portfolios provide what Steele (2007) describes as 'intellectual access' because they are understandable to children. For example, through the videos and photographs which are less reliant on the written word (Knauf & Lepold, 2021). Nonetheless, teachers still regulate children's physical access to their learning. Therefore, issues of control in the e-portfolio space

continue despite the progressive ways that teachers appeared to be using e-portfolios with children.

This section has demonstrated teachers' truth surrounding children's rights. Providing opportunities for children to be heard in this space connects with the dominant discourses that espouse this truth. Therefore, power operates to induce and extend norms.

Truth: “Actively Involved Not Just...umm...Tokenism”

As discussed earlier in the Chapter the shift to e-portfolios was a decision by the Kindergarten Association. However, each kindergarten is responsible as to how they implement and use them within their individual contexts. Both Mana Kindergarten and Rangatira Kindergarten were quick on the uptake of e-portfolios, as previously noted. They have been using e-portfolios since the Association made the decision to change. The teachers estimated this occurred around 2013. Therefore, at the time of data collection teachers have been using e-portfolios for approximately five years.

Whilst both kindergartens are regulated by the same discourses, their truths are context specific with both services using e-portfolios in different ways with children. Drawing from Foucaultian theory, truths are understood as partial and situated. Therefore, what is constituted as truth in one context can only be understood as situated within particular power/knowledge relations within that context. Consider for example, Rangatira Kindergarten. At the time of data collection they had only recently shifted to teaching children how to use technology to engage more directly with their e-portfolios. Prior to this teachers were using e-portfolios primarily as a tool to share children's learning and development with parents.

Mana Kindergarten, on the other hand, prefer to use e-portfolios as a tool 'with and alongside children'. 'With and alongside children' being a specific phrase espoused in *Te Whāriki* regarding children and teachers meaningful social relations (Ministry of Education - Te Tāhuhu o te

Mātauranga, 1996, p. 24). Despite their different practices, both Mana and Rangatira Kindergarten view children's participation as 'active' in line with their respective truths. I argue the differences in their discursive practices do not make children's participation any less active in either context, nor does it make children's learning any less meaningful. Instead, it highlights the situatedness of truths; they are value-laden and context specific, they are partial-truths.

Making judgements about the 'right' sort of e-portfolio participation connects with my discussion on truths being partial and situated. As mentioned, the discursive practices of teachers at Rangatira Kindergarten show a move to teaching children the mechanics of using e-portfolios so they can access their learning more independently. These practices emerge through complex networks of power as teachers draw from multiple truths. Most notably, neoliberal governance as it constitutes the discursive structure and formation of ECE services in Aotearoa New Zealand. Karen from Rangatira Kindergarten talks about the shift in their practice. Consider how she implicates neoliberalism by talking of the "strategic plan" and "reviews" in her kindergarten:

"Using e-portfolios with children in our strategic plan, umm, around our strategic plan and our reviews and umm, we've been thinking.... trying to get the children's voice in there somehow, and to be able to do that for their agency...then to revisit, it's that, it's that movement of progress as well, how do they [children] get to see their progress unless we are reminding them of what they were like and how they progress." (Karen, Rangatira Kindergarten, 23 October 2018)

Karen's mention of the "strategic plan" and their "reviews" show teachers' visibility because such accountability practices reflect mechanisms of surveillance. Surveillance produces tension because it

disciplines her into conformity, as is the case in here, because Karen justified their shift by drawing from other truths to defend their decision. For example, children's rights and agency. Karen articulated they had been thinking about ways "to get the children's voice in" their assessments so children could "revisit" their learning for "their agency." Presumably this would lead to what Tina described as children being "actively involved." As she goes on to explain:

"We're empowering them [children] with the skills so they are able to communicate their ideas...and supporting their own language and supporting their understanding of what ways they can contribute and then giving them the opportunities, once they have those skills...so, they are actively involved not just...umm..tokenism." (Tina, Rangatira Kindergarten, 25 September 2018)

Supporting children to be 'actively involved' in ways that provided them with opportunities to enact agency appeared to underpin the discursive practices of Tina and her colleagues. This would presumably make participating more meaningful to children and not just "tokenism." However, providing ways for children to be actively involved with their learning is an ongoing challenge for many educators (Knauf & Lepold, 2021). Some commentators claim a digital platform can encourage children's agency and participation with their pedagogical documentation (Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2020). Children's active and meaningful participation with their e-portfolios is a truth that is shared at Rangatira Kindergarten as Karen explains:

"We're working towards making it meaningful to them...we're teaching them to use the tablets... then they can choose to do it, they are the ones that want to, they

are driven by themselves.” (Karen, Rangatira Kindergarten, 11 September 2018)

Karen appeared to assume that if children “choose” to engage with their e-portfolios then they “want to’. Therefore “making it meaningful to them.” This is another example of tensions produced by power dynamics in the e-portfolio space because these are adults’ perceptions not children’s. Nonetheless, teachers demonstrated an intentional effort to behave in ways that facilitated children’s meaningful and active participation. Micha, from Mana Kindergarten demonstrates the situatedness of truths as she explains how children actively participate with e-portfolios at her kindergarten:

“We sit together and look at their learning on the e-portfolio....I think it has huge value to them, you know, building a child’s sense of mana, and the knowledge of themselves as a learner... they will tell you about what they are learning or what they want to learn, the e-portfolio has that value.... so we think that’s got to help build the mana of the child and their sense of themselves as learners and capable of contributing in an active capacity, not like before, with the paper ones.” (Mischa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2020)

From Mischa’s perspective, sitting alongside children was an opportunity for children to contribute “in an active capacity” and to choose what they might like to learn in the future. She appeared to draw on the dominant discourses of individualism, choice and agency, indicating the importance of children seeing themselves as “capable of contributing” to their e-portfolios. She used such phrases as “they will tell you about what they are learning” and “what they want to learn” to give agency and choice to children. However, like Karen from Rangatira

Kindergarten, Mischa demonstrated how dominant discourses can legitimise certain power/knowledge. As Foucault (1984a) claims, power/knowledge is then validated and perpetuated in cycle of privilege and subjugation.

What I mean is, Mischa appeared to privilege teachers' voices when she suggested e-portfolios have "huge value to them" [the children]. However, her perspectives are influenced by neoliberal ideology in terms of what constitutes value. Value, like quality is another loaded word within neoliberal ideology that has taken on economic valances, thus, value can be understood as contributing to the production of human capital. Moreover, as pointed out teachers' interpretations are constructed through an adult lens. Such views are not necessarily the views children have about what meaningful and active participation means to them. Nor whether e-portfolios have 'huge value to them'.

The construct of choice also produces tension within neoliberal governance because neoliberal ideals presuppose the subject to be a free choosing calculating individual who makes rational and responsible decisions based on their best interests (Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a). However, the neoliberal subject is so profoundly integrated into the governmentality of macro-economic growth and prosperity that they are effectively subordinated and sacrificed to the larger purpose (Brown, 2005). This produces tension because teachers think they are providing children opportunities to be agentic. Yet, they are simultaneously assimilating them into neoliberal ideology, which is characterised by subordination to macro-economics and homogenous thinking. It could be argued then, that if children freely choose to participate with their e-portfolio then this is evidence in itself of assimilation. Thus, their subordination to mechanisms of neoliberalism (see Chapter 6).

Like Karen and Mischa, Ruby's subordination to neoliberal ideology seems evident as articulated in their shared views. Ruby suggests once children have mastered the mechanics of e-portfolios they will be free to choose when they use them. She explains:

“It's driven more from me at the moment but that's because we're at the beginning stages of using the e-portfolios with children, so we are getting the children familiar with technology so they can actually access it themselves....we're teaching them how to use it, the mechanics of it... then it will be driven by the child, they choose when they want to do it, that will be more meaningful.” (Ruby, Rangatira Kindergarten, 28 August 2018)

Ruby's truth is constituted through the available discourses and subject positions. As I have mentioned elsewhere, Ruby draws on 'totalisation' to justify and validate her interpretation. She classified herself as part of a specific group of teachers who share similar views about children's participation with e-portfolios using words, such as “we're” and “we.” On another occasion, Ruby spoke from an individual perspective providing some insight to her subjectification as a self-forming subject:

“E-portfolios allow children to revisit things in a much more meaningful way, and they can take ownership, and want to include things in it as well, yeah, whereas I guess before, I don't even know if before children ever really got to see it.” (Ruby, Rangatira Kindergarten, 11 September 2018)

The 'before' Ruby talked about, was her reference to how they [teachers] had previously used e-portfolios as a tool for documenting stories and sharing children's learning with families. Ruby perceived this new way as overcoming the shortfalls of the old way because e-portfolios were not something that she thought “children ever got to see.” This in itself is not overly surprising as the difficulties of involving children in

pedagogical documentation is widely recognised (Duncan & Te One, 2014; Graham et al., 2015; Huang et al., 2016; Ibrahim et al., 2021; Peters & Kelly, 2011). According to Ruby, using e-portfolios with children meant they “can take ownership.” Her words implied taking “ownership” would be positive, because it would be “much more meaningful” to children, connecting it with dominant discourses that frame her thinking. However, various discourses of ownership reveal subjects are increasingly exposed to harsh, unstable and exacting demands of market forces that judge them in terms of efficiency, productivity, financial burden and cost (Hamann, 2009).

Nonetheless, what is significant in Ruby and her colleagues’ discussion is that children are learning the mechanics of certain digital technologies so they can access their e-portfolios more independently and without “gatekeepers.” As Felicity pointed out earlier children “can actually access it themselves.” This appears to be the first time in ECE e-portfolio research that children have both physical and intellectual access to their e-portfolios in ways that have not previously been documented. Tina confirms the shift in their practice, explaining how they previously used e-portfolios as a tool to share learning with parents rather than children:

“We just would use it for parents, learning stories, video’s umm...but using it with children is still new for me, and umm, it’s exciting umm, yeah, yeah, I feel like, umm...it makes the whole, umm, the whole documentation of their learning feel more purposeful when you’re, umm getting in there and involving the children.” (Tina, Rangatira Kindergarten, 18 September 2018)

Tina, Karen and Ruby’s comments demonstrate how teachers at Rangatira Kindergarten share similar truths on what children’s ‘active and meaningful’ participation means to them. Drawing for dominant

discourses such as *Te Whāriki* they constitute themselves as good teachers. *Te Whāriki* states “Children develop by participating actively in the opportunities that are available to them. These typically involve collaboration with adults and other children” (Ministry of Education - Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1996, p. 137). Teachers’ dialogue demonstrates how their perspectives are constituted partially through discourses, partially through their group membership and partially through their individual views.

Sandra, also a member of the above group explains her individual thoughts about involving children with e-portfolios, linking it to her perception that children enjoy this space:

“I think they really enjoy their e-portfolio, I think they really enjoy it when I bring my tablet out and we use it and record umm, their voices especially lately when I’ve used a different approach and put it down, instead of putting it in their face recording them or whatever, I put it down beside them and I think they have really enjoyed seeing themselves and...and are conscious of it, but in a fun sort of a way, and they love to see it being played it back. Then we laugh and chat about it, (laughs) you know, that’s important to get their comments, like hearing their voices.” (Sandra, Rangatira Kindergarten, 19 September 2018)

Sandra’s discussion gave the impression that the social interaction that was now occurring between her and the children in this space was an improvement. She made several references to children’s pleasure, as well as her own. She felt children, “really enjoyed seeing themselves” and “they love to see it being played it back.” She implicated herself when she said, “we laugh and chat about it.” Her discussion connects with e-portfolio studies that identify children and teachers enjoy pleasurable

relationships within this space, as discussed in Chapter 2. That is, not Foucaultian counterattacking pleasure, but the readily recognisable pleasure that connects with discourses of attachment and professional love.

Sandra explained their enjoyment was because she was using a “different approach” than she had previously. This confirms what other teachers had also stated. Sandra went on to say she no longer put “it in their face” to record them inferring this was a less invasive method. Presumably putting it on the table beside children meant Sandra was attempting to reduce the power relations that were more obvious when she had it “in their face”. Nevertheless, Spyrou (2011) claims unequal power relations between adults and children are problematic because they can mean children’s contributions are influenced unduly by adults through normative discourses.

Sandra’s perception about children being “conscious of it” potentially confirms her awareness that e-portfolios could be a tool for surveillance. Other studies have also suggested digital documentation can be a method of surveillance to ‘see’ children (White et al., 2021). Kim (2018) claims, the visibility of teachers’ discursive practices are also under the watchful eye of the hierarchy. Such visibility enables disciplinary power to function effortlessly (Foucault, 1995). Therefore, as I have suggested elsewhere, any data in children’s e-portfolios can be used to intervene, restructure and improve future individuals. The authoritative gaze is also cast upon teachers through the process of collecting data. My discussion adds weight to my earlier argument that e-portfolios can be described as a pervasive means for the control and regulation of the bodies of children, as well as teachers. Thus, the discursive practices of Sandra and her colleagues combine to create the social relations that express the ideology of neoliberal governance. But, arguably their practices are a significant step forward in children’s physical and intellectual access to their e-portfolios.

Mel, from Mana Kindergarten like the other teachers in this section, suggests e-portfolios are more meaningful than the traditional paper portfolios. Drawing from digital discourses she explains:

“It’s the whole visual thing, the world is a lot more visual than it used to be, you know, it gives them something more than the old paper ones, it opens it up I think, it’s in the moment as well, I think it’s just what they like these days.” (Mel, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Although she does not specifically use the word ‘meaningful’ Mel implies it by suggesting, “it gives them something more than the old paper ones.” Elaborating, she suggests the ‘more’ is due to “the whole visual thing,” it opens it up,” “it’s in the moment” and “it’s just what they like these days.” She appeared to be referring to digitalisation, but that is my interpretation, rather than her specific words. I took her reference to the world being “a lot more visual than it used to be” to mean the increasing ubiquity of digital technologies in all areas of our lives, which is widely documented (Buntting et al., 2015; Eckhoff, 2017; Knauf, 2019; Knauf & Lepold, 2021; Ministry of Education - Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017; Parette et al., 2010; Santamaria, 2020). Other teachers at Mana Kindergarten share similar views about children’s use of technology in ECE, connecting this with their justification of using e-portfolios with children.

Truth: “They’re Digital Natives, it’s the Language They Understand”

Felicity is one of the teachers who echoes Mel’s views. In the following excerpt she refers explicitly to digital discourses suggesting it is the language of children:

“They’re digital natives, it’s the language that they understand. It’s a format they understand, and umm, therefore more accessible to them, they can do it too...unlike when we print, when we go away and write the story in the magic place and it would magically appear in the old paper portfolio, they can be more part of that process, they can understand the digital process, I think in that way, the e-portfolio system has taken huge steps towards children being involved in their assessments and learning.” (Felicity, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Felicity’s terminology of ‘digital native’ was introduced by Prensky (2001) who categorises human beings into two specific groups. Using the metaphors ‘digital immigrants’ and ‘digital natives,’ he describes people born before the year 1980, as digital immigrants and those born after 1980, as digital natives (Prensky, 2001). Prensky (2001) claims, that although digital immigrants can adapt to their new environment, they will always be rooted in the past (Prensky, 2001). Digital natives have an increased and inherent capacity for the acquisition of digital skills because they are “born to be digital” (Lips et al., 2017, p. 11). Felicity appeared to agree with this perspective as she said “it’s the language that they understand” because they comprehend the “format” of technology. She seemed to think due to children’s digital currency, e-portfolios have “taken huge steps towards children being involved in their assessments and learning” as opposed to the “old paper portfolios.”

Felicity also mentioned children had previously not been part of the assessment process because assessment was something that teachers did on their own in “the magic place” and stories would “magically appear” in children’s paper portfolios. Lisa, another teacher at Mana Kindergarten thinks teachers should be considering ways of using e-portfolios with children if they are not already doing so:

“I mean children love technology, we know that, so they're excited about it too and I think we need to be on the same page and model appropriate use.” (Lisa, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Whilst teachers spoke positively about children’s engagement with e-portfolios, Lisa hints at wider tensions surrounding their participation with digital technologies, specifically “appropriate use” of technology. Continuing her discussion, Lisa argues for the use of e-portfolios with children:

“We've always pushed for it, even though we've had opposition from people in other kindergartens saying technology, like the e-portfolios, for example...they shouldn't be available to children. We're saying, actually children need to learn, if they learn to use it appropriately now and use it for their learning. Our belief is that when they become teenagers, they will make better decisions around, you know, it's not like taking something away and saying you can't use it, it's not safe, I mean, the road's not safe is it? But we still have to teach children to use it appropriately, same diff with technology, and you'll know that, coz they love it, there's a place for it, and our children don't sit on it for long periods of the day and e-portfolios are an appropriate technology.” (Lisa, audio recorded semi-structured interview, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Thus far, I have not spent a great deal of time discussing how one disciplines the ‘self’ through power, although I have spoken of it often. What I am referring to is Foucault’s ‘technologies of self’. Lisa’s conversation provides a good opportunity to look closer at these

'technologies'. To recap, 'technologies of the self' describe the self-governing processes through which one locates oneself as a particular kind of subject (Foucault, 1986). This occurs as a result of internalising power as opposed to 'technologies of power,' which are external forces of power. In the above excerpt, Lisa performed a number of acts on herself in the constitution of herself as a particular kind of subject, which, as argued, is the good teacher.

During her examination, Lisa described what seemed to be a confessional account of being her own accuser, declaring "we've always pushed for it" despite the "opposition" from "others" who do not feel the same way. She supported this with various reasons as if convincing the judge that using technology such as e-portfolios is necessary for children's future. However, Lisa also played the role of the judge as she assessed her actions. As the judge, she claimed they (her and her colleagues) "have to teach children to use it appropriately." Thus, in constituting herself as a knowing subject she might also be defined as more of "a permanent administrator" of herself than a judge (Foucault, 1998, p.206). Drawing from Foucault (1993):

With regard to himself, he is not a judge who has to punish: [s]he is, rather, an administrator who, once the work is done or the year's business finished, does the accounts, takes stock of things, and sees if everything has been done correctly....a permanent administrator [her]self, more than a judge of [her] own past. (Foucault, 1993, p. 206-207)

Whilst analysis suggests Lisa has examined her actions as a process of self-formation she may have felt otherwise. Nonetheless, Lisa highlights how constitutive forces control and regulate her body through her confession as draws on the disciplinary technique of totalisation. Lisa was not the only one who drew on totalisation. Teachers collectively

classify themselves as part of the same group. Mel explains, using ‘we’ to indicate the collective truths of Mana Kindergarten:

“I think it’s really important, like the kids need access to it, they need, like, I mean it’s going to happen...we want them to be using these e-portfolio tools so that later on when they go to school or whatever, they have this creative thinking behind it that they can develop, all those kinds of things.” (Mel, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Mel showed her sameness by stating “we want them to be using these e-portfolio tools.” She explained by drawing on neoliberal ideology. As she suggested, it was their responsibility as teachers to prepare children for a future that involved “using these e-portfolio tools” because “it’s going to happen” anyway. From her perspective, preparing children for the future involved supporting them to develop the “creative thinking behind it.” Phrases such as these might be argued as giving agency to children, but only within neoliberal constructions of agency, that is, regulated into normative views that provides little scope for alternate constructions of agency. I return to this discussion in later Chapters. Felicity, another teacher at Mana Kindergarten, shares group membership because she believes digital technologies are unavoidable in today’s world:

“We just move with the times, at kindergarten we have to reflect the world out there and help children work with the world out there and digital technology is a huge part of that so, and we need help them to know how to use it, I struggle with it being used as entertainment, but as a learning tool, as a story tool, as a tool for research and investigation, I love it! As a teacher, I believe it has to...

we have to reflect the world out there in terms of how we are going to use this, and how can we maximise children's, umm, strengths with it...teach them to use it in a way that's going to benefit them." (Felicity, Mana Kindergarten, 20 August 2018)

Mentioning having to "just move with the times" located Felicity's responsibility to teach children the 'right' way as coming from some anonymous directive outside of her control—controlled by the "world out there." Taking up the subject position of teacher, she indicated it as her responsibility to support children to "work with the world out there." Like Lisa, Felicity, examines herself through subjectification processes. Through her engagement with self-formation processes Felicity has developed clear teacher subjectivities that are different to her other subjectivities. As a teacher, she saw e-portfolios "as a learning tool, as a story tool, as a tool for research and investigation" but not as a tool for "entertainment." The discursive practices of teaching are different to Felicity's private life and compelled her to conform to power relations that enabled the production of the good docile teacher.

(Un)silencing the Good Docile Teacher Body: Concluding Thoughts

This Chapter set out to reveal how power/knowledge and truth circulates to produce the good docile teacher body in the e-portfolio space. In Aotearoa New Zealand, assessment in ECE is designed to foster a democratic educational culture (Mitchell, 2018). Assessment emphasises practices that support the inclusion of children's voices, contribution from family and community and to create a culture of success (Mitchell, 2018). However, whilst teachers' truths produce discursive practices that are intended to foster the outcomes described above, analysis demonstrates that teachers are situated within the macro-structures of neoliberal governance that hinder democracy. Macro-structures assure the effects of market-based economics filter down through the layers of

society and is felt at the level of the bodies that inhabit the e-portfolio space.

Applying a Foucaultian lens to the data is useful to understand how teachers' truths are constituted within their institutionalised norms, the discursive practices of their individual kindergartens and their values and beliefs. Teachers' truths also shape their subjectivities as teachers. As teachers identify, their views are not necessarily the views of other teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, the truths I have shared in this chapter are situated partial truths.

In the first section of this Chapter, I demonstrate the influence of neoliberalism and governmentality in the shift to using e-portfolios. Attention is given to the ways in which neoliberalism and governmentality circulates to produce a set of highly complex relations whereby teachers' bodies become more useful as they become more obedient (Foucault, 1995). In analysing the teacher as both object and subject I have taken into account Foucault's 'technologies of power.' To recap, these are the external influences that connect to 'technologies of self' in which teachers demonstrate conformity to neoliberalism through their speech.

In the uptake of e-portfolios the Kindergarten Association have produced an efficient way to govern, regulate and monitor teachers' behaviour. This was presumably not the Kindergarten Association's intention at the outset given e-portfolios were initially designed to document children's learning and development, not teachers development. However, the methods of surveillance have increased and intensified over time. Hence, the Kindergarten Association has effectively played into the invisible hand of the market, conforming to mechanisms of neoliberal governance through the standardisation of e-portfolios.

The potential for surveillance in the e-portfolios space shifts e-portfolios from being a tool for documenting children's learning and development to a mechanism for disciplining children's bodies, as well as teachers' bodies. Through the constitution of individuality teachers are disciplined into certain kinds of bodies—governed, regulated and

individualised in this space. As discussed in Chapter 2, e-portfolios provide a simpler method for gathering evidence for teacher registration because teachers can integrate their registration portfolio with children's e-portfolios (Storypark, 2018). The 'real-time analytics' and the 'reporting tools' operate to objectify teachers through an authoritative gaze subjecting them to a field of visibility.

Caught in networks of power teachers become perpetually monitored alongside the children they observe and individualise. However, it's not only the Kindergarten Association management that can watch teachers, but their colleagues, parents and children. Power renders teachers visible to multiple gazes that ensure every move made in this space can be watched (Foucault, 1980). The e-portfolio space produces the good docile teacher body by turning teachers into objects of a gaze. Hierarchical observation ensures one's performance as a teacher is always under review.

The second section introduced the dominant truths that guide the discursive practices of teachers in the e-portfolio space. Drawing attention to Foucault's (1995) three specific disciplinary techniques: hierarchal observation, normalising judgement and the examination, I demonstrated how disciplinary power functions in the e-portfolio space as a highly effective mechanism of control operating to constitute teachers' truths. Teachers' conversations revealed how mechanisms of power insert themselves into their everyday lives through discourses which circulate to regulate their thoughts, speech and actions (Foucault, 1980). The significance of teachers' truths is that they shape the institutional norms and the discursively constituted practices of their individual kindergartens.

Foucault's work is equally useful for revealing unequal power relations in the e-portfolio space. These relations are made visible through the hierarchical gaze of teachers who make normalising judgements about the 'right' ways for children to participate with e-portfolios. The 'right' ways are context specific and as demonstrated by

both kindergartens are very different. Mana Kindergarten focuses on working ‘with and alongside’ children in this space. Rangatira Kindergarten provides children with opportunities to learn how to use digital tools so they can access their e-portfolios independently. Both kindergartens viewed their practices as aligned with children’s active participation, rights and agency. Rangatira Kindergarten are still in the very early stages of teaching children the ‘mechanics’ of e-portfolios. Their practices have powerful possibilities in realising children’s rights, agency and freedom in ways that are previously unexplored in research. As Felicity, a teacher from Rangatira Kindergarten suggests, until now children have had to gain access to their e-portfolios via “gatekeepers.” How this plays out is documented over the following two Chapters.

Bringing teachers’ truths to the forefront, the Chapter has demonstrated how mechanisms of power, dominant discourses and teachers’ individual and collective perspectives operate to discipline their bodies. During complex power dynamics each teacher is disciplined and disciplines themselves through Foucault’s technologies rendering themselves a good docile teacher body. This particular body is a manifestation of the pervasive and incapacitating effects of disciplinary power exercised through neoliberalism and associated discourses. This Chapter has begun to develop an argument that e-portfolios can be viewed as a contemporary manifestation of Bentham’s Panopticon. A “marvellous machine” (Foucault, 2008, p. 7) of disciplinary power for the disciplining, controlling and production of the good docile teacher body. It is time we acknowledge the effects of neoliberalism and its constitutive power on the bodies of teachers in the e-portfolio space and invent new forms of critique that produces resistance to its specific threats.

The following Chapter continues with the notion of disciplining bodies through the “marvellous machine” (Foucault, 2008, p. 7) of power that is the e-portfolio space. Picking up from where this Chapter finishes, I discuss the ways the good docile teacher body behaves in the e-portfolio space so as to perpetuate normative truths, focusing primarily on the

bodies of children. During the social interactions presented, the Chapter demonstrates how disciplinary power circulates through teachers' speech and actions to produce relations of silencing and subjugation that constitute children's bodies as docile. The examples used to illustrate the circulation of disciplinary power in this space demonstrate the neoliberal discourses of individualism, choice, freedom and agency. The emphasis on neoliberal modes of governance and associated discourses exemplifies the constitutive power of normative discourses in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Chapter 6: Producing the Good Docile Child Body

People know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does. (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 187)

This Chapter analyses the consequences of neoliberalism and teachers' discursively constituted truths on the bodies of children in the e-portfolio space. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, teachers "know what they do" and they "know why they do what they do." However, this Chapter's title, '*Producing the good docile child body*,' highlights "what what they do does" to children's bodies (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 187). The Chapter brings to light the constitutive force of power that is inextricably connected through the silencing and subjugation of 'some' bodies, 'some' times in this space. My play on the word 'some' is to represent that human activity is dynamic and changeable, as such sometimes 'some' bodies resist (see Chapter 7). Hence, the activity that occurs in the e-portfolio space influences and shifts individuals' subjectivities in different ways over time. I also draw attention to the ways in which the teachers, guided by similar truths act them out differently in their everyday lives. The hierarchy link contributes to the narrative on teachers' truths and in turn the silencing and subjugation of their bodies.

This Chapter explicates the ways in which teachers' discursive practices subjugate and silence children's bodies by diminishing children's capacities to disrupt dominant discourses. It is my intention to make visible the invisibility of power relations between children and teachers that give the impression of a harmonious agentic partnership. As already mentioned, this Chapter focuses on children's bodies, identifying some of the factors that constrain their bodies in the e-portfolio space. Therefore, it contributes to answering three research questions and the overall aim of this study. The chapter also adds weight

to my argument that the discursive truths and practices in this space are a consequence of neoliberal governance.

In recognition of the significance of subjects' bodies I paid particular attention during analysis to understand the ways children's and teachers' bodies are disciplined through networks of power. To reiterate, using Foucaultian theory reveals how power circulates during relationships with other subjects, through discourses and within specific historical and cultural contexts. Hence, power relations are not finalised but are constituted and reconstituted through the discursive practices of subjects (Foucault, 1980, 1995). These complex relations of power occur as teachers and children negotiate social interactions in the e-portfolio space. During these interactions the proximity of children and teachers means it is possible for children's bodies to be manipulated by teachers (and other children, see Chapter 7) into certain kinds of productive bodies and certain kinds of subjected bodies.

Taking this vantage point provides insight into the ways children are regulated by teachers who seek to increase children's capacities, and in doing so increase their docility. Therefore, 'what they do' in the e-portfolio space has just as much implication for the constitution of children's bodies as what they say. The types of social interactions that are explored in the following section are instructional based activities where adults' actions are produced through power/knowledge and truth.

Ruby and Ella: Truth, Practice and Regulation

As noted in Chapter 5, teachers at Rangatira Kindergarten have been teaching children the mechanics of using e-portfolios so they can access them more independently. However, I often observed teachers regulating and disciplining children's bodies; these were moments when the underpinning dimension of teachers' power surfaced. Consider the following excerpt, a salient example of other kinds of similar data. Ruby, a teacher at Rangatira Kindergarten is showing Ella, a child, how to use her tablet to record a video that will be uploaded to Ella's e-portfolio:

Ruby, smiling at Ella who is beside her, “Can you see the camera?” she asks as she points to the camera icon. “Here?” Ella responds, indicating to the icon Ruby has pointed out. “Yep,” Ruby replies to Ella. Ella touches it. “Yeah.” They look at each other and smile. “Yep...now do you know how to put it on video?” Ruby asks as she points to the button and removes her hand. Again, Ella says, “Yep,” and touches a button. Ruby continues, “That’s right...now we have to turn it around so we can see the other way.” She laughs as she manipulates the device so she can see it better. The camera is facing towards them at present. “Now this one here,” she says pointing and moves Ella’s hand out of the way. “Can you see the one with the arrows?” “Yep,” Ella replies, nodding. Ruby says to Ella, “Press that one,” and Ella presses it. Ruby continues, “Right, now, hold it up,” she says, as she starts lifting it up and then helps Ella steady it with one hand. (Ella, child, Ruby, teacher, Rangatira Kindergarten, 22 October 2018)

Ruby instructed Ella by telling her to “press that one” and “hold it up,” as guided by her truths about increasing children’s capacities in the e-portfolio space. For Ruby and her colleagues at Rangatira Kindergarten, this meant teaching children the ‘mechanics’ so they could access their e-portfolios. Hence, children could be more actively involved in ways that were agentic, as discussed in Chapter 5. However, Ruby’s practices arguably controlled and regulated Ella’s body. She used physical strategies, such as moving “Ella’s hand out of the way,” manipulating the device so she had a better view, lifting the device up and she also helped “Ella steady it with one hand.” What Ruby seems to demonstrate is her internalisation of Rangatira Kindergarten’s truths, which she then

performed through her actions. However, as Larson (2014) claims the power relations typical of these types of instructional activities can reinforce unequal power relations.

Unequal power relations are problematic for two reasons. First, they create a powerful powerless dichotomy (Larson, 2014). For example, they position Ruby as the more knowledgeable other, whilst Ella is positioned as less knowledgeable. Second, unequal power relations run counter to Ruby's truth because in increasing Ella's capacities—her utility, Ruby also increases Ella's obedience—her docility (Foucault, 1995), rather than “giving her agency” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, p. 60). On this occasion power circulates to subjugate and silence Ella's body because she was only provided access to enact agency in the ‘right’ way.

Power relations that are unbalanced have the potential to construct the image of the good docile child body, which appeared to be the case as Ella complied with Ruby's requests. However, Ella and Ruby's interaction produces tension because if Ella had not conformed in line with Ruby's truth then potentially she could be constructed as a site of improvement and in need of “rectification” (Ball, 2021, p. xv). Thus, children's access is constructed within the power/knowledge and truths of the kindergarten, that is, according to their truths. This produces tension because teachers' truths are externalised through their practices, that is, ‘what they do’ and operate to establish norms. Furthermore, power dynamics show how neoliberalism, which supposedly fosters freedom, choice and agency has the potential to subjugate and silence the ideals they stand for.

Simultaneously, disciplinary power has reduced Ruby's ability to behave in ways that might produce alternate positions for her and Ella to take up. Ruby, as a good docile teacher body is merely behaving in ways as constituted through dominant discourses, which as Foucault (1995) observes is the process of normalisation. Two discourses that influence the discursive practices of teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand are guided

participation (Rogoff, 1990) and scaffolding (Bruner, 1984). According to the seminal work of Barbara Rogoff (1990), “guidance and participation in culturally valued activities are essential to children’s apprenticeship in thinking” (p.8). In the earlier version of *Te Whāriki*, it states, “Children learn through collaboration with adults and peers, through guided participation and observation of others...” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 1996, p. 9). Although guided participation is not explicitly stated in the updated version the essence of the concept remains, influencing power/knowledge.

The term scaffolding was introduced by Jerome Bruner (Bruner, 1984). It describes the adult support provided to a child in order for them to be able to take small steps in their development that they may not be able to otherwise manage alone (Smidt, 2013). Once achieved the adult removes the scaffold (Smidt, 2013). Like the term guided participation, scaffolding is also explicitly stated in the earlier version of *Te Whāriki* but not in the revised edition. Scaffolding influences the discursive practices of teachers at both kindergartens. The two concepts, scaffolding and guided participation are significant in this study as they enable children to enact agency through their participation in culturally valued activities—the e-portfolio space.

In a similar social interaction three weeks later, Ella demonstrates her increased knowledge and skills. She can now access the e-portfolio space more independently. Ella is preparing to record a video of her friend Josey swinging across the monkey bars. The video will be uploaded to Josey’s e-portfolio as evidence of her learning and development. It is also evidence of Ella’s learning and development as she increases her capacities and agency in this space in line with teachers’ truths. As Ruby, Ella and Josey engage in this space the following conversation takes place:

“Ok, so you follow Josey,” Ruby says to the two girls as they begin to walk towards the monkey bars. Ella has the

tablet in her hand and Ruby is following slightly behind. Ruby asks, "Is it recording already Ella?" Ella stops and Ruby bends down to have a look. "Yeah, it is...see how that red button is on," she says pointing to the recording light. Ella nods, "That means it's recording," Ruby says as she stands back up again and Ella presses the stop button, "So, away you go Josey," Ruby says waving her hand to Josey as she goes towards the monkey bars. Ella has the camera facing towards the ground as she watches Josey climb onto the bars. Ruby says, "You need to make sure...if you're recording Josey...what do you need to see on the screen?" She squat down and points to the tablet. "Josey!" Ella squeals and smiles. Ruby returns her smile, "Yes, so hold it up so you can get Josey in," she tells Ella. Ella presses the record button and then places both hands on the tablet and holds it up to get Josey on the screen. Ruby stands behind her and she is bending down looking at the tablet. Ruby says, "There, so follow Josey." She swats down at camera level and Ella repositions the camera as Josey begins to swing. Forty seconds pass as Josey swings across the monkey bars with Ella recording her. When Josey reaches the other side, Ruby says, "Well done, has it finished?" Then adds, as she stands up, "Has she finished?" Ella replies, "Yep," and smiles. Ruby turns to her, "So, what do you need to do?" she asks. Still smiling, Ella stretches her arm out to pass the tablet to Josey to see. "No, before you pass it to Josey, what do you need to do?" Ruby says to Ella. "Umm...stop it?" Ella replies appearing a little uncertain. "Yep, now which button do you need to push?" Ruby asks Ella. Ella moves to stop the camera recording. "That one!" she says, pointing and then pressing it. "Good job!" Ruby responds

smiling at her. (Ella, 4-year-old child, Josey, 4-year-old child, Ruby, teacher, video recorded semi-structured activity, Rangatira Kindergarten, 15 November 2018)

Ruby appeared to reduce her scaffolding of Ella as she no longer physically held the device or moved Ella's body in ways she had previously. Instead, she crouched down behind Ella, near enough to provide verbal support when she judged Ella might need it. She also only reminded Ella to press "stop" and "record" rather than show her, which again demonstrates Ella's increasing capabilities in comparison to the previous excerpt. In order for Ruby to decrease her scaffolding, she must have also made some sort of normative judgement on Ella's capacities. According to Foucault (1995), cultivating a subject's capacities is a significant reason why normalisation operates so efficiently. It helps the body realise its potential, whilst at the same time operating as a constitutive force in the production of docile bodies (Foucault, 1995).

Normalisation processes produce tension in the e-portfolio space. On the one hand, Ruby draws on discourses of guided participation and scaffolding to support Ella to increase her capacities, thereby enabling her to enact agency. On the other hand, disciplinary power circulates to individualise Ella because in identifying what she can do it also highlights what she cannot. Ruby's discursive practices arguably link with specific disciplinary techniques that adults use to 'train and shape' (Foucault, 1995) children in culturally valued ways (Rogoff, 1990). To train and shape Ella, Ruby induces the effects of power by telling Ella she did a "Good job!" Simultaneously her words extend the effects of power because in acting in the 'right' way, Ella is also positioned as a good child. The "good job" example above shows how power circulates to produce subjected and practiced bodies—docile bodies. Arguably Ella confirms the image of a good docile body by conforming to the image of the neoliberal agentic individual.

Lisa and Jared: Same Truth, Different Practice: Just as Regulated

Mana Kindergarten, as discussed in Chapter 5, are equally passionate about children having opportunities to engage with their e-portfolios. However, Mana Kindergarten focuses on using e-portfolios ‘with and alongside’ children, rather than teaching them the mechanics of e-portfolios. ‘With and alongside’ is a familiar phrase espoused by several teachers to describe how they support children to participate in the e-portfolio space. This description is also espoused in *Te Whāriki*, whereby “all children will be empowered to learn with and alongside others by engaging in experiences that have meaning for them” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, p. 13). It is important to mention that Ruby’s practices can also be considered as ‘with and alongside’ children and not as something separate. This reflects the situatedness of truths being localised to a group of people within a specific time/place (Foucault, 1972). As was discussed in the previous Chapter, both ways of engaging children can be argued as having meaning to them. However, as I have established, ‘experiences that have meaning to children’ produces tension because it is constructed from adults’ perspectives, not children’s.

Children’s bodies in both services are just as regulated in spite of the different ways teachers enact their truths. Consider the following example where Lisa is regulating Jared’s behaviour in the e-portfolio space:

Lisa is at a small table where she is kneeling on the floor alongside Jared. Jared has Lisa’s laptop open in front of him. He is writing a story in his e-portfolio and tapping the keyboard with a degree of force which Lisa does not appear to approve. Lisa moves the laptop towards her as Jared begins to run his fingers across the keyboard as if he was playing a sweeping scale on a piano. Lisa says firmly, “Stop for a minute and have a look, because I can

see that you're running your fingers over it and you will break it." Lisa moves Jared's hands away from the keyboard. Jared sits quietly beside her and looks downwards. (Jared, 4-year-old child, Lisa, teacher, Mana Kindergarten, video recorded semi-structured activity, 4 September 2018)

Building on the previous section, Lisa also gives the impression of exercising normalising judgement to assess Jared's behaviour in line with their institutional norms. Jared's actions have not 'measured up' (real or imagined) to certain rules Lisa has for using e-portfolios so she 'punished' him by excluding him from accessing her laptop for "a minute." Punishment can be understood in Foucaultian terms as anything that raises the child's awareness of the offence they have committed (Foucault, 1995). It seems that Lisa thought withholding Jared's access to his e-portfolio for "a minute" was appropriate punishment to produce the 'right' behaviour. Nonetheless, notions of punishment like disciplining cause tension because they counter the neoliberal ideals of freedom, choice and agency. Furthermore, drawing from Chapter 5, whilst teachers encourage children's participation to enhance their agency, notions of agency are also problematic because agency is positioned as individual and positive in neoliberal contexts. Neoliberal constructions of agency focus on decisions and actions that align with the 'right' kind of agency and the ways in which children should behave from Western perspectives (Bordonaro & Payne, 2012).

Jared's behaviour is not the only network of power circulating in this dynamic. Lisa's practice as a teacher is also subjected to hierarchal observation and normalisation judgement. To recap, hierarchical observation renders individuals visible for the purpose of intervening and restructuring behaviour to produce utility and docility (Foucault, 1995). Like Bentham's Panopticon, I have argued that the e-portfolio space can be likened to a 'laboratory,' a "marvellous machine" (Foucault, 2008, p.

7). The bodies that inhabit this space are shaped, manipulated and trained in line with neoliberal governance and associated discourses. Lisa, in taking up the available subject position regulated Jared's body through power/knowledge of dominant discourses.

Chapter 5 revealed that Lisa's truths are constituted within neoliberal ideology. Therefore, her ability to recognise agency from other perspectives is reduced. For example, she arguably situates Jared's behaviour in need of 'rectifying' rather than viewing his behaviour as agency from a different viewpoint. Consider the following that occurs after Lisa resumes the activity having withheld Jared's access for a minute:

Lisa turns the laptop back towards Jared, "Let's have a look at some of these letters. What might they say do you think?" Jared looks at their images on the screen and points to them. "Oh there, see this one, there ya are," he says to Lisa. Lisa ignores his comment and asks again, "What are you saying in your story? Are you thinking about what you're writing, or are you (she pauses), or are you just enjoying...?" Her voice trails off. "I'm just thinking about it!" Jared answers and then starts banging on the keyboard with heavy fingers again. Lisa immediately stops him by removing his hands from the keyboard, "I'm going to stop you *again* for a wee minute, Jared, because I want you to think about what you are doing." (Jared, 4-year-old child, Lisa, teacher, Mana Kindergarten, video recorded semi-structured activity, 4 September 2018)

Although Lisa seemed to experience brief success redirecting Jared back to his e-portfolio, Jared appeared to have different ideas about what he wanted to do. When Jared started to bang on the keyboard again Lisa stopped him for the second time. She emphasised the word "*again*" in her

intonation. I noticed teachers habitually approached using technology with children without explanation of the rules. I am unsure whether this was because the rules were considered common-sense rules therefore, taken-for-granted that children knew them, or something else. Nevertheless, whether Jared knew the rules or not, he was behaving in ways that Lisa appeared to consider inappropriate. A normative stance, as mentioned earlier diminishes the potential for recognising agency if a child acts in ways that are not 'right'. It also situates children in a powerful powerless dichotomy whereby they are subjugated and silenced, rendered one side of a binary. As Foucault (1995) states:

Generally speaking, all the authorities exercising individual control function as the double mode: that of the binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal); and that of coercive assignment, of differential distribution (who he is; where he must be; how he is characterised; how a constant surveillance is to be exercised over him in an individual way, etc). (p. 199)

If Jared's actions were not 'right' then potentially he can be positioned in the binary division and characterised as wrong. However, although Lisa is exercising her authority, she is also caught in its networks, demonstrating the urgency with which Lisa is compelled to focus Jared on the real work of the e-portfolio space, rather than playing with the keyboard. Teachers indicated it was their role and responsibility to support children to learn appropriate ways of using e-portfolios (see Chapter 5). In line with these truths, Lisa took up the available subject position and regulated Jared's behaviour, or at least attempted to. She drew on disciplinary power's three specific disciplinary techniques hierarchal observation, normalising judgement and the examination. But in doing so, she produced a mode of exclusion, presumably so Jared

learned the 'right' way to participate. Analysing this excerpt through a Foucaultian lens demonstrates that in the 'laboratory,' that is, the e-portfolio space, teachers can try "out pedagogical experiments" (Foucault, 1995, p. 204) so as to correct children's behaviour and rid them of any "abnormality" (Foucault, 1995, p. 199). I leave Lisa and Jared here for the moment and turn my gaze inward as Lisa was not the only adult with rules. I also had rules and I expressed these explicitly to children.

Layla, Ricky and Martin: Truth, Practice and Domination

According to Foucault (1972), discourses create the conditions and rules for what can and cannot be said as thinking and acting subjects. I had two rules for children when they were using my technology to engage with their e-portfolios. The first rule was that children had to take turns. The second rule was that only one person was to be using my laptop at a time. These are typical adult-derived rules children are familiar with in ECE contexts, drawn from multiple discourses. Whilst I did not think my rules were unreasonable, I was cognisant they place me in a powerful position. My rules were to provide opportunities for all children to participate in both a timely manner and in a way that I perceived would minimise the potential for any damage to my equipment. However, this led to a narrow construction of what participation looks like in some situations. The concept of rules also creates tension because I used these rules as if everybody agrees with them. Layla, on the other hand appears to have other views.

Layla announces, "It's your turn Ricky," and begins to pass my laptop to him. Ricky takes it in one hand but pauses and looks at me apprehensively. Layla, now looking at me, says in a firm voice, "Its Ricky's turn now!" Matching her firmness, I reply, "No, it's not Ricky's turn, it's Martin's turn. Martin wanted to have a turn and he came in before Ricky. Ricky can have a turn after Martin."

Martin, appearing pleased with my remark immediately pipes up, “Yeah!” A scowling Layla reluctantly hands the laptop to Martin. (Martin, 4-year-old child, Layla 3-year-old child, Ricky 3-year-old child, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity at Mana Kindergarten, 22 November 2018)

The excerpt as with earlier examples, demonstrates common practices whereby adults use disciplinary techniques to shape children’s behaviour in line with certain norms. The norms I am referring to are the power/knowledge associated with taking turns. Taking turns is considered a valuable social skill in ECE and reflects normative Western discourses. *Te Whāriki*, for example, states “children’s developing capacities and understanding about rules and social strategies are fostered through such routines as sharing and taking turns” (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, p. 39). Reflecting on this experience, I had at the time considered I was not only conducting research *with* children I was also supporting them to learn the valued cultural skills of the dominant culture. However, as Waksler (2003) explains, adults tend to assume their rules are generally ‘right’ and children’s reasons for breaking rules are generally wrong.

Looking closely at the above excerpt, my rules also highlight the discursive practices that were being produced to regulate children’s bodies in this space. For example, when Ricky waited and looked at me for approval before he took the laptop, it suggested he knew, or at least suspected Layla was breaking my rules. Our combined actions reinforce normative discourses and the powerful powerless dichotomy. My own behaviour is what Foucault (1995) describes as hierarchical, that is, those in authority who use procedures of individualisation in order to mark exclusion through the distribution of power. Of course, at the same time I was exercising authority over Layla I was just as regulated through my own visibility in the e-portfolio space. Conscious of my visibility, I

regulated myself to behave in ways I thought were 'right' according to the individual kindergartens. Visibility ensures the subject becomes "the principle of his own subjections" (Foucault, 1995, pp. 202-203). Visibility's binary 'invisibility' also makes it possible to control the bodies of individuals, as well as groups of bodies, to behave in certain ways without being totally see-able. Hence, as self-governing individuals, subjects act in ways to induce and extend norms (Foucault, 1995).

Self-governing was the case in my own subjection. I espoused dominant truths about 'turn taking' and 'one at a time' and then produced associated discursive practices to be characterised the 'right' way. My behaviour produces problematic power relations because in acting certain ways I not only regulated children's bodies, but I also subjugated and silenced my body by limiting my behaviour options. However, even if I had an alternative, I most likely would not have deviated. I was under a hierarchy gaze, the all-seeing power of surveillance, which circulates to hold the bodies of subjects in place.

Drawing from Foucault (1995), I was caught in a complex network of power in which I myself am the bearer. Therefore, whilst I constituted myself as a certain kind of subject through my own subjectification, I simultaneously used techniques of domination to control Layla's behaviour. 'Techniques of domination' is not something outside of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1993). Domination is a specific power relationship, which is "stable, and hierarchical, fixed and difficult to reverse" (Lemke, 2002, p. 53). To elaborate, from my hierarchical subject position (the position I took up in that exact moment), Martin's turn was after Layla's because he had been there next. To me that seemed 'natural,' so I was acting in the 'right' way according to the rules that govern me, the rules I set and to the exclusion of what Layla wanted to do.

Fixed and hierarchical power relations demonstrate the pervasive effects of normalising discourses that reduce our awareness of the way in which our actions impact others. Whilst notions of disciplining children's bodies in the e-portfolio space creates tension, 'techniques of domination'

represent an even greater departure from discourses of freedom, choice and agency. Again, my discussion demonstrates the e-portfolio space as a 'Panopticon' that produces relations of power that watch, monitor and regulate the bodies of subjects through the multiple gazes that can be cast.

Penny, Ruby and Thomas: Same Truth, Different Practice, Just as Dominated

The following discursive practices are guided by Ruby's truths about being a good teacher. In this excerpt she is supporting Penny (child) to increase her capacities in the e-portfolio space by providing her with 'training'. However, power relations during this interaction reflect certain techniques of domination that subjugate and silence Penny's body because Ruby's practice on this occasion appears hierarchical and fixed:

Penny, Ruby and Thomas have been sitting at a table looking at the children's e-portfolios. Thomas wants to be videoed so he can have something new in his e-portfolio. Ruby has decided Penny can video. Thomas appears to like this idea jumping up quickly and bouncing up and down. Ruby stands up too. Ruby looks down at Penny who is still sitting at the table, and says, "Now you're going to need to hold. You hold the video...the tablet in your hand," but Penny makes no move to pick it up. Ruby tries again, "Can you hold it, Penny, in your hand...lift it up?" she says looking at Penny. Penny looks back at Ruby and shakes her head from side to side indicating 'No'. Ruby, ignoring Penny's response, more pointedly says, "Oh well, you take it over to where Thomas is going to do the wobbly bridge because he needs you to video it for him." Thomas and Ruby stand up to go but Penny remains on the chair. Ruby leans down and pushes the

tablet a little closer to Penny who still hasn't picked it up. "You carry it, Penny and we will go over to the wobbly bridge," she says, as she assists Penny to her feet. "You carry it, Penny," she says again, and Penny responds again by shaking her head to indicate no. Thomas has run off to the wobbly bridge and is now waiting for them. Ruby picks up the tablet herself and hands it to Penny. "Here, take this in your hands, you're not on the video, you're videoing it for Thomas because he needs your help, otherwise, he won't be able to see himself." Penny stands there looking at her but does not take the tablet. Ruby takes Penny's hands and places them on the tablet. Penny does not resist. Penny now holding the tablet, begins walking to the wobbly bridge beside Ruby. (Penny, 4-year-old child, Thomas, 4-year-old child, Ruby, teacher, video recorded semi-structured activity, 23 October 2018)

Drawing from Ruby's discussion in Chapter 5, one of her truths is the discourse of children's 'rights'. As noted, this meant supporting children to learn the skills to access their e-portfolios more independently, thereby actively involving them in the e-portfolio space. During the social interaction Ruby demonstrated considerable effort in supporting Penny to enact agency within the e-portfolio space. She attempted to get Penny to take the tablet six times. After the fourth attempt, she helped Penny to her feet and then she finally placed Penny's hands on the device. Ruby's practice connects with techniques of domination, eventually succeeding in making Penny do something she had indicated she did not want to do. On this occasion, Ruby's truths are producing fixed and hierarchical power relations that make it difficult to reverse. These relations of power render the subject docile (Foucault, 1995). Ruby does not notice its effects, if she had, she may have

considered children should also have a ‘right’ not to enact agency if they so choose. As Tisdall et al. (2012b) observes, it should not be assumed that agency is a sought-after outcome from children’s perspectives. Ruby’s more powerful position creates the social relations that articulate the subjugation of Penny’s body as she regulates and controls Penny in line with her truths.

Power, Silencing and Subjugation

The above section highlights that at times children are not free to reject the suggestions of adults or to enact agency in alternate ways as demonstrated by Jared and Layla. Nor are they free to choose whether to enact or not, as Penny showed. Instead, adults appear to have reserved the authority for themselves. They lead the activities and make the authoritative interpretations of children’s choices and actions in such a way as to limit access and agency, while displaying control at all times. For example, in the above excerpt it was Ruby who decided (not Penny) that Penny could video Thomas for his e-portfolio demonstrating hierarchal power relations in which adults have more power.

Analysis of power dynamics during the social interactions in this section has made visible the invisible control of children’s bodies through disciplinary power and techniques of domination. As noted at the start of the section, the types of social interactions that are explored have been ‘instructional based activities’ where adults’ actions (what they do) and the implications of their actions in the e-portfolio space have been the focus. In the following section I shift the focus to the ‘conversational dialogue’ that occurs between teachers and children in the e-portfolio space. I argue that children’s bodies are just as subjugated and silenced by teachers’ words as they are by their actions.

Bridgette, Anastasia and Karen: Truth, Practice and Regulation

Teachers, as regulated by *Te Whāriki*, provide many opportunities “for children to have sustained conversations” (p. 44) throughout the day. The conversations that occur in the e-portfolio space during social

interactions can produce tension because various discourses circulating through teachers' dialogue operates to produce the good docile child body. Therefore, I argue that although instructional activities can reinforce problematic power relations, the conversational dialogue between teachers and children have similar consequences for children's bodies.

This section draws on salient data that demonstrates the ways sustained conversations between children and teachers are enmeshed in power orders. Power orders reinforce neoliberal ideology and provide children with little scope for freedom, choice and agency. Consider the following example of a conversation that emerges as Bridgette (child), Anastasia (child) and Karen (teacher) engage in the e-portfolio space:

Bridgette has just asked Karen, a teacher, to video her writing her name on her finished picture. Bridgette has asked that the video could be uploaded to her e-portfolio so she can show her Mum. Karen walks over to the table and takes a seat between Bridgette and Anastasia. Large sheets of paper, felt pens, pencils, scissors and staplers are on the table and the girls have been drawing. Karen has placed her tablet facing Bridgette and has just pressed the record button to capture her writing her name on her artwork. Karen immediately begins to speak, "Why are you putting that there, do you know?" she asks, pointing to where Bridgette is starting to write her name in the bottom right-hand corner of the page. Bridgette does not respond and continues to focus on her writing. Karen tries again, "Do you know why you're doing your name?" This time Bridgette stops writing and looks at Karen, "To know who it's by...me!" she exclaims in a louder voice. Karen continues, "That's right, to know who its written by, and drawn by." Anastasia, now appearing

interested in the conversation adds, “Coz otherwise if your Mums don’t know, then your Mums will say ‘Maybe that’s somebody else’s,’” and she points to where she is also writing her name on her art. Smiling at her, Karen replies, “That’s exactly right, they won’t know, like I showed you once before on this book,” and she picks up a library book in one hand and waves it around, “What did it have down the bottom?” she asks smiling at Bridgette. Without waiting for her reply, she elaborates further by adding, “Can you remember what it says down the bottom. Who’s that person on the book. The person that...?” She pauses expectantly and Bridgette answers with, “The person that wrote it!” then turns her attention back to her writing. But Karen continues, “Yes, good work! It’s the person who wrote it, I think she must have drawn it too. She’s the illustrator as well...I think you two are going to be illustrators as well.” She smiles, looking at both girls at the table. (Karen, teacher, Bridgette, 4-year-old child, Anastasia, 4-year-old child, video recorded semi-structured activity, Rangatira Kindergarten, 23 October 2018)

Bridgette asked Karen to video her for her e-portfolio, which can be considered an enactment of agency. From teachers’ perspectives, Bridgette’s initiation of this activity arguably demonstrates active and meaningful participation. However, Karen appeared to also have her own agenda. Karen immediately began to question Bridgette when she began recording. Her first question, “Why are you putting that there, do you know?” referring to the location Bridgette was writing her name seemed innocuous.

As the conversation developed, it appeared that Karen was trying to ascertain whether Bridgette had remembered something she had

previously discussed. Karen would most likely use such knowledge to make normalising judgements about Bridgette and correct her behaviour if need be. This line of inquiry is problematic because Alexander (2004) suggests teachers' questions are frequently little more than pseudo-enquiry. Teachers often know the answers before they have asked children and/or lead them in a particular direction to get the 'right' answer (Alexander, 2004). This appeared to be the case with Karen, as she questioned Bridgette on authors and illustrators, claiming "I showed you this once before."

Karen also asked other types of questions where she would pause to allow Bridgette time to fill in the missing words. For example, Karen asked "who's that person on the book? The person that..." and Bridgette responded, "the person that wrote it!" Pausing for children to fill in the missing words is another strategy frequently used by teachers that normalises children into the 'right' ways of knowing and doing from teachers' perspectives (De Vocht, 2015). When Bridgette filled in the words in the intended way she was reproducing and conforming to what has been defined as normal in their context. Consequently, Karen being provided with the 'right' answer from Bridgette, confirmed to another set of norms by responding with the traditional practice of praise by saying "good work."

Habitually praising children is consistent with other studies that show teachers often provide customary approval (Alexander, 2004; Brummelman et al., 2014; Robins, 2012). Teachers frequent use of praise also highlights normalisation, which is the reason power is so effective because it functions silently, efficiently and effortlessly (Foucault, 1980). Power induces and extends certain practices that are then recognised as the 'right' way to think, speak and act. Normalising judgement perpetuates the cycle of power rendering a subject individualised by exposing any deviation to norms (McWhorter, 1999). I wondered what form of normalising judgement Karen might be making about Bridgette, so later I asked her. Karen responds:

“I wanted to see if she was writing her name there [the bottom of the page] because she had remembered what I said...a while ago, about it...when I was teaching them about authors and illustrators...I did think she did, and she did too, she remembered, which is good.” (Field notes, Rangatira Kindergarten, 19 March 2019)

Karen’s response highlights the invisibility of power as she appeared to make normalising judgements on Bridgette’s abilities. Normalising judgement is problematic because it increases the potential to classify children as certain types of subjects (Gore, 1998). In this case, Karen seemed to classify Bridgette and Anastasia as good children since she acknowledged their “good work.” As discussed in Chapter 3, normalising judgement leads to some sort of examination. Consider Karen’s line of inquiry when she was trying to find out whether Bridgette had remembered the information about authors and illustrators that she had taught her. Through the examination she is also able to validate herself as a good teacher. Drawing on my early discussion regarding the double mode of ‘binary and branding,’ and of ‘differential distribution’ offered by Foucault (1995), Karen demonstrates how a constant surveillance is exercised over individuals. What I mean is, while Karen is characterising Bridgette and Anastasia as “good”, she internalises the same forces. In this example, Karen’s internalisation of power shapes her subjectivities as a good teacher because Bridgette and Anastasia had “remembered” what she had been “teaching them.”

As Karen’s tablet continues to record their conversation, Bridgette demonstrates it is possible to disrupt normalisation processes:

“No! I’m going to...no, I’m going to be...no, I’m going to...”
Bridgette speaks in a loud assertive voice to Karen. Karen replies, “You’re going to grow up and what, Bridgette?”

“I’m going to look after my kids, look after my kids!” Bridgette states. Karen responds, “You’re going to look after your kids?” “Yep,” she replies. Karen pauses, “Hmm...good idea,” she says looking at Bridgette, “That’s...it’s very, very precious to look after your kids, like your Mum looks after you, and your Dad looks after you.” Bridgette continues, “No, my Dad goes out to work.” Karen pauses again, “He goes to work...but when you’re a bit older, you’re going to look after your children?” she asks, to clarify. Bridgette nods her head while writing. Karen continues, “Are you going to go to work?” “No,” she responds to Karen. Karen clarifies, “No, you’re going to stay at home and look after your children?” Anastasia who had been quiet up to this point joins the conversation, pointing out to Karen, “You...you can’t buy a workshop, coz you still have to have a baby and then you, when your baby has grown up and is a big child, then you can go to work!” Smiling, Karen looks at her, and replies, “Really?” Anastasia confirms her truth by nodding her head. Karen responds saying, “Yes, you are quite right, you can, but some people go to work when their babies are little. What do you think about your Mum?” Anastasia considers her question, “Sometimes, I...sometimes I go with my Dad to work.” Bridgette, who has been listening to their conversation suddenly interjects in a loud voice, “I will stay home and look after my kids when I’m older!” (Karen, teacher, Bridgette, 4-year-old child, Anastasia, 4-year-old child, video recorded semi-structured activity, Rangatira Kindergarten, 23 October 2018)

The predominant discourse that underpins their discussion is gender. Bridgette and Anastasia's responses drew from classist and sexist rules around child-rearing practices between women and men. Their comments appeared to indicate they have formed gendered knowledge of different roles for men and women. For instance, mothers staying at home to look after their children while dads go out to work. Karen's response to Bridgette and Anastasia's comments also reinforced these views when she agreed this was a "good idea." In another example, Karen asked Bridgette if she was going to "work" when she grew up or stay at home, further reinforcing that child-rearing is something other than work.

Anastasia shared a similar perspective to Bridgette, "baby first, then work." Their discussion demonstrating how they contributed to classifying and reinforcing work as something separate to raising a baby and men's roles different to women's roles. Using Foucaultian theory reveals how discourses can perpetuate power orders. In this case, Anastasia, Bridgette and Karen's conversation reinforce patriarchal worldviews, rather than challenge them. Potentially, this could have been a point where the work of freedom may have destabilised these discourses, producing alternate truths. Instead, it highlights how discourses can circulate silently in our everyday conversations reinforcing norms without us being cognisant of it.

During my earlier conversation with Karen, I asked about her hesitation in responding to Bridgette's comment about staying home and looking after her "kids." I also asked about her subsequent approval when she said this was "good idea." She explained:

"I hesitated...umm... I just didn't expect that, I guess I was thinking she would tell me she had some sort of career planned, she's pretty switched on you know...and because of equality too, we want to be encouraging all children to grow up thinking they can be anything they want to be, you know, if they want to be a pilot, or doctor,

or something...like aiming high...but then I thought...I was thinking that I also needed to...you know, support her ideas.” (Karen, teacher, field notes, Rangatira Kindergarten, 23 October 2018)

Karen’s hesitancy suggests she felt tension within competing discourses. The discourses I draw attention to are the male-breadwinner model associated with more traditional gendered divisions of labour and the universal model of adult-worker prevalent in neoliberal societies (Lewis, 2001; J. Peters, 2012; Sims, 2017). Tension was evident in Karen’s reference to equality and her belief that Bridgette would or should want a career. However, she also felt bound to acknowledge Bridgette’s aspirations for herself because valuing children’s voice, agency and choice underpins normative discourses in ECE. Despite tensions, Karen shifted to validating Bridgette’s aspiration of being a stay-at-home mother but in doing so, she reinforced power orders.

Bridgette, Anastasia and Karen demonstrate how power and gender classifications intersect and circulate through discourse till they are so inscribed in power/knowledge and truth that it can be difficult to see other ways gender might be constructed. The implications of gender classifications is that the binary divisions through which male and female subjectivities are constructed can constitute the experience of male superiority and female inferiority (Davies, 1993). This makes it possible to see how dialogue with presupposed gendered social structures can play a significant role in recreating those very same gendered structures. Whilst Karen attempted to provide space for Bridgette to be agentic, she provided contradictory subject positions. For example, as members of a collective and as individuals, as persons who are potential agents of change and as females. Through these complex power relations that have hold over their bodies, Karen, Bridgette, and Anastasia demonstrate how normative discourses are reproduced and agency becomes a contentious site that needs careful navigation.

Bridgette and Sandra: Same Truth, Same Practice, Just as Regulated

In ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand assessment is linked to a political agenda of accountability (Gallagher, 2017a, 2021; Sims, 2017). This is part of the wider network for governing childhood linked to contemporary neoliberalism (Gallagher, 2017b; Giroux, 2015; Smith, 2012). The data collected reflects this discourse of accountability whereby teachers document children's learning and development to show their progression over time. As noted in Karen, Bridgette and Anastasia's social interaction, teachers draw on a wide range of dominant discourses to guide their practices during their interactions with children in the e-portfolio space.

During interactions teachers support children to think deeper about their learning, to be critical, to plan, revisit, reconnect and to restart their learning as required by the curriculum (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b). Often teachers videoed these discussions to capture the child's voice while they were reflecting on their learning as Karen did in the previous section. On another occasion Bridgette was engaged in the e-portfolio space with Sandra, another teacher. In the following excerpt Sandra has the tablet upright on a small table, it is switched on and the camera is facing towards them. She has previously asked Bridgette if they could make a video about Bridgette's recent school video for her e-portfolio. Sandra's practice aligns with her truth. Bridgette agrees and the following exchange takes place:

“What did you enjoy doing at school on your school visit the other day, Bridgette?” Sandra asks. Bridgette answers smiling at her. “The Barbies.” Sandra smiles back and responds, “Playing with the Barbies. You went there every time you got into the classroom. You went straight to play with the Barbies. What else did you enjoy about school?” “I enjoyed, umm I enjoyed climbing up the

stone wall,” Bridgette answers. “Climbing up the wall. The chain, with the chain,” she clarifies. Bridgette nods confirming it was the wall with the chain. Sandra continues, “Yeah, what did you need to use when you were climbing up that wall, so you didn’t slip back down?” Without waiting for her response, she continues, “What did you need on your feet...your shoes were quite slippery, weren’t they?” Nodding her head, Bridgette replies, “Yeah, so I needed bare feet!” “Yeah, bare feet are better,” confirms Sandra. “What did you think you did best when you went into the playground?” Bridgette doesn’t respond so Sandra continues, “What were you proud of?” Bridgette smiles, “I was proud of climbing up the stone wall.” Sandra acknowledges her, “Aww, that was good that you were able to do that. What do you think you might still need to learn to do?” Bridgette answers, “Climbing on the green ones.” Clarifying, Sandra asks, “On the green monkey bars?” “Yeah”, Bridgette confirms and nods. “So how do you think you are going to get better at doing that?” Sandra inquires. Bridgette suggests, “Maybe by...maybe by people helping me.” Sandra responds saying, “Everybody helping you, mmm. Tilly helped you, didn’t she? That’s a great idea.” She continues, “Is there anything else you want to do or learn about before you start school?” “No,” Bridgette answers. (Bridgette, aged 5 years, Sandra, teacher, video recorded observation at Rangatira Kindergarten, 24 September 2018).

Again, Foucaultian theory is helpful to draw attention to the ways in which subjects are constituted through discourses. For example, like Karen in the previous excerpt, Sandra appeared to use pseudo-enquiry

as a form of control to question Bridgette about her recent school visit. Sandra led the conversation in a direction that did not leave much room for Bridgette's agency despite the potential openness of her questions. For example, Bridgette's response about liking "the barbies" best could have provided Sandra with an opportunity to practice for freedom. As mentioned in Chapter 3, practicing for freedom requires an intentional effort to navigate power dynamics that are open and dynamic (Foucault, 1984b).

Sandra might have practiced for freedom by challenging the gendered stereotype female that Barbie portrays, potentially creating new ways of thinking. However, Sandra is subjected to normalisation, so she passed over this comment. Instead, she continued to probe Bridgette further about what she liked at school. Bridgette, taking up the subject position made available to her by Sandra, that of the student, responded that she "enjoyed climbing up the stone wall." Sandra, speaking from her subject position as teacher, continued to question Bridgette to think further about her response. To which Bridgette replied, "I needed bare feet."

As discussed in Chapter 5, documenting children's views is an important way for children to enact agency, according to teachers in both services. From a Foucaultian perspective, such conversations in the name of agency might be difficult to describe as emancipating. Asking children, what they liked on their school visit, what they were most proud of and what they still needed to learn leaves limited space for children to enact agency. Instead, children are disciplined into very limited constructions of agency that left little room for augmentation. These types of questions appeared to be the established norms at Rangatira Kindergarten during their conversations with children. As noted in Chapter 2 norms are often invisible, therefore they are difficult to challenge. But as Brown (2005) observes:

Even dreams of emancipation cannot take place unless the discursively shadowy altogether invisible character of those subjects, wounds, events, or activities is redressed....Nor are the silences constituted in discourses of subordination broken forever when they are broken once. (p. 72)

The above quote resonated with me as I read the work of W. Brown (2005). It is only by illuminating the subjugation and silencing of bodies in the e-portfolio space that we can begin to imagine alternate discourses of emancipation, to redress power and to practice for new forms of freedom. However, the silence as Brown (2005) claims, needs to be broken more than once. Therefore, breaking the silence again is Tina and Wesley's social interaction.

Tina and Wesley: Same Truth, Different Day

The following excerpt is another example of the adult child dichotomy. Teachers guide conversations with children in line with adults' agendas. In effect, they silence and subjugate children, rather than giving them agency. Alongside agency, the notion of guiding conversations is contentious. On the one hand, it is viewed as a way to support and scaffold children's learning and development, as discussed earlier. On the other, it is a form of social control whereby adults exercise power to get the outcome they want. In ECE, the outcome of assessment is to make "valued learning visible" (Ministry of Education—Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga, 2017b, p. 63). It is assumed (by adults) that pedagogical documentation is a way to see more of the child (Lindgren, 2012). However, it is adults who control what is seen, positioning themselves more powerfully than children (Lindgren, 2012). Consider the following social interaction between Tina and Wesley, whereby Tina engages in similar discursive practices as Sandra had in the previous excerpt:

Tina switches the video record button on, looks at Wesley smiling and asks, "Wesley can you tell me, we went.. where did we go the other day with your Mum and Dad?" Wesley looks up at Tina and responds, "To Saint Stephen's." "Yeah," she acknowledges him, "And Wesley, can you tell me what you liked about Saint Stephen's school?" Wesley pauses for a bit, "Umm, playing in the sandpit." "I thought you might say that," she responds, nodding her head at Wesley, and smiling. She continues, "Was there anything else you liked on your school visit?" Wesley shakes his head indicating that there wasn't. "No?" she questions, then asks, "Mostly playing in the sandpit, what did you like about it?" Again, Wesley pauses, "Umm, putting water in it." Tina, responds, "Yeah, can you remember where the water came from?" Wesley immediately responds, "From the tap." Nodding, Tina confirms this. "Mmm." Then continuing, she inquires, "And how did you know that was there?" "Coz Elvin goes to that school," answers Wesley. Tina replies, "Aww, did you already know because Elvin showed you before?" Wesley nods, confirming he did. "Cool, and who else is at that school?" asks Tina. Replying, he says, "Ben, Ben and Jamie." Indicating she knows who these children are she suggests, "Yeah, it will be cool being at the same school as your brother and sister, won't it?" Wesley nods his head in agreement with Tina's comment. Tina picking up her previous line of inquiring, "Is there anything else you're looking forward to at school?" Wesley shakes his head and frowns. (Tina, teacher, Wesley, aged 4, video recorded observation, Rangatira Kindergarten, 3 December 2018)

Tina, like her colleagues, looks as if she controls the conversation. She questions Wesley about his recent school visit leading the conversation in the direction she wanted it to go and leaving little room for divergence. Tina wanted to know what Wesley liked most about his school visit. From his subject position as a student, he responded, “playing in the sandpit.” After probing further, she switched tactics and asked him what he liked about the sandpit. Wesley’s lack of response could be viewed as an act of resistance to the type of questions she was asking. Therefore, he is exercising agency, although not from a normative perspective. It is hard to know from this piece of data alone what was Wesley’s reasoning. However, what I want to draw attention to is that whilst teachers intentionally provide opportunities for children to participate with their e-portfolios, it is constrained within normative discourses. My views are echoed by Kumpulainen and Ouakrim-Soivio (2019) who claim children’s agentic contribution in pedagogical documentation is largely unrealised. According to Kumpulainen and Ouakrim-Soivio (2019) the discursive practices of teachers often leave children with limited agency in the construction or content of their portfolios.

The above example along with the others in this section cause tension because whilst teachers have increased opportunities for children to participate, it is in ways that are in line with adults’ views. Wesley’s comments suggest it is not necessarily meaningful participation for him. Nor did it provide him with much opportunity to enact agency that was recognisable. As the conversation continues disciplinary power becomes more visible:

Tina asks, “Wesley do you think there is anything you need to learn before you are ready for school?” He nods his head this time in confirmation. Tina continues, “What do you think you still need to learn?” Wesley answers, “Umm, Stop Power.” “Stop Power,” repeats Tina, “That’s

a really good idea. How do you think you could get better at Stop Power?” Wesley doesn’t respond. He looks around the room, distracted. Unperturbed, Tina continues, “What makes you get better at things?” Wesley remains quiet for a bit, then says, “I don’t know,” shrugging his shoulders. “Do you think there’s any way you could practice getting better at Stop Power?” Tina asks, but not waiting for a response, she asks, “Where could you practice that?” Wesley murmurs, “Umm, umm...” Helping him out she asks, “Do you think you could practice it at kindergarten maybe?” Wesley nods confirming her idea. “That’s a really good idea, Wesley, I wonder if you could practice it at home too?” she says smiling. He nods his agreement. She then inquires, “Is there anyone you could use Stop Power with at home?” Wesley nods his head up and down. “Who would that be?” she asks. “Elvin,” he answers. (Tina, teacher, Wesley, aged 4, video recorded observation, Rangatira Kindergarten, 3 December 2018)

This is another example of how the e-portfolio space can be conceptualised as a contemporary manifestation of Bentham’s Panopticon. As described by Foucault (2008), Bentham’s Panopticon is a ‘marvellous machine’ in which to discipline subjects’ bodies, rendering them docile. What I mean is, Tina and Wesley’s interaction appeared to demonstrate asymmetrical power relations with Tina in control guiding the conversation. As such, there were limited subject positions made available for Wesley to take up. Whilst Tina thought she was providing opportunities for Wesley to access his learning and be agentic she had simultaneously situated him in a field of visibility, objectifying him as an individual to be judged. In line with normalising judgement, behaviour that does not measure up to established norms is punishable so as to improve the future individual (Foucault, 1995).

Tina has identified gaps in Wesley's capacities and to improve him, she classified Wesley as still having to practice 'Stop Power'¹¹ skills. Tina used the normalising judgement technique of gratification as Wesley's punishment. Foucault (1995) observes gratification is an efficient technique for the effortless functioning of disciplinary power because it establishes binaries divisions, such as good and bad subjects in which the subject is constituted through. In intervening and improving Wesley's body, Tina, like her colleagues earlier in the Chapter, rewarded Wesley with habitual praise. For example, Tina stated, "that's a really good idea," confirming Wesley's response as being the 'right' answer when he identified he still needed to practice "Stop Power." She further praised his "good idea," when he nodded confirming he could also practice "Stop Power" at kindergarten.

To point out, it was Tina who suggested the idea and Wesley was merely taking up the subject position of student, responding in the 'right' way. Tina most likely positioned herself as supporting Wesley to enact agency by suggesting a way he might practice "Stop Power," but it is difficult to know for sure. Potentially it could have been a reflection of the value Tina placed on "Stop Power," rather than Wesley's value. Regardless of this, what I want to highlight is that a Foucaultian lens reveals the disciplinary techniques Tina used to intervene, restructure and potentially improve Wesley as a future productive individual. Whilst this constitutive process might situate Wesley as a good child, it leaves little room for augmentation.

This section has demonstrated the "discursively shadowy altogether invisible character" (Brown, 2005, p. 72) of power that circulates to diminish children's ability to exercise agency in ways that disrupt normalising discourses. Hence, disciplinary power subjugates and silences their bodies in the e-portfolio space. This section has broken the silence more than once.

¹¹ 'Stop Power' is a concept from the 'Kidpower' programme that was developed in Aotearoa New Zealand in collaboration with the New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Justice to protect and empower young children from birth through to teenagers (Kidpower, 2021).

(Un)silencing the Good Docile Child Body: Concluding Thoughts

This Chapter has revealed how disciplinary power circulates to produce the discursively constituted good docile child body in the e-portfolio space. Divided into two sections, the first section of the Chapter discussed hierarchy power arrangements that were evident in teachers' practices as they engaged with children. During power dynamics teachers' discursive practices demonstrated how they drew on multiple discourses. However, teachers' actions produced problematic relations of power which positioned them as more powerful than children. As such, disciplinary techniques of power and domination are exercised, constraining children's bodies despite teachers attempts to provide more authentic access for children.

Particular 'techniques of domination' that subjugated children's bodies in ways that were more visible were also brought to the fore in this Chapter. Beginning with my own objectification and subjectification, I discussed certain rules I had for using my technology in the e-portfolio space. Drawing from Foucault (1995), I explained my position was that of the 'authority' and therefore I functioned through a double mode: the binary division and branding and that of differential distribution (Foucault, 1995, p. 199). My techniques of domination objectified Layla as a body to be classified and shaped into the 'right' ways of behaving in this space. I diminish Layla's capacity for agency, while at the same time subjectifying my own body in the process. Through normalisation processes we are both 'made' into docile bodies constrained through complex power dynamics.

The Chapter has drawn attention to the ways power frequently circulates silently and invisibly during social interactions. However, as pointed out, at times power was not so silent or invisible. Relations of power circulated to interrupt teachers' good intentions in unexpected ways. I use the word 'unexpected,' because although it was the teachers' intention to engage children in the e-portfolio space, children were also learning that to engage in this space they needed to behave in certain

ways that are considered 'right'. The 'right way was from adults' perspectives. Teachers do not always recognise children's agency if it does not align with normative views. Hence, access is withheld and, in some cases, denied altogether. Teachers demonstrate that although they have good intentions, they have retained authority for themselves. Teachers led the activities and made the authoritative interpretations of the children's conversations. Such actions led to the subjugation and silencing of children's bodies. The resulting kind of body is the good docile child body.

The second section of this Chapter explores the conversational dialogue that occurs in the e-portfolio space. This section argues that although teachers believe they are providing children with opportunities for them to be free choosing agents, children are still doing what the teachers want them to do. This is a form of control and manipulation that renders children docile as they are shaped into the 'right' ways of behaving. Focusing on one particularly salient social interaction I show how over the course of their conversations Bridgette, Anastasia (children) and Karen (teacher) are enmeshed in power orders that discipline their bodies in multiple ways.

Using the discourse of gender that was evident in Bridgette, Anastasia and Karen's discussion, Foucaultian theory illuminates the work of disciplinary power as they discuss competing discourses within gendering. Despite some resistance by Bridgette when she articulates she wants to be a stay-at-home mum, the conversational dialogue fails to make sufficient space to challenge and disrupt dominant discourses. This results in subjugating and silencing of alternate discourses. To (un)silence the subjugation more than once I also draw on the dialogue between Tina and Wesley. Analysis of the 'conversational dialogue' between teachers and children demonstrate that children are under just as much control as when they are engaging in the 'instructional activities' in this space.

Teachers share similar truths between the two participant kindergartens, but their discursive practices are different, neither any less as constitutive than the other. As discussed in Chapter 5, teachers know ‘what they do’ and ‘why they do it’. This Chapter has demonstrated that ‘what teachers think they do does’ is very different to ‘what what they actually do does’ to children’s bodies in the e-portfolio space. Instead of giving children agency by providing access to the e-portfolio space, children seem to have diminished freedom, choice and agency.

The following Chapter reveals that the subjugation and silencing of children’s bodies in the e-portfolio space is not always the case. During some relations of power, children are doing a good job of resisting normalisation processes. During these interactions, children flip the double binary that Foucault (1995) claims is prevalent in all forms of authority. Drawing on Foucault’s conceptualisation of pleasure I chronicle children’s counterattack to power in the e-portfolio space as an exercise of agency—the work of freedom. Children’s work of freedom is a powerful way to disrupt dominant discourses repositioning them as powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies.

Chapter 7: Producing the Powerful, Agentic and Pleasurable Child Body

This Chapter draws on Foucault's (1980) conceptualisation of pleasure. A Foucaultian approach to power and pleasure recognises that "power is not simply oppressive; we are caught in its networks precisely because some aspects of the exercise and experience of power are profoundly pleasurable" (Foucault, 1980, p. 34). Acknowledging the potential for children's bodies to be both powerful and pleasurable acknowledges the interconnectedness of many of Foucault's key concepts. Positioned centre stage in this Chapter, children demonstrate how they challenge dominant discourses. Children's resistant and subversive actions are understood as the work of freedom, revealing the entanglement of power, freedom and pleasure in the e-portfolio space. This is a combination that produces certain kinds of powerful bodies, certain kinds of agentic bodies and certain kinds of pleasurable bodies.

The aim of this Chapter is to rupture current discourses that are assumed as common-sense ways of thinking about what constitutes truth. Rupturing current discourses is significant because it creates space to insert the undetermined possibilities for new power/knowledge and truths and new practices of freedom. As Foucault (1982) observes, freedom is the point during relations of power where one chooses the possibility of resistance, rather than subjecting oneself to a continual cycle of subjugation. Locating how pleasure might be harnessed in this production is central to the discussion on the possibilities of new frontiers that challenge norms, ultimately shaping new norms.

Documented accounts of how some children's bodies are enabled are captured in this Chapter through their acts of resistance and subversion. Whilst children's actions might be a cause to celebrate such emancipatory work of freedom, their actions and behaviours are often at the expense of other bodies. Therefore the conditions that enable 'some'

bodies are the same conditions that constrain other bodies. As noted in Chapter 1, children's acts of resistance and subversion are significant because they have the potential to augment constructions of power. I begin with Layla, Martin and Ricky.

Layla, Martin and Ricky: Acts of Resistance: The Work of Freedom

The notion of children as powerful has been a catalyst for change over the last two decades and “strikes at the heart of conventional authority relationships between children and the adults who regulate their lives” (Woodhead, 2005, p. 92). In this section, children ‘strike at the heart’ of the powerful powerless dichotomy by destabilising power dynamics during social interactions with adults. I argue this is the work of freedom, because in challenging norms they are simultaneously exploring the possibilities of going beyond current freedoms. To set the context for the following two excerpts I draw attention back to my discussion in Chapter 6. During my interaction with Layla, Ricky and Martin, I demonstrated how I had exercised ‘techniques of domination’ over Layla’s body when she challenged my rules around turn taking (see Layla, Ricky and Martin: Truth, practice and domination).

The following excerpts are from the same transcript shared in Chapter 6 and reveal what transpired prior to my subjugating and silencing of Layla’s body. To recap points made in that Chapter, I argued I had invoked Foucault’s (1995) double binary by exploring the “authority” (myself) who was “exercising individual control” (p. 199) over Layla as she attempted to thwart my rules. However, as I show in the following excerpt, Layla’s struggle against my rules might also be described as the work of freedom as she attempts to disrupt my exercise of power:

Martin comes into the room. I look up at him and smile.
I immediately say, “You can sit there if you want, so you can see Layla’s pictures,” indicating to another bean bag

beside the one Layla is sitting on. Layla says firmly, “No!” and she swivels her legs around on the bean bag facing away from Martin, and then moves the computer screen to obscure his view. Martin sits down anyway ignoring Layla and she ignores him. I ignore Layla’s comment. (Martin, 4-year-old child, Layla 3-year-old child, Ricky 3-year-old child, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity at Mana Kindergarten, 22 November 2018)

Layla openly resisted my invitation to Martin to come and join us. But, I had also invited Martin to join us without asking if this was okay with Layla (it was her e-portfolio after all). Instead, I had privileged my own voice and in doing so, silenced Layla’s. This is consistent with other studies that show that whilst adults attempt to provide children with agency and voice they often marginalise them despite their efforts (Beaumont-Bates, 2016; De Sousa, 2019; Edmonds, 2019; Spyrou, 2011). As I pointed out, it was Layla’s e-portfolio. Therefore, she should have had the opportunity to choose who viewed it with her, something I had overlooked at the time. However, drawing from Foucault (1972), I was merely acting in ways that seemed natural and common-sense. I am after all objectified and subjectified through the same normalising discourses, which other subjects in the study are constituted within.

My actions on this occasion may have contributed to Layla’s resistance and subsequent insistence that Ricky have a turn before Martin, as explained in the previous Chapter. However, no one can ever be entirely sure what another person is thinking, so this remains unclear. What I can say is the following transpires when Ricky arrives into the room:

Ricky comes in and immediately goes over to Layla and throws his arms around her neck, leans in and cuddles

her. “Hi Ricky, I’m looking on my pictures,” Layla says with a huge smile on her face. “See, see, see,” she says pointing to the screen. I ask Layla, “You are very good at using that. Did you learn how to use this e-portfolio here, or at home....?” Layla doesn’t respond, so I say again, “Did the teachers teach you how to use your e-portfolio?” Again, she ignores my question. I pause slightly. “Did the teachers teach you?” Layla still ignoring my questions, continues to Ricky, “See,” she says, pointing at the laptop screen. Ricky, noticing himself in the image, responds, “There’s me,” pointing to himself. Layla smiles at him, “You was on my page!” she says, continuing, “So you are gonna come to my birthday?” (Martin, 4-year-old child, Layla 3-year-old child, Ricky 3-year-old child, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity at Mana Kindergarten, 22 November 2018)

In the above excerpt, Layla ignored my adult-led dialogue. At first I thought this was because she was happy Ricky had joined us so she focuses her attention on him, rather than responding to my questions. However, she repeatedly ignores my question making me wonder if she was deliberately ignoring me. Regardless of her reasoning, intentional or otherwise, in ignoring me Layla shifted power in her favour. After all, Layla held the valuable information I wanted to illicit from her. Again, this was in relation to my adult questions, which I had privileged. As I have suggested, this could be understood as Layla’s work of freedom because she had stated explicitly that she did not want Martin joining her, which I had ignored. She ruptures power here, making it falter.

Brown (2005) questions the notion of freedom because if freedom rests in the act of choosing which course of action to take then it is enacted and negated simultaneously. The very act of choosing occurs within the constitutive force of discourses, which renders it moot (Brown,

2005). Therefore, according to Brown (2005), freedom is self-cancelling and ultimately unachievable. However, freedom is not merely in the act itself, but in the potential of new sorts of freedom that may come of it. This is where I situate the work of freedom. Layla acts, she creates herself, self-stylising through every decision she makes and her experience of it. In challenging power she momentarily disrupts it and inserts new possibilities for freedom into the e-portfolio space. Only when we consider freedom from this perspective can we see freedom as a practice and a potentiality. As Foucault observes, freedom lies in practices, it is not tangible, nor does it lie in institutions, ideals or proclamations (Foucault, 1982, 1984b).

As for my own practices of freedom I had intended to conduct research *with* children not *on* them (see Chapter 4). As demonstrated, at times my own motives got in the way. Nonetheless, once words are transcribed onto paper they are open to endless critique and one's spoken words, one's actions and one's intentions can be full of contradictories. Reflecting on my words and actions during data analysis I realised I had not been aware of these power dynamics at the time. I was so focused on my own agenda that it blinded me to my enslavement. In confronting my own subjectivity I became more conscious of how my words might affect the subjectivity of others. As Caldwell (2007) suggests, disciplinary power "is so deeply submerged in human subjectivity that it is the embodiment of self-subjugation through self-discipline" (p. 773).

It was also during this particular analysis I realised Layla's silence was the valuable information I desired. As Brown (2005) observes, silences harbour meaning and is just as constitutive as speech. Layla demonstrates how children can challenge the typical adult – child power dichotomy of powerful powerless in the e-portfolio space (re)constituting their bodies as powerful and agentic. Including these two additional pieces of data from a single transcript shows how it is possible to experience one's body in multiple ways and through multiple networks of power during a single social interaction. This also connects with my

argument at the beginning of Chapter 6 where I talked of power silencing and subjugating 'some' bodies, 'some' times in the e-portfolio space. Power is dynamic, changeable and reversible over time (Foucault, 1995).

Foucault (1980) reminds us that subjects are never finalised, they are constituted and reconstituted through the discursive practices they participate in. As I have demonstrated in the above excerpts, Layla shows how practicing for freedom in the e-portfolio space makes it possible to experience one's body in alternate ways, even if only for a short time.

Ella and Wesley: The Work of Freedom Continues

During children's subversive behaviour they reposition themselves as powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies. A particularly salient example that illustrates this behaviour occurs when I am recording Wesley. Wesley is using a tablet to record his favourite places at kindergarten, so he is in the e-portfolio space. Wesley's video will be uploaded to his e-portfolio as an artifact for him to revisit and reflect on. Whilst Wesley was not free to choose what the video was about because his teacher had already decided, he was free to choose how and what he videoed. This illuminates that although agency is given to children it is limited agency and the 'right' kind of agency. Ella, who featured in Chapter 6, sees me recording Wesley and approaches me:

"Can I do that?" Ella asked, referring to me videoing what Wesley was doing. "Yep, it's still recording, so go and video Wesley. Wesley needs to be in it because I'm really interested in what he's doing with that," I say, indicating to the tablet. Ella takes the device in her hand, "I've got two...Wesley and James!" she tells me, referring to the images of both Wesley and James on the screen. Wesley runs away from James. Ella chases Wesley with the device in her hand. They head into an area of the kindergarten that is surrounded by large trees and

shrubs. Ella asks Wesley, "Can you do the trees?" she says pointing the video towards the tops of the trees above and is laughing. "All of them?" he answers. Ella says, "Wooo, woooo, ha, ha, ha, look, look, video the trees, I'm videoing the trees," she squeals. Wesley imitates her, "Wooo, woooo," and laughs. Watching closely to what Ella has on the screen, I say, "Are you getting some video footage of Wesley?" Ella spins around and my face appears on the screen. Ella squeals with laughter. I continue, "Remember you're not supposed to be taking video of me. I'm interested in what you children do with this." Ella turns the camera back around to Wesley and I see a full screen shot of the back of his head. Ella looks at me, "There we go!" she says, and laughs. Wesley who is watching us both now, looks at me, and laughs too. (Wesley, 5-year-old child, Ella, 5-year-old child and Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity, 4 December 2018)

Drawing from Chapter 6, this excerpt demonstrates Ella's increased skill and competence since beginning to learn to use digital tools in the e-portfolio space. Her increased mastery may have contributed to her self-confidence since she had initiated this interaction by approaching me and asking to video Wesley. Her growing confidence may have also contributed to her resistance to my adult power, and in the pleasure she appeared to take in thwarting my instructions. As Foucault (1980) claims, "mastery and awareness of one's own body can be acquired only through the effect of an investment of power in the body...But once power has produced this effect...what had made power strong becomes used to attack it. (p. 56)" Foucault (1980) calls this a "counterattack" (p. 56).

Ella's counterattack to relations of power were enacted in the form of Foucaultian pleasure—pleasure in her resistance to normalisation processes. Her resistance appeared several times. First, subtly, when I told her she was not supposed to be videoing me, rather she needed to be videoing Wesley. Although, she complied with my request she panned in closely on the back of Wesley's head, taking up the entire screen so I could not see anything except his head. Then Ella laughed about it. Her compliance was at one in the same non-compliant because her laughter indicated she knew this was most likely not what I had meant or wanted. Wesley's similar response confirmed my thoughts.

As Foucault (1995) observes, in mastering control over their bodies, it is possible for subjects to embody an understanding of themselves as capable. In this case, capable of exercising a certain amount of control and agency and in the pleasure of evading adults' power. As Ella is the knower only she will know what she was experiencing in the moment. However, she portrayed a subject who has an increased capacity to act in the e-portfolio space. She chose to engage, she created certain conditions to exercise power against me and she appeared to take pleasure in it. Ella's work of freedom creates a rupture to dominant discourses and this is the space for transformation.

I, on the other hand, saw myself as providing Ella with an opportunity to enact agency by accepting her choice to be actively involved in the research process. This aligned with certain truths I held about children's participation in my research and in being a teacher of young children myself. However, most of what I articulated during this social interaction reflects binary divisions. I positioned myself, albeit unintentionally, as powerful rather than empowering. This dichotomy was evident when I informed Ella of 'who' and 'how' she should be videoing, instead of allowing her opportunity to choose her own course of action.

Evidence of my power and objectification of Ella can also be seen in examples, such as "go video Wesley, Wesley needs to be in it," and

when I told her “you’re not supposed to be videoing me, I’m interested in what children do.” I was so focused on capturing video footage of Wesley that served my own agenda I had failed to see that Ella was doing something, she was videoing me. I just did not ‘see’ because Ella had deviated from the rules and norms, thus I was blinded by my own subjectification.

Acting as I did, demonstrates the problematic power relations that occur between adults and children. I reproduced particular adult power relations that monitor the actions and behaviour of children. Following Foucault (1995), my authoritative gaze objectified Ella by subjecting her to a field of visibility where I could observe, classify and assess her actions and behaviour and if she did not measure up she would be judged accordingly. As discussed, I judged her normatively, positioning her behaviour as resistant to my instructions. Moreover, my judgements, as mentioned elsewhere seem natural to me and reflect common-sense and taken-for-granted ways of thinking (Foucault, 1972).

Despite my subjugation, Ella chose her own course of action, conducting the work of freedom. Like Layla in the last section, Ella’s actions rupture typical power dynamics in which adults have more power. Accordingly, she creates a potentiality for new augmentations of power, agency and pleasure. Ella and Wesley’s social interaction was one of many examples of counterattacking pleasure that children demonstrated in this space. Shelley, Simone and Pia are next with their work of freedom.

Shelley, Simone and Pia: Pleasure Loves Company, but Only if it’s the ‘Right’ Company

Power is frequently discussed as being oppressive and something which is possessed by dominant groups, including adults (Gallagher, 2008). However, from a Foucaultian perspective, power is productive because it produces—it produces individuals, knowledge and realities (Foucault, 1976). Using Foucault opens up the possibilities of seeing and thinking

about alternate ways of being that run counter to dominant discourse. As demonstrated in this Chapter thus far, it is possible for children to challenge power dynamics when adults and children engage in the e-portfolio space. These power dynamics are moments where children affirm themselves as powerful and agentic through the use of pleasure as a counterattack. The following example is another salient illustration of children conducting the work of freedom by counterattacking power in the production of pleasure. Shelley, a child at Mana Kindergarten has initiated this activity, asking to use my laptop to look at her e-portfolio with Simone (child), Pia (child) and Kathy (teacher). The following interaction unfolds:

Shelley takes my laptop as I hand it to her and she sits down on a bean bag. Simone sits on one side of her and Pia sits on the other and they cuddle into Shelley. Kathy sits down beside Pia, although slightly back and leans on the wall. Kathy asks, "So, what are all these, Shelley?" she says, pointing to Shelley's e-portfolio. Shelley ignores her. Kathy asks again, "What are you showing me?" Shelley ignores her question and continues to scroll the screen. The other two girls also ignore Kathy. Simone looks at Shelley, and asks, "Where's me?" and then spotting herself says, "Look!" pointing to herself and touching the screen. Kathy responds, "Yeah, mmm." Simone ignores Kathy's response and looks at me, then glances sideways at Kathy, "We don't like heaps of people here!" she announces slapping her thigh with her hand and looking at Shelley. Shelley is looking at me now, too. I don't respond. Pia whispers something into Shelley's ear while she is scrolling the laptop screen, and they both turn their heads to look across at Kathy, and snigger. Shelley turns back to the screen again and they continue

to watch the video. Suddenly, Simone throws her head back, leans back on the bean bag and laughs out loud. The other two girls follow her lead and throw themselves onto the bean bag and laugh loudly. They sit up and look at me when the giggling has subsided. “What’s so funny on there?” I ask. “Nothing!” Shelley responds. (Shelley, 5-year-old child, Simone, 3-year-old child, Pia, 3-year-old child, Kathy, student teacher, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity, Mana Kindergarten, 3 September 2018)

The disruption of typical adult child power dynamics that occurred during this social interaction might have been due to Shelley having instigated the activity. She also had physical possession of the laptop and chose what they were viewing. As discussed in Chapter 4, possession tended to give children a greater share of power, or at least a sense of it. Children then used their power to subject the bodies of others. However, unlike Kathy, Shelley’s friends, Pia and Simone were not solely subjected to her power. They chose to (re)produce power against both Kathy (teacher) and I, through their pleasure in ignoring and excluding us.

This is an example of what Foucault (1990) describes as the “perpetual spirals of power and pleasure” (p. 45). Power pleasure is another Foucaultian mechanism with a double impetus. As Foucault (1990) observes, “The power that lets itself be invaded by the pleasure it is pursuing; and opposite it, power asserting itself in the pleasure of showing off, scandalizing, or resisting” (p. 45). The double impetus was prominent in two places in the excerpt. First, by Pia when she was whispering in Shelley’s ear. Presumably this was something ‘secret’ about Kathy because it resulted in them both looking at her and laughing. It seemed power had inserted itself into the pleasure of their secrecy. Second was when Shelley refused to share with me what the three girls had been laughing about a little later in the excerpt. Instead, she chose

to tell me they were laughing at “nothing.” This indicated she was either not willing or did not want me to know what they were sharing.

The girls had excluded Kathy in several ways. Shelley repeatedly ignored Kathy’s questions. Simone appeared to follow her lead by excluding Kathy when she looked sideways at her exclaiming, “We don’t like heaps of people here.” She emphasised her comment by slapping her leg and looking at Shelley. Her expression and use of intonation made me think perhaps she had noticed Kathy’s attempt to gain access and was not yet prepared to relinquish their authority. Kathy also felt their power against her as she explains:

“I don’t think they really wanted me there, coz they just ignored me pretty much. Shelley didn’t even answer my question...and they were laughing and sniggering at me for some reason, but I couldn’t hear what they were saying since they were whispering, so I just pretended not to notice.” (Kathy, student teacher, field notes, 3 September 2018).

Kathy felt “ignored” by the girls and thought they didn’t really want her there because Shelley had disregarded her question. She was also aware they were “sniggering” at her and this had made her uncertain how to react. Kathy’s response demonstrates how adults can feel like outsiders during interactions with children. Therefore, on these occasions teachers’ bodies were subjected bodies. Their bodies were potentially constituted as something other than pleasurable and something other than powerful. Through their delight in resisting the typical powerful powerless dichotomy, the girls demonstrated their capacity to practice for freedom, disrupting processes of normalisation. Larson (2014) observes dualisms are enmeshed in power orders; it is at this juncture that underlying binaries become explicit. As Thrumbull (2018) states, “resistant, counterattacking pleasure, whatever it is, has

to originate within the power network” (p. 526). Therefore, on this occasion the constitution of children’s bodies appeared to be as pleasurable, powerful, agentic bodies.

In the following excerpt, Shelley, Simone and Pia demonstrate how they are capable of exercising more subtle power dynamics, rather than the overt displays seen in their previous engagement. These are not any less constitutive, because as Gallagher (2008) points out, power and pleasure are overlapping and reinforcing. During their interaction the girls are watching a video that Shelley’s mother has uploaded to her e-portfolio. Shelley’s mother, Shelley and her baby sister appear in the video:

“What is your video about, the one you’re watching?” I ask. Shelley responds, “Yeah, Baaabyyyyy,” she says in a funny voice, and then giggles. Simone imitates Shelley’s voice, “Baaabyyyyy!” she says and then throws herself back on the bean bag, in peals of laughter. Shelley laughs loudly, Pia joins in as well. They glance at me, then settle back on the bean bags and look at the screen again. Shelley says, “Aww, look at that girl,” she says, waving her hand dramatically in front of the screen slowly. This immediately draws laughter from Pia and Simone. Pia looks back at the screen and suddenly points out, “That’s me.” Simone chimes in, “Look!” Shelley, distracted by their outbursts, joins in, “Look, movie, movie,” she says as she sees another video, and presses play to start it. “Aww, look my...” she says. Pia interrupts her, “Mummy, Mummy, Mummy,” she says, pointing over top of Shelley. Shelley continues, “One, two, three, four...” Simone interrupts, “Mummy, Mummy, Frances, Mummy, Mummy,” and the girls break into more laughter. (Shelley, 5-year-old child, Simone, 3-year-old child, Pia,

3-year-old child, Kathy, student teacher, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity, 3 September 2018)

Shelley, Pia and Simone's giggling, their mimicking of "baaabyyyyy" and their chanting of "mummy, mummy, mummy," were some of the ways they demonstrated their resistance to adult questioning. De Vocht (2015) claims, children's playful use of this type of dialogue can create individual authority, as opposed to the constraints of adult discourses that are regulated by rules and routine. Nonsensical behaviour, such as giggling, imitation and irrelevant contributions feature frequently in children's dialogue, which children use to gain membership without the need for clarification (De Haan & Singer, 2001; De Vocht, 2015). However, as I have discussed previously, this is from adults' perspectives because Shelley, Pia and Simone's contributions to their group membership made sense to them. Therefore, there was no need for clarification. During these moments children seemed to actively challenge adults' views of e-portfolio participation, as Kathy candidly expressed:

"Yeah, when I said 'yeah' I was trying to get them to stop laughing without telling them to stop laughing, but I was a bit uncomfortable actually with the whole thing and I didn't quite know what to say coz you were videoing it. They were just being so giggly, and they weren't really looking much at the e-portfolio, they were too busy being silly." (Kathy, student teacher, field notes, 3 September 2018).

Kathy felt "uncomfortable" about the whole social interaction. Her discomfort was evident as she spoke of trying to get them to stop laughing without directly telling them to. She indicated this was because "they were just being so giggly" and she seemed to think this might interfere

with them engaging in the e-portfolio space in a way that she perceived was 'right'. This appeared to be intensified with me being there videoing the "whole thing," as she was aware she was also under surveillance. As mentioned throughout this thesis, we are always under surveillance in the e-portfolio space. However, knowing one *could* be watched at any time is entirely different to knowing one *is* being watched. Kathy knew she was being watched; potentially, this made her act in a different way than she would have acted if I had not been there.

Kathy's perception of Shelley, Simone and Pia's silliness also shows how subjects filter discourses to create meaning. However, the girls' silliness also has alternate ways of being interpreted. Thinking Foucaultian, their silliness could have been a technique of power they used to exclude Kathy during their interaction, interconnected with their production of pleasure. Corsaro (2003) claims exclusion of others is often children's response to their desire to protect their social space so they can continue "to keep sharing what they are already sharing" (p. 40). It made sense the girls would want to continue to share pleasure, rather than allow Kathy's adult line of questioning to shift their interaction in alternate ways. Hence, their actions can be viewed as the work of freedom and an act of power, rather than silliness.

As Foucault (1990) observes, any acts of resistance to the effects of normalisation must be understood as an expression of freedom and a space of possible transformation. As demonstrated by Shelley, Pia and Simone, it is possible for children to challenge power dynamics in this space in unexpected ways. Their use of the disciplinary technique of totalisation is also reflective of teachers in Chapter 5, whereby teachers gave themselves collective agency, speaking certain truths into existence. Gore (1998), who also works with Foucaultian theory claims totalisation is a specific disciplinary power that is used for the governing and regulation of subjects and for producing knowledge, typically used by teachers in pedagogical contexts. This Chapter shows that children also

draw on totalisation classifying themselves as being part of a specific group.

As MacNaughton (2003) claims, children learn and practice what they learn from the adult world. Therefore, in taking up and exercising totalisation children demonstrate assimilation and reproduction of normative adult disciplinary practices. However, children also augment them in the process by disrupting power dichotomies in the production of new forms of freedom, agency and pleasure. It was during these disruptions that children's bodies could be viewed as powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies. The following section tells of Jenny and Simone's pleasure.

Jenny and Simone: 'Right' Company, 'Wrong' Pleasure: Rupturing Common Sense Ways of Thinking.

Shelley, Simone and Pia were not the only children to exercise power in the production of pleasure. In a completely different kind of interaction, Jenny and Simone also used nonsensical language and mimicking to resist typical adult child power dynamics. During the following interaction I had been questioning Jenny and Simone about their e-portfolios and they were responding in line with convention. This type of adult questioning places the adult in a more dominant position. However, by exercising pleasure in surprising ways Jenny and Simone destabilised the power dynamics when I got up to check my video camera:

Jenny (child) and Simone (child) remain on the bean bags as I moved away momentarily to check my equipment, Jenny has my laptop on her knee and the girls continue to chat and laugh between themselves while looking at Jenny's e-portfolio. My laptop is on her knees and playing a video the girls have been repeatedly watching. Jenny suddenly leans back on the bean bag, she lifts up her top to reveal her belly and sticks her finger in her belly

button, “Binky, Binky, hehe.” Every time she speaks the word Binky, her finger goes in and out of her belly button. She laughs and then covers up her stomach and looks at Simone. I sit back down on the floor just off to the side of them, observing quietly. Simone responds to Jenny by getting up on to her knees and lifts her top to reveal her belly. She says, “Bumby, Bumby, Bumby.” Every time she speaks the word, ‘Bumby’, just like Jenny, her finger goes in and out of her belly button. Again, Jenny lifts her top and this time says, “Bouble, Bouble, Bouble.” The girls laugh, and Simone looks from her belly to Jenny’s belly and back again, exclaiming, “My ones different!” Jenny comments, “My skin is white,” and she grabs her belly in both hands either side her belly button and turns her belly button towards her eyes, “My skin is white!” Simone, doing the same as Jenny with her belly, and responds, “My ones have brown.” Jenny, now leaning a little further back onto the bean bag pulls her top up higher and holds it between her teeth and then squeezes her belly together as if her belly button is a talking mouth and says between clenched teeth, as her top is in her mouth, “Hello, Hello.” “Hello, hello,” Simone imitates doing the same actions. This brings forth squeals of laughter from the girls and Simone launches her body to lie beside Jenny. I interrupt them by asking, “So, can I ask you guys something?” The girls stop and look at me. Not waiting for an answer, I continue, “So you know how I am taking videos and I’m asking you questions all about your e-portfolio, because I want to know what you think about it, well I’m also going to ask some Mums and Dads too, so we have to think of some really good questions to ask them. Can you help me?” “Yes, when we are finished

looking at my e-portfolio,” Jenny says, as she sits upright and turns her attention back to the screen. (Jenny, 5-year-old child, Simone, 3-year-old child, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity, Mana Kindergarten, 10 September 2018)

Drawing from the theory, specifically the technique of totalisation, Shelley and Simone demonstrated how children can construct pleasure with peers. Their use of nonsensical language, for example, “Binky, Binky,” “Bumby, Bumby, Bumby” and “Bouble, Bouble, Bouble”, their mimicking and their imitation of each other reflects their shared understanding. Whilst the girls appeared delighted during this interaction their behaviour had deviated from the expected ways of participating within this space, from my adult centered views. My views, like Kathy’s, reflect normative discourses. As revealed in Chapter 5 and 6, Foucault’s work helps explain how adults construct normative views of children’s acceptable behaviour in this space. If children did not participate in the ‘right’ way, then from the binary division they are potentially positioned as wrong and judged and punished accordingly. Jared’s punishment for not tapping the keyboard lightly in Chapter 6 is a salient example. I judged Jenny and Simone’s behaviour and finding it inappropriate I attempted to redirect them back to my agenda. I considered this acceptable at the time as I was drawing from common-sense ways of viewing children’s behaviour. Following Foucault (1994), I acted in ways that confirmed certain normative true and false statements, but in doing so, reproduced them.

Non-sensical language, mimicking and imitation are not the only ways children destabilise relationships of power. Children often use references to body parts to thwart power relations. Such references appear to be immensely funny and a source of great amusement and pleasure to children. Consider the following example where Shelley has

diverted my question by drawing attention to her nana's "boobs" in a photograph:

"And then I grabbed my Nana's boobs," Shelley stated, laughing. I look at her, shifting uncomfortably, and exclaim, "Really?" Shelley responds, "Yep...look...go in close...see, see..." She points to the laptop screen and then pans in with her fingertips to show me. Shelley squeals with laughter again and then chants, "Boobies, Boobies, Boobies!" followed by more laughter. (Shelley, 4 years, Jo, researcher, 27 August 2018)

Shelley took great delight in showing me she had grabbed her "Nana's boobs," even panning in so I could have a closer look. Wondering how to respond to this, I shifted uncomfortably and filled the silence with "Really?" My body language and verbal response seemed to please Shelly and incite pleasure because she started chanting "Boobies, Boobies, Boobies!" Power plays an important role in the production of pleasure in the e-portfolio space, especially if it is exercised during relations of power with adults. The examples in this section demonstrate how power asserts itself in the pleasure of "scandalising or resisting" (Foucault & Rabinow, 1984, p. 324). Children's nonsensical language and accompanying behaviour appeared to play a central role in constituting their bodies as powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies, shaping their subjectivities and their social worlds. However, children did not only exercise power against adults in the e-portfolio space. They also exercised power against each other.

Steven, Isla and Shane: The Subtle Exercise of Power, Agency and Pleasure

This section of the Chapter (un)silences what Foucault would describe as the invisible power dynamics that circulate between children and their

peers. Consider the following interaction where one of the children appears to experience his body as powerful, agentic and pleasurable, while for others' pleasure is less certain. As already discussed, from a Foucaultian stance pleasure and power are interconnected. Hence, pleasure relies on a subject's capacity to negotiate the perpetual spirals of power that circulate between themselves and members of their peer group. In the following excerpt Steven appears to immediately take up the dominant subject position as he, Isla and Shane watch a favourite video on Steven's e-portfolio:

Steven points at Isla, his sibling, "You touched it so much. You don't like snow!" he comments about the video they have been watching on his e-portfolio. Whilst Isla doesn't respond, Shane answers, "I like snow though. When I went to the snow..." Steven cuts him off. "Sometimes...hey, my dad kept making really big footprints and a really good..." This time Isla interrupts Steven, "Steven, Steven, Stevie, sometimes I like snow, not all the time!" she says, and pushes his head in what appears to be a friendly manner. Steven ignores her and looks at Shane, "Hey, last time I was going to skid down like that (hand gesture) on my dad's big footprint, ha-ha." Isla says again, "Steven, hey Stevie!" Shane and Steven both ignore Isla and carry on their conversation. Shane, looking at Steven, says, "Hey, last time I went to the snow, do you know what my dad did to me when we went to the snow?" "No." Steven replies. "He hit me with a snowball on my head, right on my face." Shane dramatically imitates his forehead being hit by a snowball. The children squeal with laughter and then Shane does a forward roly-poly on the floor and Steven bounces up and down on his knees. Steven responds, "That's exactly what

happened to me.” He starts the video again and the three children refocus their attention on the screen, accompanied by intermittent giggles as it plays through another time. Steven suddenly shouts at the image on the screen, “Go Steven! Don’t give up! Ooo...” He continues looking at Shane. “Isla’s only there running down,” he says, pointing to the image of Isla running down behind the toboggan. Shane nods in agreement. The video finishes and Steven presses the start icon to watch the video again. (Steven, 4-year-old, Shane, 4-year-old, Isla, 4-year-old, video recorded semi-structured activity, Mana Kindergarten, 9 November 2018)

Steven seemed to delight in his sense of power, which Fromberg (2002) claims can occur when children are able to control and make decisions during social interactions with their peers. He demonstrated his dominance in a number of ways. First, through the positioning of his physical body; the laptop was directly in front of him and his peers were positioned either side. Secondly, he controlled the software and chose what they were viewing. Third, he exercised his power verbally. For example, through his classification of Isla as not liking snow and his use of exclusion by not letting her enter the conversation despite her interruptions. According to Davies and Harre (1990), a subject can only speak from the positions made available within the group a subject has membership to, and through the known discursive practices the groups use.

Whilst Steven gave the impression that he speaks from the dominant subject position of the group, his position was affirmed by Shane and Isla. This was seen in their attempts to engage Steven and at the point he allowed them to enter. For example, when Steven announced Isla did not like snow and in Shane suggesting he did “like snow,” he successfully gained entry. Whilst it is possible Shane may have said this

to confirm his membership to the group, in doing so, he also confirmed Steven's more powerful subject position. However, when Isla attempted the same strategy, saying she did "like snow, sometimes," Steven ignored her. She is no more successful in her second attempt although, like Shane, she confirmed Steven's more powerful position.

In taking up the positions made available by Steven, that is, responding in ways that validated his position, Shane and Isla were subjected bodies. They were subjected through the discursive practices being jointly produced by the group. However, subjectification processes do not exclude Isla and Shane's bodies from sharing pleasure because power is productive. They were not passive subjects, Shane and Isla actively contributed to the production of their own pleasure from their individual subject positions. Shane's expressions of pleasure were demonstrated when he shared his snowball experience, which brought "squeals of laughter" from the children.

The children's 'giggling' and other playful actions, such as roly-polys and bouncing up and down were further examples of the ways they actively contributed to the constitution of their bodies as pleasurable. Therefore, despite the dominant – subordinate subject positions that can occur within peer groups, Isla and Shane show it is possible for children to constitute their bodies as pleasurable from multiple subject positions. Arguably then, like Shelley, Simone and Pia demonstrated previously, Steven, Shane and Isla are carrying out the work of freedom. Freedom is how we can test limits and go beyond them by carrying out work on ourselves, for ourselves as free beings (Mendieta, 2014).

This interaction shows how the children made choices about their actions as individuals and in conjunction with each other. Foucault (1980) reminds us, we must think of power as an exercise; the exercise of provoking some sort of response. Exercising power is not to force the subject to do something, rather they are free to choose how they will act (Foucault, 1980). As Foucault (1980) observes, power should not be considered an act of violence to repress and dominate a subject. Power is

the dynamic relations between free subjects, unbalanced, one acting on the other and the other acted upon. What Foucault (1980) wants to draw our attention to is, which is critical to my position on freedom, is that although the relationship is unbalanced the subject is free to respond and influence the other subject's actions.

Continuing with this argument about freedom, the following interaction between Steven, Shane and Isla demonstrates how it is possible to practice for freedom by disrupting the peer groups relatively stable power dynamics. Isla's actions position her as a powerful body:

Shane asks, "Can I have a turn?" Steven replies, "Yep, but I'm just going to find your picture for you!" Steven has several attempts at getting out of his e-portfolio, to no avail. Shane gets restless, "And can I get on there, though?" he asks again, pointing to the screen. Steven says, "Yeah, but I don't know how to get out of mine?" Shane nods his head and Steven looks over to me, and asks, "Jojo, I don't know how to get out of it?" referring to his e-portfolio. While Steven was looking over at me, Isla leans across the laptop screen and pushes the 'close' button and then she sits back on her knees, announcing, "I did it!" smiling widely at the boys and then at me. Steven looks down at the screen. He claps his hands together in what appears to be glee when he sees what she has done. "Whoooa!" he exclaims loudly. As I couldn't see the screen from my position, I ask, "Did Isla do it?" Steven not waiting for her reply, gets up on his knees and announces, "Whoooa, Isla is an expert on e-portfolios!" Isla says nothing, but she looks across at me, raises both arms in the air with her palms upwards in a dramatic gesture. She has a big smile on her face. Then she leans back on a bean bag, still smiling, one arm propping her

up. Steven pats Isla's arm in a friendly manner. (Steven, 4-year-old child, Shane, 4-year-old child, Isla, 4-year-old child, video recorded semi-structured activity, Mana Kindergarten, 17 December 2018)

On this occasion, Isla seemed to make the relations of power falter when she reached over and closed Steven's e-portfolio for him. Her intonation, language and facial expressions appeared to indicate her pleasure when she exclaimed, "I did it!" Steven who often excluded or resisted Isla as seen in the excerpts above also seemed pleased. He clapped his hands and patted her affectionately on the arm, pronouncing her an "expert with e-portfolios." In this instance, Steven repositioned Isla as an expert. However, Isla's familiar hand gesture implied she already thought she was "an expert," as she smiled and leaned back on the bean bag with a look of satisfaction on her face. Foucault (1980) observes that subjects' positions are not finalised. Subjects are in a constant struggle to negotiate power in relations with others (McWhorter, 1999). On this occasion Isla demonstrates the work of freedom as she shows how it is possible for children to speak themselves or others into alternate ways of being. Sometimes children demonstrated more overt displays of power. This does not necessarily make them any freer. Rather it draws attention to the ongoing "struggles" (Foucault, 1982, p. 780) of subjects during relations of power and its potential effects.

Wesley and Freddy: Unpredictable and Unexpected Expressions of Power and Pleasure

At times, children's exercised power against their peers was not only unpredictable, but also unexpected. Displays of power that seemed to be pleasurable for some children, while subjugating others, were observed in acts of taunting, denying or delaying requests and hurtful responses from their peers. Whilst this could be argued as an exploration into the limit of possibilities, this behaviour potentially made it less pleasurable

for their peers, or in some cases, not pleasurable at all. Consider the following interaction where Wesley taunts Freddy with his e-portfolio by stopping it part way through a video:

Wesley is outside and has a tablet in his hand and runs up to Freddy to show him a video on his e-portfolio. Freddy is on the hanging ring swings. He stops to look at the video with Wesley. Wesley comments, "That's all of it," and stops the video. "No, it's not!" Freddy responds in an annoyed voice. Wesley retorts, "Yes, it is," as he looks at the screen. Freddy repeats himself, a little louder. "No, it's not," and he climbs off the steps. Wesley yells back at him, "Yes, it is!" he laughs. "No, it's not," Freddy repeats again, and this time he moves to stand next to Wesley so he can see the screen clearly. Wesley answers, "Yes, it is!" "There are heaps more videos," Freddy replies, as he tries to touch the tablet. Wesley swiftly jerks his body around in a half circle away from Freddy. Freddy scowls at Wesley. Wesley shouts at him, "What the...what the hell, what the hell, what the hell!" He holds the tablet up in the air out of Freddy's reach. He smiles and laughs and spins around in a circle, jumping up and down. (Wesley, 5-year-old child, Freddy, 4-year-old child, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity, 4 December 2018)

In the above excerpt, Wesley held the dominant position. He held the device, he chose when the video started and stopped and he chose what Freddy could see. The dominant subject position is reflected throughout this Chapter by children who controlled the digital device. What caught my attention in this particular interaction was Freddy's resistance to Wesley's attempts at positioning him as a subordinate.

However, Freddy's resistance appeared to heighten Wesley's pleasure. For example, through their mutually antagonistic language as they engaged in the toing and froing of "no it's not," "yes, it is." It was also seen in Wesley's repeated laughter when Freddy "tries to touch the tablet." Wesley responds by shouting, chanting and holding the tablet out of Freddy's reach.

Wesley's apparent use of power against Freddy and Freddy's subsequent response seemed to create a space for Wesley to exercise power simultaneously constituting his body as pleasurable. Children's use of power against their peers echoes Stephenson's (2009) study, which identifies that, "while many relationships are richly satisfying, there is also potential for children to be rejected and dismissed by their peers" (p. 186). As expressed by Wesley, power dynamics on this occasion operate to fuel the pleasure he seems to take in rejecting and dismissing Freddy.

Children frequently took pleasure in rejecting and dismissing their peers in the e-portfolio space. Their rejection and exclusion of each other through the cultivation of pleasure was a common occurrence during data collection. On some occasions children's treatment of each other seemed particularly hostile. Consider the following interaction between Wesley and Freddy:

Freddy asks, "Can I have a turn now?" Wesley responds with a short, sharp, "No!" He scowls at Freddy. Wesley turns his back to Freddy and continues to look at the screen. Freddy begins to repeatedly tap Wesley on the shoulders with both hands. "I want a turn! I want a turn!" he chants. Wesley spins around. He leans toward Freddy and pokes his tongue out making an unusual "plauuu" sound. Saliva flies out of his mouth at the same time. "Yuk!" Freddy exclaimed as he wipes saliva from his face, scowling at Wesley. Wesley runs off with the tablet in his hands laughing, and Freddy chases after him. Suddenly

Freddy stops, frowning, he yells out, “I wanted to have a turn!” He turns and walks away. (Wesley, 5-year-old child, Freddy, 4-year-old child, Jo, researcher, video recorded semi-structured activity, 4 December 2018)

This example surprised me because I had not observed such an overt display of belligerence and control in this space between children. I also had asked Wesley if I could video him. On gaining his assent I was following closely behind with my video camera, so he was aware he was under surveillance. Surveillance, as already explained, operates to assure subjects monitor and regulate their behaviour, knowing that at any given time they are either being watched or could be watched (Foucault, 1995). It renders subjects visible and thereby submissive to the processes of normalisation (Foucault, 1995). However, as Wesley demonstrates, it’s not quite as black and white because children are always under surveillance in ECE, whether there is a camera recording or not, and it does not stop all challenging behaviours.

Is Wesley’s experience of pleasure heightened in knowing he is being watched? I wondered if he would have acted this way if I was not following him? Or am I privileging my voice by considering that he might even care what I think? I cannot determine the answer from the information available. I can say this excerpt demonstrates issues of power and control are a part of children’s daily experiences in the e-portfolio space. For some children it can be a dangerous and unpredictable space. The word dangerous caught my attention in work by MacNaughton (2003), because danger is associated with negative images and sits counter to the ECE curriculum.

MacNaughton (2003) claims during playful social interactions with their peers, children “can create and experience racism, sexism, homophobia and classism...They practice what they learn from the adult world and each other about gender, sexuality, violence, love, hate, power, friendship, exclusion and inclusion” (MacNaughton, 2003, p. 58).

Acknowledging the power relations between children and their peers caused me to consider how these power dynamics might impact their learning in this space, particularly when e-portfolios are designed as a tool to celebrate children's learning. What might Wesley be learning and what might Freddy be learning during this interaction and what did they already know?

The intended curriculum at Rangatira Kindergarten is for children to use tablets as a way to access their learning more directly as guided by teachers' truths. But, the examples in this section reveal the hidden curriculum. Blaise and Nuttal (2011) claim the hidden curriculum describes what children are learning without teachers realising. The result is the lived curriculum, which is what they actually experience. Wesley's increased capabilities in the e-portfolio space reflects the intended curriculum as guided by teachers' truths. This experience also provided him with opportunities to learn how to dominate others in ways that are not considered acceptable behaviour from normative views of children's interactions with their peers. Therefore, it also reflects the hidden curriculum. Nuthall (2007) claims, "students learn what they do" (p. 236). What children do consistently over time in the learning environment is what they learn and become competent in (Nuthall, 2007). It is possible Wesley might be learning that at times he can get away with this behavior because adults did not intervene. For Wesley, the e-portfolio space appears to be an enabling space of transformation where he can experiment with the type of subject he might want to be.

Freddy's experience of lived curriculum meant he was potentially learning that for himself the e-portfolio space is something other than pleasurable. Therefore, for Freddy, power in this space operates on his body in ways that negate the aspirations of *Te Whāriki*. These are significant findings because both learning outcomes influence children's future participation within this space. For example, Wesley might continue to seek out the e-portfolio space to explore his power and control over others. On the other hand, Freddy's experience of the hidden

curriculum means he might retreat from participating altogether. Neither of these learning outcomes align with *Te Whāriki* as teachers have intended. Wesley and Freddy's social interaction is not the only example where children engaged in the e-portfolio space in ways that led to outcomes that are not in line with the curriculum goals. Consider Ashley, Kelly and Jane in the following excerpt.

Ashley, Kelly and Jane: More Rejection and Exclusion

In a similar example of rejection and exclusion amongst children and their peers, Ashley exercises power as she rejects Jane's attempts to join her and Kelly:

Jane enters the room and walks over to join Kelly and Ashley on the bean bags. She kneels down beside Ashley and leans forward to look around the side of the laptop screen, which is perched on Kelly's lap and partially obscured from her view. Ashley pushes her out of the way. Jane sits back momentarily and then leans back down into the same position again. Ashley pushes her out of the way again. Jane says, "Don't," and tries to resist. Ashley responds by repositioning her body in front of Jane's, blocking her view. This time Jane pushes her back. Both girls manoeuvre their bodies in such a way as to end up on their knees with their hands on the ground. They start head butting and pushing each other. Jane responds, "Aaarrgggh, you're hurting me...I can't see!" Ashley sits up and laughs, and then resumes her position and continues to push her with her head. (Kelly, 4-year-old child, Ashley, 3-year-old child, Jane, 3-year-old child, video recorded semi-structured activity, Mana Kindergarten, 3 September 2018)

It seemed clear that Ashley did not want Jane to join in. Ashley used a number of physical strategies to exclude Jane from joining them. She pushed her and blocked her view of the screen before this intensified into head-butting. However, just as I demonstrated in Wesley and Freddy's interaction, it is the battle for power that appears to ignite her pleasure. The more Jane tried to gain entry to the group the more force Ashley used to exclude her, whilst simultaneously appearing to delight her. Foucault (1980) describes this as the profoundly pleasurable experience of exercising power against others. These power dynamics are discursively produced during social interactions with others (Foucault, 1980). Using Foucault to illuminate the sorts of pleasure that children can and do experience in this space demonstrates that power dynamics are open and creative. Children's practices of freedom have the potential to augment current constructions of pleasure, increasing children's capacities for new sorts of pleasure.

(Un)silencing the Powerful, Agentic and Pleasurable Child Body:

Concluding thoughts

This Chapter has examined children's practices of freedom that produce particular kinds of bodies—powerful, agentic and pleasurable or various permutations. Making use of the theoretical framework to explore children's resistance and subversion that emerged in the data demonstrates how children can counterattack power dynamics in the e-portfolio space. Children resisted adults in a number of ways. They resisted when adults diminished their capacity to enact agency, disregarding their freedom to make their own choices. Drawing on Foucault's concept of normalisation, children also counterattacked power by affirming their development but not their docility. As shown by Ella, her increased confidence and skill in the e-portfolio space led to her resistance and subversion of adults' power. Children also exercised power by forming alliances with one another through the disciplinary technique of totalisation. Children used their comradeship to exclude adults from

social interactions. As children demonstrate, on these occasions their actions make power falter, in doing so, they shifted power in their favour by making adults feel like outsiders.

The Chapter also draws attention to the ways in which children exercised power in the production of pleasure. Beginning with the subtle ways in which power circulates, I demonstrate how each subject can and does make a contribution to power dynamics. Children, in choosing certain subject positions available to them, spoke themselves into existence. The availability of the subject positions in this space meant negotiating complex power dynamics. They demonstrated that power dynamics are not static and stable, rather they are mutable and transformable. Such freedom practices are a site where children's bodies can be constituted as pleasurable. However, as shown, pleasure is also fragile and can be snatched away at any moment. Pleasure in the e-portfolio space rests tentatively in their ability to negotiate power dynamics that circulate between themselves and their peers.

The final section of the Chapter drew attention to children exercising power against their peers in ways that are considered inappropriate from normative perspectives. Being able to engage in this space independently without adults' supervision presupposes children have increased their capacities in the e-portfolio space in line with teachers' truths, as demonstrated by Ella and Wesley. Therefore, it also presupposes children will act appropriately as articulated by teachers in Chapter 5. Presumably then, children as capable independent free choosing subjects will make rational choices about their behaviour in this space. This was not the case, as Wesley and Ashley demonstrate. Therefore, for Freddy and Jane, the e-portfolio space is potentially dangerous and something other than pleasurable. Unlike Chapter 5 and 6, this Chapter contributes to the power/knowledge and truth of 'what what children do in the e-portfolio space does' to the bodies of others.

The data and discussion presented in this Chapter reveals that children's use of pleasure as a counterattack to power is a powerful way

to disrupt current normative views. There is little known about how power operates to subjugate and silence the bodies of children and teachers in this space and even less known about the ways children resist and counterattack such subjugation and silencing. There is also little known about the ways in which children can harness power as the work of freedom and produce alternate freedoms. This thesis might make a contribution to these areas.

The next Chapter is the final Chapter in the thesis. I revisit the main thesis argument and discuss how the core themes constrain and enable children and teacher's bodies in the e-portfolio space. I highlight the ways children disrupt the common-sense and taken-for-granted ways of acting in this space. In the final section I return to the argument that children's resistance demonstrates the ways in which they rupture power dynamics. On these occasions the e-portfolios space produces a powerful context in which children conduct the work of freedom. This work might be cultivated in the pursuit of new pedagogies of emancipation for *all* bodies that inhabit the e-portfolio space. The Chapter also addresses the significance and wider implications of my findings and the possibilities for future research.

Chapter 8: (Un)silencing Bodies

Every aspect of a human being, including our bodies, is implicated in the powers and knowledges we want to critique. What is at stake in critique, then, is our very bodies, our very selves. (McWhorter, 1999, p. 148).

The title of this Chapter *(Un)silencing Bodies* signifies the conclusion of this particular journey. The thesis title and subsequent Chapters have all led to the culmination of power/knowledge and truth that elucidate the types of bodies produced in the e-portfolio space. The main thesis argument is that power circulates to discipline the bodies of children and teachers into certain kinds of bodies. These bodies are constituted through neoliberal modes of governance and associated discourses of individualism, freedom, choice and agency. The Foucaultian theoretical framework has helped to present a view of the disciplinary processes by identifying and drawing on the tensions from children's and teachers' everyday social interactions whilst engaging in this space.

Contributing to the field, this thesis reveals how children's and teachers' bodies are disciplined through the discursive practices and truths of teachers. It also reveals how children's acts of resistance can disrupt dominant discourses and create a space of transformation. Where this is the case, these dynamics are considered as practices of freedom, constituting children's bodies as powerful, agentic and pleasurable. Whilst this study focuses on children's and teachers' bodies, the research process is not devoid of my own influence. As Foucault (1995) reminds us, power is everywhere and constitutes everything. Therefore, during salient power dynamics I add my dialogue to demonstrate the influence of power in disciplining *all* bodies that inhabit the e-portfolio space.

This Chapter summarises knowledge produced from the main research argument, drawing attention to the constraint of disciplinary

power and the enablement of counterattacking power. I begin by discussing how the e-portfolio space can be understood as a “marvellous machine” (p. 7) of power. Drawing together my discussion from the Findings Chapters, I demonstrate what teachers say and do in the e-portfolios space is shaped by dominant discourses that come to be known as truths. I also discuss how Foucault’s concept of pleasure is useful for understanding the ways subjects might actively resist disciplinary power. In resisting, I argue children are conducting the work of freedom in the pleasure of resistance. Through these complex power dynamics, children are demonstrating what it means to be powerful and agentic bodies.

Bringing Foucault’s concepts of disciplinary power, freedom and pleasure together has strengthened the study because pleasure and freedom provide a lens in which to counterattack and critique disciplinary power. As has been argued, Foucaultian notions of pleasure provide us with hope for new sorts of freedom that might lead to the production of new emancipating discourses. The chapter concludes with some contributions this research makes to the field. Further research directions and recommendations are suggested.

E-portfolios: A Marvellous Machine of Power

My commitment to using Foucault has revealed that the e-portfolio space is a political site underpinned by neoliberal ideology in the production of the *homo economicus*. Influenced by neoliberal policy reforms, this production involves securing ‘good’ educational outcomes for children and in doing so, assure the country’s future prosperity within a global economy. Consequently, the power dynamics that operate in the production of *homo economicus* make the e-portfolio space comparable to Bentham’s Panopticon. However, long before I postulated such an idea, I was convinced they were, as Lisa stated in Chapter 5, “absolutely the way forward.” Such thinking is evidence in itself of my shifting subjectivities over the course of this doctoral journey due to my close reading of Foucault. At the outset I perceived e-portfolios as marvellous for making

the documentation process more efficient. However, as the Chapters have progressed I have used Foucault's work to build a case that the e-portfolio space, like Bentham's Panopticon, is a 'laboratory,' a "marvellous machine" (Foucault, 2008, p. 7) of power in which subjects are shaped, manipulated and trained in line with dominant neoliberal discourses. As Foucault (2008) observes, the "marvellous machine" produces homogeneous effects of power regardless of "whatever use one may put it to" (p. 7), as discussed in Chapter 5 and 6.

E-portfolios discipline the bodies of teachers through technologies that can monitor every aspect of their e-portfolio behaviour. Foucault (1995) states, "Thanks to the mechanisms of observation, it gains in efficiency and in the ability to penetrate into men's behaviour" (p. 204). Teachers, in knowing they are visible behave in the 'right' ways according to dominant discourses. But the disciplining does not stop at teachers' bodies. Through Foucault's (1995) three specific disciplinary techniques—hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and the examination—teachers assess, classify and correct children's behaviour in line with institutional norms.

Hence, the good docile teacher body and the good docile child body are compliant bodies devoid of critical thinking and the capacity to resist the constitutive force of discourses. These kinds of bodies are a manifestation of the pervasive effects of disciplinary power within an effective neoliberal disciplinary product—the e-portfolio. However, the thesis also reveals the production of a powerful, agentic and pleasurable child body. This is a resistant body that counterattacks mechanisms of power through the Foucaultian notion of pleasure as the work of freedom. There will undoubtedly be more types of bodies in this space but I focus on these specific bodies as they demonstrate subjugation and silencing but equally how subjects might counterattack power, producing other kinds of bodies.

The following section demonstrates how the good docile teacher body is produced in the 'laboratory'. It addresses the main research

question: “In what ways does power/knowledge and truth operate to discipline the bodies of children and teachers in the e-portfolio space?”

Producing the Good Docile Teacher Body

As explained in Chapter 5, the Kindergarten Association shifted to an e-portfolio platform in 2013. This move was influenced by the increasing standardisation and accountability practices that have become prevalent in countries that are guided by neoliberal governance. The Chapter explored teachers’ implementation of this new technology and the ways it shaped their truths and subjectivities as teachers. Analysis reveals teachers’ truths are consistent with neoliberal policy initiatives that circulate to produce the *homo economicus*. However, the production of this kind of body produces tension because rather than being free choosing autonomous subjects, teachers’ conversations illustrate conformity and docility. The notion of docility articulated by Foucault (1995) is illuminated as teachers are affirmed as docile bodies through neoliberal practices that highlight their compliance. Thus, teachers’ truths are established through complex power dynamics that ensure docility as they acknowledge their responsibilities for their work with children.

Lisa’s conversations demonstrate how power/knowledge circulates to subjugate her into behaving in a certain way to the exclusion of other ways of being. Her conformity is evident when she suggests e-portfolios are absolutely the way forward, as noted earlier. However, as Sims (2020) points out, subjects’ conformity is often necessary for survival in neoliberal educational institutions. Active resistance can leave employees labelled as troublemakers and overlooked for promotions (Sims, 2020). Critical thinking is also positioned as problematic within neoliberal governance because it challenges top-down compliance requirements (Sims, 2017). However, teachers in this study do not conform merely out of fear of retribution or of being labelled as troublemakers. Rather, they

willingly adopt neoliberal ideology as they think, speak and act in ways that perpetuates a cycle of power and subjugation.

The idea that one conforms unquestionably to dominant discourses connects with my discussion in Chapter 3. As Foucault (1995) claims, disciplinary power is a highly efficient mechanism of control and regulation because it reduces one's ability to think, speak and behave in ways that might produce alternate discourses; it renders one docile. The notion of constraint demonstrates the efficiency of disciplinary power. Mechanisms of constraint operate to train and mold subjects' bodies so that they desire only what is appropriate. As Hamann (2009) claims, a subjects' willingness to adopt neoliberal ideology is due to the all-encompassing nature of governmentality. Neoliberal governmentality ensures subjects accept market-driven values in all their judgements and practices (Hamann (2009)). Operating through individualism, a key tenet of neoliberalism, teachers willingly take responsibility for their actions. Thus, teachers freely choosing to act in ways that induce and extend dominant discourses.

Teachers do not think to actively resist and challenge the silencing and subjugation of their bodies because power circulates invisibly through discourses that are considered as truth. As Foucault (1976) observes, "Subjugation operates as a sentence to disappear, but also as an injunction to silence, an affirmation of non-existence, and, by implication, an admission that there was nothing to say about such things, nothing to see, and nothing to know" (p. 4). But I have found something to say. I am saying disciplinary power operates as a highly effective mechanism of control in the subjugation of teachers' bodies in the e-portfolio space.

To recap, disciplinary power is not solely an external process, it is also internalisation of power. A disciplining of one's own body, thereby crafting oneself into something one was not before. Teachers internalise their truths and then act in ways that validate themselves as good teachers, shaping their subjectivities in the process. Their subjectivities

as teachers are different to their subjectivities outside of the kindergarten context. As noted by Felicity, e-portfolios are a “great learning tool” and “story tool” but not as “entertainment,” which is the case at home when she takes up a different subject position.

Throughout Chapter 5 and 6 teachers articulate their truths, they talk about ‘what they do’ in the e-portfolio space and ‘why they do what they do’. But ‘what teachers think they do does’ is very different to ‘what what they do does’ to children’s bodies in this space. Chapter 6 reveals how power/knowledge and truth circulates to discipline the bodies of children, producing the good docile child body. Hence, children are under just as much control as teachers because teachers typically control the narrative through established truths. The concept of power/knowledge helps to uncover the institutionalised and normalised common-sense truths within a specific time/place/group of people (Foucault, 1972). In turn these Foucaultian concepts have helped to understand the ways children’s and teachers’ bodies are disciplined.

The next section also addresses the first research question, as well as three sub-questions: “What normalising judgements are being made in this space and how might these judgements operate to intervene, restructure and improve the bodies of individuals?” “How is power exercised between children and teachers in the e-portfolio space?” “In what ways does power/knowledge constrain the bodies of children and teachers?” Answering these questions contributes to knowledge about how the good docile child body is produced in this space.

Producing the Good Docile Child Body

During social interactions, teachers’ good intentions subjugate and silence children through power/knowledge established by the truths of teachers. As pointed out in Chapter 6, teachers’ truths create tension because teachers have greater power in the e-portfolio space. Subsequently, their truths allow limited augmentation of power/knowledge since neoliberal ideology operates to constitute one

way, as if there is no alternative (Hamann, 2009; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a, 2021b). As Foucault (1995) observes, any behaviour that deviates from the norms is considered unacceptable, immoral, and deviant. Thus, children can be subjected to punishment and correction in the e-portfolio space.

Evidence of the tensions produced by uneven power relations in the e-portfolio space is seen when children's behaviour has not 'measured up' (real or imagined). Teachers punished children, not as an intentional effort to discipline children's bodies. Rather, it is an example of the invisibility of power that blinds teachers from 'seeing' other ways. For instance, when Jared (child) does not behave in the ways Lisa (teacher) considers 'right' she punishes him for 'a minute' by not letting him access his e-portfolio. However, it is Lisa who decides what the 'right' behaviour is, and it is also Lisa who decides what the 'right' punishment is.

Ball (2021) reminds us, for those who do not measure up, neoliberal ideology is a source of despair and subjugation, positioning them as unproductive and in need of correction. Subjugated and silenced by power/knowledge and truth in the e-portfolio space, Jared's resistance is not recognised as agency, and this has implications for his subjectivities. However, Lisa is a conforming *homo economicus*, thus, her ability to recognise agency from alternative perspectives is diminished. Her views are situated within dominant Western perspectives of agency. If Jared's punishment had resulted in an improvement then Lisa most likely would have positioned him as good. By not conforming, Jared, on this occasion might potentially be positioned as bad because normalising judgement produces binaries (Foucault, 1995).

It is important to note, teachers are guided by their truths. Therefore, in line with their truths, they are providing children with agency by providing them space to engage with their e-portfolios. Nevertheless, in doing so, they simultaneously situate children in a field of visibility, objectified as individuals to be judged. Consider in Chapter 6 for example, when Tina, like Lisa, individualises Wesley. Tina identifies

gaps in Wesley's capacities and uses gratification, a normalising judgement as a regime of punishment to intervene and improve Wesley's body. She rewards Wesley when his response is 'right,' reinforcing and extending the normalising discourses she is disciplining him through.

As noted elsewhere, Foucault (1995) claims the primary reason normalisation operates effectively is because it helps the body realise its potential by developing its capacities. Increasing children's capacities is a central purpose of ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand in line with neoliberal policies, which emphasise the country's future economic productivity in terms of employment and prosperity. Therefore, it seems common-sense that normalisation would function effortlessly in the e-portfolio space. Hence, through specific disciplinary techniques Tina is able to intervene, restructure and improve Wesley as a future productive individual. But, she constitutes him as a good docile child body in the process. Such actions limit the possibility for alternative discourses and truths to be recognised or produced. They also leave limited subject positions for children to take up.

The argument that the e-portfolio space is a 'laboratory' is expanded here using Foucault (1995) because as discussed above teachers can "try out pedagogical experiments" (p. 204) in the e-portfolio space. Teachers can seek the most effective strategies for restructuring children's behaviour to rid them of any "abnormality" (Foucault, 1995, p. 199). Disguised as supporting and developing children's capacities there is potential for silencing and subjugation through mechanisms of surveillance that render them docile. But, what a marvellous machine of power this is because in failing to improve children in line with normalising discourses teachers also risk being constituted as a binary. I'm drawing from Foucault (1995) in relation to the constitution of good and bad subjects. In failing there is potential to be constituted as bad.

The following section addresses the ways in which children exercise power between themselves and teachers. It answers the final research sub-question: "In what ways does power enable the bodies of children

and teachers?” The section reveals what happens when children exercise power in ways that resist norms. Children’s resistance is viewed as the work of freedom and has the potential to produce powerful, agentic and pleasure bodies.

Producing the Powerful, Agentic and Pleasurable Child Body

Although adults typically having more power in the e-portfolio space than children, power is not a one directional dichotomy. Power is negotiated in relations with others (Foucault, 1995). As McWhorter (1999) notes, during social interactions each subject is trying to influence the choices and actions of another. Neither subject is in complete control and exactly how their behaviours might change from moment to moment and in what ways is unpredictable (McWhorter, 1999). Up until this point my argument has been relatively one sided, insofar as normalisation processes that circulate to ensure children’s and teachers’ bodies are rendered docile. However, children make normalising judgements about teachers and so too, do they make judgments about other children. The actions resulting from children’s judgements in the e-portfolio space are considered at times, the work of freedom. Children, in determining the course of action to take, resist. In line with the Foucaultian stance of this thesis, resistance is understood as the intersection between power and freedom, and is the space of possibility.

As demonstrated, Chapter 7 ruptures certain operations of power by addressing the ‘common-sense’ and ‘taken-for-granted’ ways of thinking about what constitutes truth in the e-portfolio space. It does this by revealing how children challenge norms through their resistant and subversion actions during a range of social interactions. Whilst children’s actions might be worth celebrating because they disrupt discourses, shifting power in their favour, their actions are often at the expense of other bodies. Therefore, it has to be mentioned that the conditions that enable ‘some’ bodies in the e-portfolio space are the same conditions that subjugate and silence other bodies.

Children's practices of freedom in this space are in the production of pleasure. The pleasure in resisting normalisation processes. Taking up certain subject positions in the production of pleasure is at times unpredictable and unexpected. In practicing for freedom, children subjugated and silenced the bodies of other children when they taunted, denied or delayed other children's requests. Wesley and Freddy's social interaction in Chapter 7 demonstrates Foucault's power pleasure dynamic. Wesley and Freddy make choices about their actions both as individuals and in conjunction with each other because "each move by one adversary, there is an answering on by the other" (Foucault, 1980, p. 57). This toing and froing that Foucault identifies is enacted during a number of other interactions between children. For example, during the social interaction between Ashley, Kelly and Jane in Chapter 7. Ashley uses a number of physical strategies to resist and exclude Jane from joining them, such as pushing her and blocking her view, eventually intensifying to head butting each other.

Whilst Wesley and Ashley's experiences of pleasure seem to intensify, it is arguably not the 'right' kind of behaviour that dominant discourses would position as good. Nor is their behaviour recognised as pleasurable or even agentic within the constraints of normalising discourses. Nonetheless, through a Foucaultian lens these power dynamics can be understood as the 'profoundly pleasurable' experience of exercising power against others and is discursively produced in social interactions (Foucault, 1980). During these types of interactions children also demonstrate they have the capacity to engage in the e-portfolio space independently. As mentioned, this is guided by the truths of teachers.

Children have been learning how to use the available technologies and they know how to navigate the e-portfolio platform. However, children's increasing knowledge and associated behaviour does not necessarily presuppose they will act in ways consistent with neoliberal ideology, that is, as free choosing subjects who make rational choices about their behaviour. Instead, data reveals that children exercise power

against their peers in ways that challenge dominant discourses. Children's pleasure in the e-portfolio space also rests tentatively in their ability to negotiate relations of power that circulate between themselves and their peers. As Chapter 7 demonstrates, pleasure is fragile and can be snatched away at any moment. On these occasions relations of power potentially made it less pleasurable for some children, or in some cases, not pleasurable at all.

Children's use of power is not always against children in this space. The conditions that enable some children's bodies also subjugate the bodies of adults. I refer to the bodies of Kathy and myself in this instance. Shelley, Simone and Pia (children) exercised power against us through their shared understanding, their comradeship and secrecy and their unwillingness to let us share in their pleasure. Instead, their resistant and subversive actions seemed to heighten their pleasure, intensifying as the interaction continued. It is during these relations that power and pleasure acts as a double impetus. Power "lets itself be invaded by the pleasure it is pursuing; and opposite it, power asserting itself in the pleasure of...resisting" (Foucault, 1990, p. 45).

The pleasurable discursive practices that Shelley, Simone and Pia jointly produced is useful when exploring how the body might counterattack such disciplining. To counterattack power in the e-portfolio space, individuals need to affirm their increasing capacities without confirming their docility. To recap, disciplinary power makes bodies more useful as they become more obedient (Foucault, 1995). It individualises bodies so as to carry out specific techniques in which to correct and train those bodies – a specific relationship between utility and docility (Hoffman, 2014). In resisting the typical powerful-powerless dichotomy Shelley, Simone and Pia demonstrate their capacity to exercise power against adults in ways which disrupts and destabilise power. During these interactions children's bodies are identified as, powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies, rather than docile bodies.

Whilst Shelley, Simone and Pia's bodies are arguably powerful, agentic and pleasurable, this also illuminates my early point. Not every 'body' in this space considers their behaviour agentic. The power of normalisation is in the standardisation of acceptable behaviours that limits the ability to see alternate ways of being. As Kathy explains "they were just being silly." Kathy believes this because she is constituted within normalising discourses. On this occasion Shelley, Simone and Pia are not behaving in ways that Kathy recognises as anything other than 'silly'.

Teachers' inability to recognise children's exercise of power as either agency (because it did not fit normative views of agency) or as practices of freedom is a consistent theme. I also consistently fell prey to the power of normalisation as I considered problematic power relations that occurred between myself and children. Nonetheless, despite my best intentions I consistently reproduced the powerful powerless dichotomy that monitor the actions and behaviour of children. I objectified children through disciplinary power. But as children have demonstrated, pleasure as a counterattack to power and the work of freedom is a powerful way to disrupt thinking.

As expressed throughout this thesis, more often than not, power circulates as a "discursively shadowy altogether invisible character" (Brown, 2005, p. 72). Power has the propensity to diminish teachers' and children's ability to exercise agency and practice for freedom in ways that might disrupt normalising discourses. However, when children did disrupt norms they reveal how they can challenge the subjugation of their bodies. Children's actions demonstrate how they can shift the pendulum from good docile bodies to (re)constitute themselves as powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies. I argue it is time we acknowledge the effects of neoliberalism and the governmentality of citizens and invent new forms of critique that produces resistance to its specific threats. This is the 'true' work of freedom, "an experiment with

the possibility of going beyond” (Foucault & Rabinow, 1984, p. 50) what we currently are—to see what we might come to be.

The Work of Freedom

To live freely is to experiment with oneself, not knowing whether one is getting free from the forces that have moulded one, nor being sure of the effects of one’s experimentation. (T. May, 2014, p. 78)

Reconceptualising current truths and producing new kinds of bodies in the e-portfolio space requires the “work of freedom” (Foucault, 1984b, p. 46) to be carried out. This thesis is the work of freedom. Not only the work of freedom carried out by children in the e-portfolio space but my own personal journey alongside an academic one—my *askesis*. Thus, it is ‘our’ work of freedom as self-forming subjects. To recap, Foucaultian freedom represents the subject’s “struggles” (Foucault, 1982, p. 780) against forms of subjections, that is, the point when the subject, faced with a decision chooses to resist and subvert dominant discourses. Freedom connects with ‘technologies of self’ as a process of self-formation, something “that one performs on oneself...to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one’s behaviour” (Foucault, 1984a, p. 27).

It seems to me, if we can understand both the current and historical power/knowledge that influence who subjects are in the e-portfolio space, then as T. May (2014) suggests, we have partial knowledge of how this came to be. Hence, we are free to decide which forces are tolerable and which are “intolerable” (Foucault et al., 1991, p. 106). Experimenting with how we might struggle and move beyond what is intolerable is the space of possible transformation (Foucault, 1982).

The work of freedom, nonetheless, produces tension. Whilst the Findings Chapters reveal how teachers think they are free choosing subjects, they are in fact, what Foucault (1995) would describe as docile bodies, compelled to conform to normalising discourses. A salient

example of the power of normalisation (Chapter 5) was when Lisa claimed the Kindergarten Association could “see” what teachers had been documenting at the “push of a button”. Lisa claimed this was “good” because it would make teachers and the senior teachers more efficient in their work. Lisa did not see the authoritative gaze of surveillance that regulated her thoughts, speech and actions. This is not a criticism of Lisa and her colleagues. Quite the opposite, Lisa and her colleagues consistently demonstrate how they provide space for children to enact agency in line with their truths.

Teachers’ truths are underpinned by dominant discourses that espouse rights and agency so teachers provide children with the freedom to choose when, where and how they might participate with e-portfolios. However, choice and agency must be understood within normalising discourses and power networks that constrain it as consistent with Foucaultian thinking. Therefore, only choice and agency expressed in the ‘right’ way is recognised. Hence, teachers’ discussions with children left limited space or on some occasions, no space for children to enact choice and agency as a practice of freedom. I briefly touched on this earlier in the Chapter in regards to Jared’s agency. The interaction between Bridgette, (child) and Sandra (teacher) in Chapter 6 is also an example of the constraints of power. Bridgette and Sandra’s conversation is underpinned by discourses of gender that show valuable opportunities to disrupt power and augment current truths are being missed. Therefore, instead of supporting children’s choice and agency in the e-portfolio space, at times children appeared to have less agency, choice and freedom.

As Roberts-Holmes and Moss (2021b) claim, neoliberal ideology is a powerful force, but it is “resistible and replaceable” (p. 1). Children’s work of freedom in Chapter 7 demonstrates how this is possible. Adults can learn from children because through children’s internalisation of the constitutive rules that govern them, they create themselves as self-stylising citizens. In resisting and challenging relations of power, children

rupture it and insert new possibilities for new practices of freedom. Thus, the potential for counterattacking power relies on the work of freedom and the pleasure in navigating complex power dynamics between themselves and others.

Contributions to the Field

This thesis contributes to knowledge about the ways in which children and teachers are disciplined into productive citizens—*homo economicus* in the e-portfolio space in two kindergartens in Aotearoa New Zealand. Attesting to the pervasive effects of neoliberal ideology by bringing power dynamics to the fore, this thesis questions current understandings in this area of inquiry. There is little known about how power circulates to discipline the bodies of children and teachers in this space. Therefore, this is where the thesis might contribute to the field.

The Foucaultian theoretical framework is another contribution of this thesis. Foucaultian theory helps demonstrate the link between the e-portfolio reporting tools and neoliberal technologies, creating space for discussion about the prevalence of mechanisms of surveillance in ECE. These mechanisms are concerning because they strengthen discourses of managerialism, panoptic performativity and accountability, which are associated with neoliberal policy reforms in Aotearoa New Zealand. These insights contribute to the field by questioning current policy and calling for revisions to bring about improvements for children and teachers who are both visible and vulnerable within this space. These insights might also inform the broader neoliberal space as e-portfolio platforms are used extensively throughout Aotearoa New Zealand as governed by neoliberal discourses of professionalism.

There is also a dearth of literature describing or analysing Foucault's concept of pleasure in ECE, including how children exercise pleasure as a counterattack to power and the work freedom. The Foucaultian concepts of pleasure and freedom provide fresh insights into how children can challenge normalisation in a space that typically

subjugates and silences their bodies. Appreciating children's resistance and subversion has the potential to reposition them as powerful and agentic in ways that sit outside normative frameworks. In appreciating pleasure as a form of power and agency, and the work of freedom, the nexus to children's resistance and subversion can be celebrated. I am not suggesting that we abandon social order completely, only that as adults we pause for a moment and consider how we might do things differently. Doing things differently challenges imperfect policy and has the potential to reshape existing power/knowledge and truths. This thesis addresses the gaps by creating space for new directions of public policy in Aotearoa New Zealand and for new truths to be produced.

Further Research and Recommendations

Consistent with my arguments about the work of freedom, I have identified the need for further work to be conducted. Teachers are not mentioned as having powerful, agentic and pleasurable bodies in this study because they consistently behaved in ways that demonstrate their subjugation to neoliberal ideology. Teachers unintentionally subjugate and silence not only children's bodies in the e-portfolio space, but their own bodies as well. Therefore, further studies exploring how teachers might resist and reverse the constraints of neoliberal ideology would be worthwhile. Further research could also go beyond the e-portfolio space to explore how power circulates in a range of other spaces in ECE settings.

Another area where research would be worthwhile is the power/knowledge and truths that constitute the bodies of parents. Specifically, the ways in which parents influence this space beyond the ECE setting. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the e-portfolio space crosses borders between the physical and virtual worlds and the kindergarten and home environment. Research into what the power/knowledge and truths of e-portfolios are and how they shape parents and children's bodies at home might add to the ongoing narrative. Particularly since, e-

portfolios are marketed as a tool to improve children's human capital and parents are the consumers of this product.

There are many studies that reveal the dehumanising and devastating effects of neoliberalism in ECE (Chomsky, 2016; Freire, 1973; Roberts-Holmes & Moss, 2021a; Sims, 2017), but not enough studies that demonstrate how we might counterattack this pervasive ideology. Therefore, further research into counterattacking the effects of power in this space could be beneficial in the production of new discourses that counter the effects of neoliberalism. This thesis also highlights the need for more studies that identify practical ways children and teachers can circumvent the constraining effects of power.

Final Note

It is often said that we have been incapable of imagining any new pleasures. We have at least invented a different kind of pleasure: pleasure in the truth of pleasure, the pleasure of knowing that truth, of discovering and exposing it, the fascination of seeing it and telling it, of captivating and capturing others by it, of confiding it in secret, of luring it out in the open—the specific pleasure of the true discourse on pleasure. (Foucault, 1990, p. 71)

After five years, it seems fitting to finish this thesis with a poignant passage by Foucault who has been influential in shaping my subjectivities during this time. Gazing inwards, this journey has changed me into something I was not in the beginning. It has been my work of freedom—my *askesis*.

Gazing outwards, this thesis provides fresh insights into complex operations of power and pleasure that operate during a range of social interactions in the e-portfolio space. It makes visible the invisibility of the constitutive forces of discourse that cause 'us' (adults) to 'say what we do' and 'do what we say' in this space. Such visibility might mean we change

what 'we say' and 'what we do' in this space in the future. Given the growing trend in ECE towards children's participation with e-portfolios I suggest it is timely to consider how power operates to discipline children's and teachers' bodies. Moreover, to consider how children's resistance and subversion in this space can produce new forms of power and new forms of freedom. The truth that may come of this knowledge is the undetermined possibilities of new discourses, in which pleasure is recognised as an act of emancipation in the constitution of ourselves as 'free.'

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethics Approval



HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE

Secretary, Rebecca Robinson
Telephone: +64 03 369 4588, Extn 94588
Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz

Ref: 2018/23/ERHEC

2 August 2018

Joanne Beaumont-Bates
School of Teacher Education
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Joanne

Thank you for providing the revised documents in support of your application to the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee. I am very pleased to inform you that your research proposal "E-portfolios in Early Childhood Education: Hearing Children's Voices" has been granted ethical approval.

Please note that this approval is subject to the incorporation of the amendments you have provided in your emails of 7th June and 1st August 2018, **and the following:**

For clarity, in the Information Sheets and Consent Forms, please reword the statements "All data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis" to "All audio and video data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis".

Should circumstances relevant to this current application change you are required to reapply for ethical approval.

If you have any questions regarding this approval, please let me know.

We wish you well for your research.

Yours sincerely

PP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'R. Robinson'.

Dr Patrick Shepherd
Chair
Educational Research Human Ethics Committee

Please note that ethical approval relates only to the ethical elements of the relationship between the researcher, research participants and other stakeholders. The granting of approval by the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee should not be interpreted as comment on the methodology, legality, value or any other matters relating to this research.

F E S

Appendix 2: Information Sheet and Consent Form – Centre Owners/Directors/Governing Bodies



School of Teacher Education
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16/04/2018

E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children's voices.

Information Sheet: Centre owner/Directors/Governing bodies

My name is Joanne Beaumont-Bates. I am a fully registered early childhood teacher and a Doctoral student at the University of Canterbury. The purpose of my research is to explore how young children are participating with e-portfolios and provide space for them to voice their perspectives of e-portfolios.

Two ECE services will be invited to participate to support anonymity. It is anticipated that service providers, policy makers and teachers who are presently using/or contemplating the move to an e-portfolio platform may benefit from the perspectives that are analysed and documented.

Your ECE service/organisation has been chosen because children are participating in e-portfolios. If you consent to your ECE service/organisation taking part in this study, we can discuss a regular day and time per week before data collection commences. I anticipate being on site for a minimum of 4 hours each day I attend. Data collection may take up to 5 months and children's involvement in this study will be during session time only. I will be working alongside the participant children and am willing to be flexible with daily routines and activities during the period of attendance at the service. Prior to beginning each data collection session, I will discuss my plan for the session with teachers to minimise disruption to any regular or planned activities.

Teachers' and parents' involvement will be at a time that is suitable to them.

Project procedures

Data will be collected from children at their early childhood service using three

different methods.

1. Observation: This will involve observing children engaging with e-portfolios. There will be three to five observations of each participant child. Observations are used to see how children are participating with their e-portfolios, who they are viewing them with, and the conversations that they are having. Data will be video recorded.
2. Child-conferencing: The child conference is a semi-structured interview and will be organised around a set of open-ended questions. The conferencing will take place in the ECE service where the child feels most comfortable and discussed with them prior to commencing. Data will be audio recorded.
3. Semi-structured activity: The semi-structured activity involves encouraging the participant children to show me how they use their e-portfolios. Data will be video recorded.

Data will be collected through the use of video and/or audio recording equipment. The video recorded data collection methods will be conducted in spaces which minimise the risk of non-participating children/teachers being recorded. Before video data is collected at your service all parents/legal guardians will be provided with an information sheet asking for consent for their child to be captured on video should they be alongside participating children. Children of parents/guardians who give consent for their child to be videoed will also be asked for their consent.

It is estimated that each method of data collection with individual participant children will take 30 minutes. When the audio is transcribed, the participant children will be invited to listen to me verbalise a summary of their transcript, during this time children will an opportunity to clarify my interpretation. At the end of this I will ask children to verify if it is an accurate account of their transcription.

Data will be collected from parents of participant children using a single method.

Although the focus of the study is on hearing children's voices, parents' and teachers' voices can add another layer to the dialogue on children's social worlds.

1. Semi-structured interview: this will be a set of open-ended questions and will provide space for emerging topics. Key topics for the semi-structured interview are:
 - Exploring parents' perspectives of e-portfolios
 - Exploring the ways parents are using e-portfolios with their child
 - Exploring factors which impact parents when using e-portfolios

Data will be collected from teachers using a single method

Teachers who create assessment documentation for the participant children's e-portfolios will also be invited to participate. Data will be collected through one single semi-structured interview, which will take approximately 30 minutes. This may or

may not be within work hours depending on your ECE service's/organisation's policy around professional release time for research participation. If this is able to be conducted during working hours, then it will be conducted at a time that is suitable to your ECE service and you. If it is to be conducted in your own time, then it will be at a time that is suitable to you. The data will be audio recorded. Transcriptions will be returned to each teacher to check for accuracy and confirmed as correct.

1. Semi-structured interview: this will be a set of open-ended questions and will provide space for emerging topics. Key topics for the semi-structured interview are:

- Exploring parents' perspectives of e-portfolios
- Exploring the ways parents are using e-portfolios with their child
- Exploring factors which impact parents when using e-portfolios

Informed consent/assent

Parents will be given an information sheet outlining the project. If parents give consent for their child to participate, their child will be asked for their assent prior to the research commencing and again at the beginning of each data collection phase. I will request that parents discuss this research with their child first, so he/she has time to think about it before I ask him/her. Parents will be given an information sheet that is designed for children – one that parents/guardians read out to them. Children will have their own assent form to fill in before each data collection method. This requires them to colour either a happy or sad face showing their preference for involvement/or not. Two visual cues will also be available for children who may prefer not to colour in the assent form and/or to respond without words. These visuals will be a 'happy face' and a 'sad face' indicating either they do, or do not want to participate.

Parents will have their own consent form to sign as well.

Teachers will be given an information sheet outlining the project and be asked to sign a consent form if they agree to participate.

Right to withdraw from participation

Participation is voluntary and your ECE service/organisation, children, teachers and parents have the right to withdraw from this study at any time as far as practically achievable –final date for withdrawal is 1st October 2018.

If you withdraw your ECE service/organisation from the project, any data that has not been confirmed as correct by participants will be securely destroyed.

Children will have the right to withdraw their data from any collection method up until the time they confirm their transcripts as correct.

Parents and teachers will have the right to withdraw their data up to one month after their transcript has been returned to them for confirmation.

Analysis will be ongoing during data analysis, so it will become increasingly difficult to remove the influence of your ECE service's/organisation's data on the results. Therefore, once data is confirmed it will become part of the project even if

participants withdraw from the project in the future.

Confidentiality

All data will remain confidential to myself and my supervisors.

All audio and video data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis.

The audio and video data will be erased from any equipment used to gather it as soon as it has been downloaded to my password protected drive.

Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office. The audio and video data will be erased from any equipment used to gather it. Electronic data will be stored on a password-protected drive and backed up on the UC Server. Should any data need to be sent via electronic services, appropriate encryption protocols will be used to ensure confidentiality. All data will be destroyed after ten years on completion of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

In dissemination of the research findings, the use of pseudonyms and omitting any other particular characteristics that may identify any of the children, teachers and families that attend your ECE service/organisation will be removed. Any identifying features of the ECE service/organisation will also be removed.

Potential to harm

I cannot provide full assurance of anonymity as you will know who the participant children are because you will see me with those children. You will also be aware of which teachers are responsible for documenting those children's assessments and vice versa. It is also likely that children will tell each other and other adults if they are involved or not. All participants will be made aware of this.

As anonymity cannot be guaranteed there is potential social risk for teachers if information that was unfavourable was to be discussed openly. To minimise the potential for social risk I will hold an information session prior to commencing data collection whereby participants will be informed of potential risks and encouraged to share their thoughts both positive and negative. By showing that I am respectful and committed to open dialogue where the research process can be discussed honestly should support an environment where difficulties can be minimized and resolved successfully.

Access to appropriate support services will be guided by your ECE service's/organisation's policy/procedures.

This research does not explore any sensitive topics; however, there is a chance a child may disclose information that could indicate they are at risk of harm. If this should happen, you will be informed so you can follow procedures in line with your ECE service's/organisation's policy/procedures.

Concerns

This study is being carried out as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Joanne Beaumont-Bates under the supervision of Dr Lia de Vocht and

Dr Nicola Surtees. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

If you or any participants have further concerns at any stage during the research process which I do not address, then you are able to contact my supervisors, Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees. They can be contacted at lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns.

Dissemination

The results of the project will be published in a thesis and subsequent journal articles. A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC library.

On completion, your ECE service/organisation can have a summary of the findings or a copy of the thesis. Participant children will have an opportunity to create an e-book/book of the findings alongside other participant children and myself. Participant children will receive their own to keep and one will be provided to the ECE service to have available all children to view. This will involve some extra time with the participant children at the end of the data collection during session time.

Complaints

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Please indicate on the consent form if you would like to receive a copy of the thesis and/or a summary of findings of the project.

If you agree to participate in the study, you are asked to complete the consent form and return it to me via email: jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Thank-you for taking the time to consider this invitation.

Regards

Joanne Beaumont-Bates

PhD Candidate

The School of Teacher Education

College of Education, Health and Human Development

Te Rāngai Ako me te Hauora

University of Canterbury,

Private Bag 4800,

Christchurch 814

School of Teacher Education

Telephone: +64 021775215

Email : jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children's voices.

Consent Form: Centre owners/Directors/Governing bodies

- I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand what is required of the ECE service/organisation if I agree for the service to take part in the research.
- I understand that participation is voluntary.
- Withdrawal of participation will also include removing data if it is practically possible to do so.
- I understand that any information or opinions that have been provided by participants will be kept confidential to the researcher and supervisors, and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants or the ECE service/organisation.
- I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.
- All audio and video data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis.
- I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after ten years.
- I understand the risks associated with taking part and how they will be managed.
- I understand that another ECE service will be included in the research.
- I understand it is likely that participants will be identified.
- I understand that I can contact the researcher: Joanne Beaumont-Bates (jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) or supervisors: Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees (lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz).

- If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- I understand that children will have an opportunity to create an e-book/book of the findings alongside other participant children and the researcher. Participant children will receive their own copy to keep and one copy will be provided to the ECE service to have available for all children to view.
- I would like a copy of the thesis.
- I would like a summary of the findings of the project
- By signing below, I agree for the ECE service to participate in this research project.

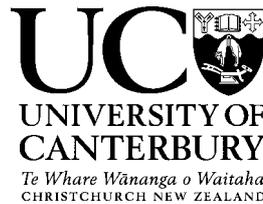
Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Email address (*for a summary of the findings, if applicable*): _____

[If you agree to participate in the study, you are asked to complete the consent form and return it to me via email: jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz]

Appendix 3: Information Sheet and Consent Form – Teachers



School of Teacher Education

Telephone: +64 021775215

Email : jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

16/4/2018

E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children's voices.

Information Sheet: Teachers

My name is Joanne Beaumont-Bates. I am a fully registered early childhood teacher and a Doctoral student at the University of Canterbury. The purpose of my research is to explore how young children are participating with e-portfolios and provide space for them to voice their perspectives of e-portfolios. It is anticipated that service providers, policy makers and teachers who are presently using/or contemplating the move to an e-portfolio platform may benefit from the perspectives that are analysed and documented. Although the focus of the study is on hearing children's voices, teachers' and parents' voices can add another layer to the dialogue on children's social worlds.

You are invited because you create some of the assessment documentation for the participant children's e-portfolios.

Project procedures

Data will be collected from children at your early childhood service using three different methods.

1. Observation: This will involve observing children engaging with e-portfolios. There will be three to five observations of each participant child. Observations are used to see how children are participating with their e-portfolios, who they are viewing them with, and the conversations that they are having. Data will be video recorded.
2. Child-conferencing: The child conference is a semi-structured interview and will be organised around a set of open-ended questions. The conferencing will take place in the ECE service where the child feels most comfortable and discussed with them prior to commencing. Data will be audio recorded.
3. Semi-structured activity: The semi-structured activity involves encouraging the participant children to show me how they use their e-portfolios. Data will be

video recorded.

Data will be collected through the use of video and/or audio recording equipment. The video recorded data collection methods will be conducted where possible, in spaces which minimise the risk of non-participating children/teachers being recorded. However, permission will be sought from everyone in the service in regard to being captured on video.

It is estimated that each method of data collection with individual participant children will take 30 minutes. When the audio is transcribed, the individual participant children will be invited to listen to me verbalise a summary of their transcript, during this time children will an opportunity to clarify my interpretation. At the end of this I will ask children to verify if it is an accurate account of our conversation.

Data will be collected from parents of participant children using a single method.

Parent involvement in this project will be a single semi-structured interview, which will take approximately 30 minutes. The interview will be at a time that is suitable to them and I will discuss what will work best for them in order to minimise any disruption to their regular routines. The data will be audio recorded. The transcript will be returned to the parent to check for accuracy and confirmed as correct.

1. Semi-structured interview: this will be a set of open-ended questions and will provide space for emerging topics. Key topics for the semi-structured interview are:
 - Exploring parents' perspectives of e-portfolios
 - Exploring the ways parents are using e-portfolios with their child
 - Exploring factors which impact parents when using e-portfolios

Data will be collected from teachers using a single method.

If you choose to take part in this study, your involvement in this project will be a single semi-structured interview, which will take approximately 30 minutes. This may or may not be within work hours depending on your ECE service's policy around professional release time for research participation. If this is able to be conducted during working hours, then it will be conducted at a time that is suitable to your ECE service and you. If it is to be conducted in your own time, then it will be at a time that is suitable to you. The data will be audio recorded. Your transcript will be returned to you to check for accuracy and confirmed as correct.

2. Semi-structured interview: this will be a set of open-ended questions and will provide space for emerging topics. The questions are unknown as yet, as they will emerge from the discussion and interpretation of data collected from children. However, key topics for the semi-structured interview are:
 - Exploring teachers' perspectives of e-portfolios
 - Exploring the ways teachers are using e-portfolios with children
 - Exploring factors which impact teachers' documentation practices using an e-portfolio platform

Right to withdraw from participation

Participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time as far as practically achievable – final date for withdrawal is 1st October 2018.

You will have the right to withdraw your data up to one month after your transcript has been returned to you for confirmation.

Analysis will be occurring simultaneously, so it will become increasingly difficult to remove the influence of your data on the results. Therefore, once your data is confirmed it will become part of the project even if you withdraw from the project in the future.

Confidentiality

All data will remain confidential to myself and my supervisors. Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office. All audio and video data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis. The audio and video data will be erased from any equipment used to gather it. Electronic data will be stored on a password-protected drive and backed up on the UC Server. Should any data need to be sent via electronic services, appropriate encryption protocols will be used to ensure confidentiality. All data will be destroyed after ten years on completion of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

In dissemination of the research findings, the use of pseudonyms and omitting any other particular characteristics that may identify you will be removed. Any identifying features of the ECE service/organisation you work for will also be removed.

Potential to harm

I cannot provide full assurance of anonymity as you will know who the participant children are because you will see me with those children. You will also be aware of which teachers are responsible for documenting those children's assessments and vice versa. It is also likely that children will tell each other and other adults if they are involved or not. Children's anonymity could also be compromised in the child conferencing method and the semi-structured activity as these may be conducted in areas where others are present, and/or the child may wish to have their parent/a friend alongside them during the process.

As anonymity cannot be guaranteed there is potential social risk to you if information that was unfavourable was to be discussed openly. To minimise the potential for social risk I will hold an information session prior to commencing data collection whereby participants will be informed of potential risks and encouraged to share thoughts both positive and negative. By being respectful and committed to open dialogue where the research process can be discussed honestly should support an environment where difficulties can be minimized and resolved successfully.

This research does not explore any sensitive topics; however, there is a chance a child may disclose information that could indicate they are at risk of harm. If this

should happen, the ECE services head teacher/manager will be informed and procedures in line with the ECE service/organisation's policy/procedures will be followed.

Access to appropriate support services will be guided by your ECE service's/organisation's policy/procedures.

Concerns

This study is being carried out as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Joanne Beaumont-Bates under the supervision of Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

If you or any participants have further concerns at any stage during the research process which I do not address, then you are able to contact my supervisors, Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees. They can be contacted at lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns.

Complaints

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Dissemination

The results of the project will be published in a thesis and subsequent journal articles. A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC library.

On completion, your ECE service/organisation can have a summary of the findings or a copy of the thesis. Participant children will have an opportunity to create a book/e-book of the findings alongside other participant children and myself. Participant children will receive their own to keep and one will be provided to the ECE service to have available all children to view. This will involve some extra time with the participant children at the end of the data collection during session time.

Please indicate on the consent form if you would like to receive a copy of the summary of findings of the project.

If you agree to participate in the study, you are asked to complete the consent form and send it back to me via email: jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Thank-you for taking the time to consider my invitation.

Regards

Joanne Beaumont-Bates

PhD Candidate

The School of Teacher Education

College of Education, Health and Human Development

Te Rāngai Ako me te Hauora

University of Canterbury,

Private Bag 4800,

Christchurch 8140



School of Teacher Education

Telephone: +64 021775215

Email : jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children's voices.

Consent Form for Teachers

- I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand there is a chance I may be captured on video.
- I understand what is required of me if I agree to take part in the research.
- I understand that participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw at any time without penalty.
- Withdrawal of participation will also include removing data if it is practically possible to do so.
- I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and supervisors and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants.
- I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.
- All audio and video data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis
- I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after ten years.
- I understand the risks associated with taking part and how they will be managed.
- I understand that I can contact the researcher: Joanne Beaumont-Bates (jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) or supervisors: Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees (lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz). If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- I understand that children will have an opportunity to create an e-book/book of

the findings alongside other participant children and the researcher. Participant children will receive their own copy to keep and one copy will be provided to the ECE service to have available for all children to view.

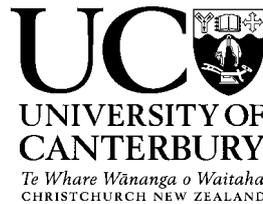
- I would like a summary of the findings of the project.
- By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Email address (*for summary of the findings, if applicable*): _____

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the consent form and email to: jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Appendix 4: Information Sheet and Consent Form – Parents



School of Teacher Education

Telephone: +64 021775215

Email : jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

24/05/2018

E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children's voices.

Information Sheet: Parents/legal guardians

My name is Joanne Beaumont-Bates. I am a fully registered early childhood teacher and a Doctoral student at the University of Canterbury. The purpose of this research is investigate young children's perspectives of their e-portfolios. This is to develop an understanding of the ways children are participating with e-portfolios and to inform future early childhood service providers who are using or considering the move to e-portfolios.

Although the focus of the study is on hearing children's voices, parents and teachers' voices can add another layer to the dialogue on children's social worlds.

You and your child are invited to participate in this study because your child is between the age of 3.5-6 years old. If you consent to your child participating, but you do not want to, then that is ok. If you do not consent to your child participating then you will not be required to participate.

Project procedures

Data will be collected from children at their early childhood service using three different methods.

1. Observation: This will involve observing your child using their e-portfolio. There will be three to five observations of your child. Observations will be used to see how your child is participating with their e-portfolio, who they are viewing them with, and the conversations that they are having. This will be video recorded.
2. Child-conferencing: This is a type of semi-structured interview and will be organised around a set of open-ended questions. The conferencing will take place in the ECE service where your child feels most comfortable (for example while they are having a

swing or digging in the sandpit). This will be discussed with them prior to commencing. This will be audio recorded.

3. Semi-structured activity: The semi-structured activity involves encouraging your child to show me how they use their e-portfolio. This will be video recorded.

Each method will be collected using video and/or audio recording equipment. It is estimated that each method will take approximately 30 minutes. When the audio is transcribed, your child will be invited to listen to me verbalise a summary of their transcript, during this time your child will have an opportunity to clarify my interpretation. At the end of this I will ask your child to verify that it is an accurate account of our conversation.

As a parent/legal guardian you have a right to be present during any data collections methods if you choose.

Data will be collected from parents of participant children using a single method.

If you choose to take part in this study, your involvement in this project will be a single semi-structured interview, which will take approximately 30 minutes. The interview will be at a time that is suitable to you and I will discuss what will work best for you in order to minimise any disruption to your regular routines. The data will be audio recorded. Your transcript will be returned to you to check for accuracy and confirmed as correct.

1. Semi-structured interview: this will be a set of open-ended questions and will provide space for emerging topics. Key topics for the semi-structured interview are:
 - Exploring parents' perspectives of e-portfolios
 - Exploring the ways parents are using e-portfolios with their child
 - Exploring factors which impact parents when using e-portfolios

Data will be collected from teachers using a single method.

Although the focus of the study is on hearing children's voices, teachers' voices can add another layer to the dialogue on children's social worlds.

2. Semi-structured interview: this will be a set of open-ended questions and will provide space for emerging topics. Key topics for the semi-structured interview are:
 - Exploring teachers' perspectives of e-portfolios
 - Exploring the ways teachers are using e-portfolios with children
 - Exploring factors which impact teachers' documentation practices using an e-portfolio platform

Informed consent/assent for your child

If you give consent for your child to participate, your child will be asked for their assent prior to the research starting and again at the beginning of each data collection method. It would be helpful if you discuss this project with your child first, so he/she has time to think about it before I ask him/her. I have given you an information sheet that is designed for children – one that you can read out to him/her.

Your child will have their own assent form to fill in at the beginning of each method. This requires them to colour either a happy or sad face showing their preference for involvement/or not. Two visual cues will also be available for your child if he/she prefers not to colour in the assent form. These visuals will be a ‘happy face’ and a ‘sad face’ indicating either they do, or do not want to participate.

Right to withdraw from participation

Participation is voluntary, if you withdraw consent for the study, this means that your child can no longer take part.

You and your child have the right to withdraw from this study at any time as far as practically achievable –final date for withdrawal is 1st October 2018.

Your child will have the right to withdraw their data from any collection method up until the time they confirm their transcripts as correct.

You will have the right to withdraw your data up to one month after your transcript has been returned to you for confirmation.

Analysis will be occurring simultaneously, so it will become increasingly difficult to remove the influence of you and your child’s data on the results. Therefore, data is confirmed it will become part of the project even if you or your child withdraw from the project in the future.

Confidentiality

All data will remain confidential to myself and my supervisors.

All audio and video data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis.

The audio and video data will be erased from any equipment used to gather it as soon as it has been downloaded to my password protected drive.

Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office. Electronic data will be stored on a password-protected drive and backed up on the UC Server. Should any data need to be sent via electronic services, appropriate encryption protocols will be used to ensure confidentiality. All data will be destroyed after ten years on completion of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

In dissemination of the research findings, the use of pseudonyms and omitting any other particular characteristics that may identify your child will be removed. Any identifying features of the ECE service your child attends will also be removed.

Potential to harm

I cannot provide full assurance of anonymity as you will know who the participant children are because you will see me with those children. You will also be aware of which teachers are responsible for documenting your child’s assessments

and vice versa. It is also likely that children will tell each other and other adults if they are involved or not. Your child's anonymity could also be compromised in the child conferencing method and the semi-structured activity as these may be conducted in areas where others are present, and/or your child may wish to have you/a friend alongside them during the process.

This research does not explore any sensitive topics; however, there is a chance your child may disclose information that could indicate they are at risk of harm. If this should happen, the ECE services head teacher/manager will be informed and procedures in line with their ECE service's/organisation's policy/procedures will be followed.

Access to appropriate support services will be guided by your ECE service's/organisation's policy/procedures.

Concerns

This study is being carried out as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Joanne Beaumont-Bates under the supervision of Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

If you or any participants have further concerns at any stage during the research process which I do not address, then you are able to contact my supervisors, Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees. They can be contacted at lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns.

Complaints

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Dissemination

The results of the project will be published in a thesis and subsequent journal articles. A thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC library.

Your child will have an opportunity to create a e-book/book of the findings alongside other participant children and myself for the ECE service to have available in their setting for children to view. This will involve some extra time at the end of the data collection during session time.

Please indicate on the consent form if you would like to receive a copy of the summary of findings of the project.

If you agree to participate in the study, you are asked to complete the consent form and return it in the allocated box in the ECE services foyer.

Thank-you for taking the time to consider my invitation.

Regards

Joanne Beaumont-Bates

PhD Candidate

The School of Teacher Education

College of Education, Health and Human Development

Te Rāngai Ako me te Hauora

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School of Teacher Education

Telephone: +64 021775215

Email : jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children's voices.

Child Consent Form: Parents/legal guardians

- I have been given a full explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand what is required of my child if I agree to let them take part in the research.
- I understand that data will be collected from my child onsite at their early childhood service during session time.
- I understand that some methods use video equipment.
- I understand that as a parent/legal guardian I have a right to be present during any of the data collection methods involving my child if I choose.
- I understand that participation is voluntary, and my child may withdraw at any time without penalty. Withdrawal of participation will also include removing data if it is practically possible to do so.
- I understand that if I withdraw consent for the study, this means that my child can no longer take part.
- I understand that any information or opinions my child provides will be kept confidential to the researcher and supervisors and that any published or reported results will not identify the participants.
- I understand that a thesis is a public document and will be available through the UC Library.
- All audio and video data will be used solely for the purposes of data analysis.
- I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and/or in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after ten years.
- I understand the risks associated with my child taking part and how they will be

managed.

- I understand that I can contact the researcher: Joanne Beaumont-Bates (jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) or supervisors: Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees (lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz).
- If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- I would like a summary of the findings of the project.
- I understand my child will have an opportunity to create an e-book/book of the findings alongside other participant children and the researcher. My child will receive their own copy to keep and one copy will be provided to the ECE service to have available for all children to view.
- By signing below, I agree for my child to participate in this research project.

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

Email address (*for summary of the findings, if applicable*): _____

[If you agree to participate in the study, please complete the consent form and return it in the allocated box in the ECE services foyer]

Appendix 5: Information Sheet and Consent Form – Non-Participant Children’s Parents



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16/4/2018

E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children’s voices.

Information Sheet: Non-participant children (parents)

My name is Joanne Beaumont-Bates. I am a fully registered early childhood teacher and a Doctoral student at the University of Canterbury. The purpose of my research is to explore how young children are participating with e-portfolios and provide space for them to voice their perspectives of e-portfolios. It is anticipated that service providers, policy makers and teachers who are presently using/or contemplating the move to an e-portfolio platform may benefit from the perspectives that are analysed and documented.

Project procedures

Data will be collected using video in two of the data collection methods. The video recorded data collection methods will be conducted where possible, in spaces which minimise the risk of non-participating children/teachers being recorded. However, there is potential that your child may be captured on video footage.

Confidentiality

All data will remain confidential to myself and my supervisors. Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my home office. The video data will be erased from any equipment used to gather it when it has been downloaded to my computer, which is password protected. Should any data need to be sent via electronic services, appropriate encryption protocols will be used to ensure confidentiality. All data will be destroyed after ten years on completion of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Concerns

This study is being carried out as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Joanne Beaumont-Bates under the supervision of Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

If you or any participants have further concerns at any stage during the research process which I do not address, then you are able to contact my supervisors, Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees. They can be contacted at lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz. They will be pleased to discuss any concerns.

Complaints

This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Dissemination

Some video may be used in future conference presentations.

If you agree to your child being videoed alongside participant children in this research project, please complete the consent form and return it in the allocated box in the ECE services foyer.

Thank-you for taking the time to consider this.

Regards

Joanne Beaumont-Bates

PhD Candidate

The School of Teacher Education

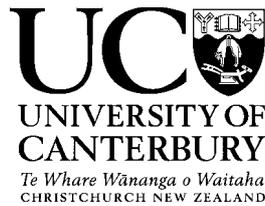
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E-portfolios in early childhood education: Hearing children's voices.

Consent Form for non-participant children (parents)

- I have been given an explanation of this project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand that my child is not a participant in this study, only that they may be captured on video alongside children that are.
- I understand there is potential for video footage to be used in conference presentations.
- I understand that all data collected for the study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and in password protected electronic form and will be destroyed after ten years.
- I understand that I can contact the researcher: Joanne Beaumont-Bates (jo.beaumont-bates@pg.canterbury.ac.nz) or supervisors: Dr Lia de Vocht and Dr Nicola Surtees (lia.devocht@canterbury.ac.nz and nicola.surtees@canterbury.ac.nz). If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz)
- By signing below, I agree to my child being videoed alongside participant children in this research project.

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Child: _____

[If you agree to your child being videoed alongside participant children in this research project please complete the consent form and return it in the allocated box in the ECE services foyer]

Appendix 6: Children's Information Sheet and Assent Form

Children's Information sheet



This is Jojo, she is a teacher too.

Jojo is really interested in what you say and do with your e-portfolio.

Sometimes she will come to when you are playing, and she will ask if she can play with you. On her visits

- She might talk to you about your e-portfolio.
- She might do activities with you.
- She might watch you.

You can have a friend with you if you want to when you are playing with Jojo.

Jojo will video you or record your voice, but she will show you how the equipment works before she starts. You can also try the equipment out if you want to. You can look at the video she takes too.

You don't have to play with Jojo if you don't want to and if you have any questions you can ask your teachers or Jojo.

If you don't want to play with Jojo any day she is at, you can say 'NO' or tell your teachers and that will be OK too.

When Jojo has finished learning about you and your friends she wants to make a book about it. You can help Jojo do this if you want too and you can have a copy to keep forever.

Children's Assent Form



I know Jojo is interested in e-portfolios and she would like to know more about how I use mine. I know I don't have to help Jojo learn and I can ask my teachers or Jojo if I have any questions.

- I am happy to help Jojo learn more about e-portfolios, so I have coloured in the happy face

OR

- I don't want to help Jojo learn more about e-portfolios, so I have coloured in the sad face



My name: _____

Appendix 7: Non-Participating Children’s Information Sheet and Video Assent Form

Non-participant children’s Information sheet for video



This is Jojo, she is a teacher too.

Jojo is really interested in what your friends say and do with their e-portfolio.

Sometimes she will come to when you are playing, and she will ask to play with them.

Sometimes Jojo will be videoing your friends. You might be in a video with your friend.

You don’t have to be videoed if you don’t want to and if you have any questions you can ask your teachers or Jojo.

Non-participating children's assent form for video



I know Jojo is learning how some of my friends using their e-portfolios and she is going to take some videos. I know that I might be in a video that Jojo takes. I know I don't have to be in videos if I don't want to be.

- I am happy to be in video if I am with a friend that Jojo is learning about, so I have coloured in a happy face

OR

- I don't want to be in video if I am with a friend that Jojo is learning about, so I have coloured in the sad face



My name: _____

Appendix 8: Informal Letter Introducing Myself to the Kindergarten Community

Joanne Beaumont-Bates



Kia ora koutou, my name is Joanne Beaumont-Bates, also known as ‘Jojo’ to the children I have taught over the years.

I am a fully registered early childhood teacher and I work at XXXX Kindergarten (Tuesday-Friday). I live in the XXX community and my son attends XXXX Primary school. He also attended XXXX kindergarten! Although I never have enough spare time, when I do, I love spending it with my family, good food, great company and playing my bagpipes.

In a few weeks I will be coming to XXXX Kindergarten every Monday till the end of the year. I will be investigating the ways some of the children at XXXX Kindergarten are participating with their e-portfolios (XXXX) and what they have to say about them. I will also be interviewing XXXX Kindergarten’s teachers and parents of those children who are participating. This is part of my Doctoral research for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) through the University of Canterbury.

My study aims to develop a deeper understanding into the ways children are participating with their e-portfolios and to add to the body of literature on this topic. It will also inform future early childhood service providers who are using or considering the move to e-portfolios.

Not everyone will be invited to participate in my study; however, every family at XXXX Kindergarten will receive an information sheet and appropriate consent/assent forms. I welcome any discussion should you have queries.

I hope to personally introduce myself to you over the coming months but do feel free to introduce yourself to me if you see me around kindergarten. I am very approachable 😊

Jojo

Appendix 9: Jared's Assent Form

